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Local boy drumming up new business

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By Mitch Hotts, Macomb Daily Staff Writer

The Macomb Township youngster billed as the "world's youngest drummer" has now added the moniker "world's youngest entrepreneur" with his backing of a new fruit bar.

Julian Pavone, 5, has named the product the Go-Baby Fruit Bars, which are produced by Michigan Quality Snacks in Shelby Township. The bars, which cost \$2.19 each, come in four fruit flavors.

"They're good and healthy but I'd like to make a chocolate one too," he said.

Julian, who started playing drums at the age of 3 months while propped in a high chair and sucking on a pacifier, has gained worldwide fame as a talented young musician.

The musical prodigy, who plays a 22-piece custom drum kit, has been featured on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" and "Good Morning America," as well as numerous magazine and newspaper articles.

His father, Bernie Pavone, said the fruit bar concept evolved during a conversation with Mark Levesque, Julian's manager and business partner.

The two were talking about golfers snacking on fruit bars on the course and the idea grew from there.

"We suddenly realized there was a huge market, from children to pro athletes for pure fruit snacks," Levesque said.

They started experimenting with various flavors — all of which had to be tested by Julian — before settling on blueberry, cherry, apple and banana. The bars will be marketed for charity fundraisers, trade shows, and the military.

The bars were also approved by Julian's mother, Lisa Pavone, M.D., a clinical lecturer at University of Michigan.

Despite Julian's young age, he is patient when visiting the 3,500-square-foot plant where the bars are made and packaged.

"He exudes youth, he's so happy and so full of personality, corporate loves him," Levesque said.

Julian, who attends kindergarten classes at University Liggett School in Grosse Pointe Woods, has other projects in the works including a possible television show with WonderWorld Entertainment.

Through his various ventures, Julian is developing a curiosity about business fundamentals.

"Dad, how much is four plus five," he said during a recent visit.

"Let's use our fingers," his father answers, counting off, "Here's four fingers and then we add five more, so there's five, six, seven eight, nine."

"OK, nine," the son said.

In addition, Bernie Pavone said his son's early introduction to the business world will pay dividends as the youngster goes through school.

"When he's with kids, he's a kid. When he's with adults, he acts like a little adult," he said.

For more information on Julian or the fruit bars, visit www.littledrummerbaby.com.

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