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Frank Adams Jewelers brings on fourth generation as it nears 100 years in business

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Dec. 14, 2021



Jeffrey Adams Russell stands behind the jewelry counter at Frank Adams Jewelers, his family's business on Monday, Dec. 13, 2021, at Stuyvesant Plaza in Guilderland, N.Y. Jeffrey is stepping into the family business and taking it over from his mother Kimberly. It was something he was groomed to think about since he was a little boy and now it's finally happening.

Will Waldron/Times Union

GUILDERLAND — Frank Adams Jewelers will celebrate a century in business next year, and the family-run operation has plans to maintain its legacy.

Stepping into the family business wasn't on Jeffrey Adams Russell's radar when he graduated from college with a degree in entrepreneurship. Hearing family conversations about the store here and there, the 24-year-old always knew it was part of his history, but admitted he never had a ton of involvement in it.

Then again at that age, neither was his mother, Kimberly Adams Russell, who today owns the store alongside her father. Kimberly initially set out to work in communications. However, when her father started asking her for help around the store, she became taken with it.

Now, Jeffrey is taking similar footsteps to preserve the Adams legacy. He has become the next generation to work in the store and potentially own it in the future.

“I think having the next generation come forward as the fourth generation... is extremely rare,” she said. “We're a diamond, we're rare, durable, strong and long-lasting.”

Those who pop into the store may find three generations of Adams and several longtime employees still working there among a couple of fresher faces. That's how they want to keep it.

“I'll work until I can't. I see us working together for a very long time,” Kimberly said, noting that ultimately Jeffrey will gain a piece of ownership in the business.

Kimberly was slightly worried about how Jeffrey would fit into the mix because of all of the strong personalities at the store. Yet, after watching him transition into the business, Kim thinks Jeffrey has what it takes to run things.

“Jeffrey has been remarkable,” she said. “He is extremely cautious and careful with the staff and making sure that everyone is happy and respected.”

Jeffrey previously fell in love with sales working for a Honda dealership. He said he loved the job but felt selling cars was far different from the experience of jewelry sales. Selling a car was entirely about getting the customer the best price as quickly as possible to get them out of the door and not see them again for years until they bought another car.

To him, it was selling without emotion, which is why he eventually chose to join Frank Adams Jewelers where he could sell people something “special.”

“Every time we sell a piece of jewelry, we were making somebody happy,” he said. “I eat sleep and dream about what we do here.”

Some of Jeffrey's favorite moments have been watching a video of how a customer proposed to their significant other with a ring from his family's shop, or gave another the Christmas present they never thought they would get. The emotional attachment people assign to their products is what prompted him to tag in.

“I'm hoping to continue to do that for generations,” he said.