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Moraga 9-year-old launches charitable artisan chocolate business

By Jenn Freedman



Kalyana Salvi creates a mold for her new Valentine's Day chocolates. Photo Jenn Freedman

It's not often that a preadolescent starts a business, much less a business rooted in philanthropy. But that is exactly what Kalyana Salvi has done, along with the help of her mom, Tenaya Garrett. In the fall of 2022, they launched Chocolates for Change, an artisan chocolate company that grants 20% of profits to a different nonprofit organization each quarter.

Kalyana's passion for chocolate began early - she was just 2 when she started to express interest in becoming a pastry chef. A few years later, during COVID, she and her mom took advantage of the extensive time at home to study chocolate making. They learned to mold, temper, develop recipes, and even source chocolate from sustainable farmers, garnering as much information as they could from various cookbooks, YouTube, and even Netflix's School of Chocolate.

Toward the end of 2020, at the age of 6, Kalyana began to consider how she could parlay her passion for chocolate into a business. And together, she and her mom continued to develop recipes with that idea in mind.

"My favorite flavor that we make is guava. It is white chocolate on the outside with guava caramel and milk chocolate ganache inside." In addition to guava, two of her other bestsellers are strawberry (milk chocolate exterior with strawberry ganache filling) and brown sugar pecan (dark chocolate exterior with brown sugar pecan filling).

What was her inspiration to give back as part of the business model? Kalyana has been in a unique position of having a front row seat to seeing philanthropy in action throughout her childhood. Her mom is the executive director of Sydney Paige Foundation, a local nonprofit that empowers students to succeed by providing equal access to the tools (e.g. backpacks and books) and confidence needed to learn and thrive in school and in life. And her older brother, 17-year-old Rylen, started a nonprofit when he was just 4 years old (with the help of mom, Tenaya, of course). Called R Strengths, the organization supports low-income youth by donating backpacks, school supplies, and clothing for back to school each fall and Easter baskets each spring.

"I just love giving back to people!" Kalyana shares. Linking chocolates to charity was truly a natural extension of the business. The causes she is most passionate about include climate change, clean water, and polar bears. This year's grants from Chocolate for Change will go to nonprofits leading change for these causes.

Her company's proposition is simple: If you love chocolate, why not buy from a company that is investing back into making a difference in the world?

You can support Chocolates for Change just in time for Valentine's Day by visiting them at the Sydney Paige pop-up shop at 1243 Boulevard Way in Walnut Creek on Friday, Feb. 10 from 4 to 7 p.m.

Currently, they are offering a box of 8 assorted chocolates for \$15, a bag of 3 assorted chocolates for \$5, and chocolate bars for \$10 each.

Or, to order chocolate for local delivery, go to www.chocolatesforchange.com. Orders will be filled once per month.

Finally, for the latest news and updates from Chocolates for Change, follow them on Instagram at www.instagram.com/chocolatesforchange.

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