



December 2, 2015

Ms. Erin Andrew  
Office of Women's Business Ownership  
409 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, S.W. Suite 6600  
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Ms. Andrew:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of Susan Castriota, owner of Cuchina Safe and inventor of Cuchina Safe Universal Glass Lids for selection as a semi-finalist in our local InnovateHER 2016 Women Business Challenge.

At the Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence, we work with over 1,000 business owners each year. We understand the challenges that all entrepreneurs face in starting their business. We have also recognized that women entrepreneurs may face even more challenges, particularly when trying to introduce new, innovative products to the market.

Ms. Castriota is a breast cancer survivor who used her health challenge as an inspiration to create a product that potentially decreases exposure to plastic toxins while still allowing the convenience of microwaving food. As a survivor, Ms. Castriota became concerned about the toxins released from heating plastics in the microwave, and the possible link to her estrogen based breast cancer. In response to the overwhelming supporting evidence she found through research, Susan decided to create a non-toxic alternative to harmful plastic lids, plastic wraps and paper towels typically used in the microwave to cover food. The Cuchina Safe Lid is a vented glass lid a unique design that can be universally used to cover glass bowls, mugs and glassware of varying sizes with a thoughtful design that allows for safe and efficient steaming as to ensure the retention of nutrients during the cooking process.

The Cuchina Safe Universal Glass Lids measurably impact the lives of women and families by giving them a safer alternative to plastics. As many busy women and families use microwaves for their efficiency and convenience, the lids allow them to feel safe while doing so. Ms. Castriota has spent a great deal of time developing her product and has just recently started manufacturing the lids for purchase through different outlets which demonstrates a significant potential for commercialization. There are not many items in the marketplace that directly compare with the Universal Glass Lids. As consumers become more aware of the chemicals that can potentially leach from plastics into their food, the demand for safer alternatives will increase.



We believe that Ms. Castriota is developing innovative, beneficial products for women and families. We are honored to nominate her as our semi-finalist and will fully support her as she continues to grow her business.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jessica Sinclair".

Jessica Sinclair