

WELCOMING PRINCETON

Recognizing the contributions made by newcomers and immigrants

TICO'S EATERY AND JUICE BAR



Ammel De Bernard warmly welcomed us into his bright and colorful eatery located on the corner of Witherspoon and Spring Streets. Mr. De Bernard grew up in San José, Costa Rica. Having visited the beautiful country of his birth, we knew that the word Tico refers to a Costa Rican. Mr. De Bernard told us that his wife who is a US native, chose the name. Mr. De Bernard came to the United States in 1993, when he was 22 years old. His mother was working in the area and he found jobs in area businesses including Teresa Caffee and Olives. Mr. De Bernard told us that the experiences in restaurants helped him to make the decision to venture out on his own. He grew up drinking juice and eating wonderful

fruits and vegetables. He knew Princeton would be a good home for health minded food lovers who appreciate quality, local and organic ingredients. There are so many good drinks and foods to choose from at Tico's. The signature drink is called "The Green Monster". It has seven ingredients which include spinach, kale, celery, cucumber, ginger, lemon and green apple. He treated us to a beverage and we agree that it is smooth, healthy and delicious! We asked him what helped him most when he started his business. He told us "old fashioned hard work". His wife and mother also helped when they could and he hired the help he could afford at the time. When talking about his biggest challenges, Mr. De Bernard told us that he didn't have a formal business education and he had to learn along the way and figure out how to pay the bills. Mr. De Bernard's advice to other immigrants trying to find their path to the American dream would be to start with learning the language. It may be hard, he said, but knowing English is necessary for moving forward. We asked Mr. De Bernard how we as members of the Princeton community can help others who wish to make their home here. He told us that Princeton is a nice town. While racism exists, it is not experienced on the same scale as in other towns. Princeton is welcoming to immigrants and he feels the diversity of the university population and community certainly helps to make newcomers feel comfortable. Mr. De Bernard said he's very happy to be here. We think anyone who samples something delicious at Tico's will also be very happy!

Interview by Avelyn and Emerlee Simons

Princeton Human Services ~ (609)688-2055 ~ Monument Hall