



GARRET HADEL: DON'T CALL IT A COMEBACK

By Doug Mace

Garret Hadel personifies perseverance and shows optimism and drive in the face of adversity. Two years removed from an injury that would encourage most to change jobs or industries, Garret consistently shows why every hurdle serves as a step toward future success.

After studying graphics and print communications, Garret began working at Jimmy's Famous Seafood in June of 2012. He started bartending at tailgate events for Ravens and Orioles games, as well as other tailgate events, and has continued to do so for over three years now.

Since watching the tailgates grow from events of fifty guests, to well over one thousand, he and Jimmy's continue to match that growth day in and day out, despite hurdles along the way.

Challenge Accepted

In October of 2015 Garret experienced a life-changing event where he attempted to help break up a scuffle in the bar that resulted in

injury. Garret was stabbed and spent three days in the hospital, as well as several weeks recovering, before returning to work.

Despite the incident, that most would consider overwhelming, Garret leaves the memory in the back of his mind.

"We've done nothing but grow since then and that's the last thing that's ever on my mind when I'm at Jimmy's."

Garret's mental fortitude and sanguine outlook is second to none and awe-inspiring.

"First of all, that was a complete eye-opener for my whole life in many different aspects. You can never take anything for granted. That's the biggest lesson I learned from that, is that you never know when your time is coming."

Both Garret and Jimmy's Famous Seafood made incredible strides over the last few years. The Jimmy's brand, already very well known and recognized nationwide, continues to grow and Garret continued to grow with it as the awards and acknowledgments keep on piling up.

After Jimmy's won best restaurant and best bar in previous years, at the 2017 Maryland Restaurant Association Awards, Garret was presented with the Heart of the Industry Award.

The award goes out to a staff member who goes above and beyond to keep the restaurant running smoothly and exemplifies dependability, teamwork and dedication to the industry.

"Honestly, I had never heard of that award before so it was a pretty awesome feeling to be up against people who have been in the industry for thirty-plus years. It was crazy. It was an amazing feeling when I won. I can't even describe it, really."



A Growing Member of The Famous' Family

Regardless of his own growth, recovery, and success, Garret is the first to point out that he's only one member of a cast and crew that became a pillar of stability in his life.

Second generation Jimmy's Seafood owners John and Tony Minadakis, and their mother, Foula Minadakis continue to offer mentorship and guidance as Garret makes strides and take on more roles within the brand.

"John is one of my best friends. We see each other almost every day, and we text everyday and he's always there, whatever I need, no matter what. He's always got my back through whatever may happen. I'm fortunate enough to have an incredible group around me; my friends, my family, my coworkers. Not only John, but Tony too. Those two guys, they do amazing things. Not everybody sees what they actually do every day in that restaurant. I can't say enough good things about them."

Paying it Forward

Jimmy's Famous Seafood constantly

hosts fundraisers and special philanthropic events — often including sports figures or local personalities — and as Garret saw such an outpouring of support, he too continues to pay it forward.

"We're always doing something. For instance, on Friday, October 20th at the Dundalk AMF, we're hosting a bowling event in conjunction with several Ravens players to support the Make-A-Wish Foundation ... It's all about giving back. You get so much out of it and it just feels good to give back. It feels good when you're doing stuff like that. Taking time out of your day to take a step back and take it all in."

As for the future, Garret's goals are clear and concise.

"Obviously it's on everyone's mind to one day have a place they can call their own, but I'm focused on getting better and focused on Jimmy's. We have so much going on. I love where I'm at right now and I have no intentions on leaving anytime soon. I have one focus on my mind."

And that focus is Jimmy's Seafood.

Jimmy's Famous Seafood discovered a brand ambassador of sorts in Garret Hadel and his story encourages everyone to find their drive to overcome, improve, and succeed no matter what obstacles get in the way. ■

Favorite Movie:

"Stepbrothers...let's do some karate in the garage."

Other Industry You'd Like To Be In

"My heads always racing, but maybe to start a clothing company."

Favorite Drink You've Recently Made

"I made what I called an 'Old Crabby Pumpkin' with bourbon, pumpkin spice simple syrup, pumpkin bitters and a charred cedar wood smoked glass. It tastes like a bonfire with pumpkins in it."

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