

BIOGRAPHY

Murat Guzel is a successful small business owner and father of two daughters. He has his company offices in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley where he also lives.

He has lived in the United States since 1986 when he first immigrated to pursue graduate work. After earning an engineering degree from the prestigious Hacettepe University in Ankara, Turkey and his graduate studies at Lehigh University and Washington State University, he then decided to start his own business and to chase his American dream.

Now, Murat is the Founder and CEO of Natural Food Group, an industry leading, and fully vertically integrated, international food and beverage company that he founded in 2000. The business then expanded its product range to organic and natural frozen fruits, frozen vegetables, juice concentrates and purees. Always up for a challenge, in 2008, with an unrivaled work ethic, Murat began branding many organic, healthy juices, smoothies, kid's products and candy retail lines such as Smart Juice Organic, Smart Harvest, Smart Kids and Kervan USA. Currently, Natural Food Group is a nationwide company that sells to all the major retailer chains including Costco, Sam's Club, Safeway, Kroger, Wegmans, Trader Joe's and Aldi as well as many other retail food stores.

His passion and commitment to organic farming and healthy eating is evidenced in the broad range of products that his companies grow and distribute. His goal is to preserve the soil with organic and sustainable agriculture practices to produce organic and healthy food that is accessible to the main stream consumer.

As an expert in nutritional products, Murat has also channeled his philanthropic works to coordinate with the Second Harvest Food Bank which serves thousands of residents across a six county region. He is working with professionals at the Food Bank to make menu offerings for children as nutritious as possible

Murat has developed a high protein and vitamin bar to distribute free of charge to homeless shelters in his region to ensure they get some necessary nutrition they maybe lacking.

He is quietly working with Pennsylvania elected, appointed, and non-profit leaders on innovative mentoring and empowerment programs for inner-city middle school female students. Working with the award winning Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley, Murat launched the SHE (Self-esteem, Health, Education) Program. In the 2017-2018 school year, this program worked with at-risk middle school female students in an unprecedented and holistic approach to education.

Based on his own experiences, Murat firmly believes that a strong education, fighting poverty, and proper nutrition can change lives. He now sponsors many high school and college students with scholarships so they can have an education to follow their own dreams

Murat received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor Award in May, 2018. These awards are presented annually to a select group of individuals whose accomplishments in their field and inspired service to our nation are cause for celebration. The Medal has been officially recognized by both Houses of Congress as one of our nation's most prestigious awards and is annually memorialized in the Congressional Record. The Medal has been presented to many distinguished and diverse Americans including seven Presidents of the United States, Muhammad Ali, Rosa Parks, and Frank Sinatra among other outstanding Americans.

Living in Pennsylvania, the birthplace of independence, Murat has become a great admirer of the Founding Fathers. Referencing their perseverance and lasting wisdom, Murat played a leadership role with the Philadelphia Democratic National Convention in 2016 – the largest in American history. He follows the principles of the Founders not only in business matters, but through his approach to civic engagement. He is active in Presidential, Federal, State and Local political activities. So, he is a bit disheartened that so few Americans participate in the political process but hopeful that through community involvement this will change. He regularly visits both Harrisburg and Washington to take full advantage of the political process and to celebrate the freedoms afforded by our Constitution.

In a bipartisan manner, Murat has worked to bring more new Americans into the political process and to educate elected officials about the importance of engaging naturalized citizens. His vision is for a day when American voter turnout is near universal.

Murat is a people person. He is able to build relationships and make connections between people, creating partnerships and alliances and motivating forward momentum to "get things done". In fact, he is often invited to make motivational speeches to reflect his passion for America and energize people in organizations.

Perseverance and creativity guide Murat Guzel as he consistently seeks new challenges and ways in which he can better the lives of his neighbors in Pennsylvania and other states. As for the Keystone State, Murat hopes that his work in Pennsylvania will influence activism and involvement nationwide. His opinion columns about these values are regularly published in Pennsylvania papers which he hopes will serve as an inspiration to others.