



Salt & Honey Catering - Olivia Colt

How Olivia Colt overcame illness and adversity to do what she loves, and become one of Opportunity Fund's most unique and inspiring business owners.

➤ A LIFE CHANGING MOMENT

Olivia Colt's life changed on December 27, 2010. The 27-year-old was on her way to baggage claim at San Francisco International Airport when she suffered a stroke. "At the top of the escalators, I knew where I was," Colt said. "When I got to the bottom I had no idea where I was. I had a pounding headache, tunnel vision and was utterly confused."

Another stroke during her hospital stay forced Colt to reconsider what she was doing with her life. She had been dabbling in catering, just small events and parties in her spare time, but facing an uncertain future forced her hand.

"I told my parents that if I could cook every day for the rest of my life, I'd be a happy girl," Colt said.

The next six weeks Colt's parents nursed her through her recovery and helped her launch what would become Salt & Honey Catering. They started in Colt's apartment with fancy dress dinners, complete with entertainment provided by her parents, who also helped prepare and serve the three-course plated service.

➤ IT TAKES MORE THAN JUST A GOOD RECIPE

Word of mouth from dinner guests, combined with the company's website and Yelp profile grew Salt & Honey's buzz, allowing Colt to expand into a small commissary at Oakland's Clarion Hotel.

While building the business for the next two-plus years, but before Colt could get the financing to expand again, she had another stroke. This time she was diagnosed with an extremely rare, chronic condition, and needed one of the world's most expensive drugs to control it. The only way she could afford that was to be on MediCal to qualify for disability, which would not make her a good candidate for a loan.

But Shanna McClearn, an Opportunity Fund loan consultant, disagreed, and helped Colt get approved for a loan of \$15,000. "Shanna worked to find a way through the challenges," Colt said. "Lenders who are willing to support entrepreneurs are wonderful for the community."

Thanks to Opportunity Fund, Colt has been able to boost Salt & Honey's cash flow, which has helped with working capital, equipment, and payroll. She sees the partnership as more than a source of funds—it's a chance to build a relationship with a trustworthy lender who shares her values. Which we find very satisfying.

To get started today, call us at 866-299-8173 or visit us at opportunityfundloan.org