

## Meet the | Merchant

## Homey 'Arlington Tax' Co. has personal touch

By DAN ROSENBLUM  
KW CORRESPONDENT

**A**t the Arlington Tax & Bookkeeping Service, Bernadette Antonelli has a second home built on numbers.

When the hectic tax season begins in the last week of January, three generations of daughters work together to meet the growing demand. Antonelli's mother, Alice Belfiore, 89, and daughter, Brianna Antonelli, 20, answer phones and book appointments.

Belfiore helped the first year of the business and has helped her daughter every year since. She needs it: Since Antonelli began her business in 1985, she's watched it grow from the preparation of 160 taxes to over 1,500 this last year.

Because of that, her office is a testament to the 18-hour days she spends there during tax season. It's decorated with a growing hourglass collection, family photos and plaques from civic groups she's joined.

"It has all the comforts of home," said Antonelli.

**Owner:** Bernadette Antonelli, 56.

**What kind of business is it?** Arlington Tax provides accounting and focuses mostly on small businesses and personal taxes.

**How did the owner get her**

**F.y.i**

Arlington Tax & Bookkeeping Service

764 Kearny Ave., Kearny  
(201) 991-8888

arlingtontax.com

**HOURS:** During tax season:  
Monday through Saturday,  
9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sunday,  
closed; Off-season:  
Monday through Thursday,  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**start?** Antonelli used to work for another accountant before opening her own business. In 1996, Antonelli bought a two-family house on Kearny Ave. and converted it into her new office.

**How long has the shop been in business?** This year will mark the 27th tax season.

**What's inside the business?** As a full-service accountant, Arlington Tax helps customers file income, payroll and sales taxes, as well as managing bookkeeping and business assistance.

**What are the price points?** Antonelli said she tries to keep prices cheaper than the chains, but they vary based on the amount of work that needs to be done.

**What makes the place unique?** Antonelli said over the



DAN ROSENBLUM KW PHOTO

**BERNADETTE ANTONELLIE**, right, and daughter Brianna Antonelli are, respectively, the owner and an employee of the family-run Arlington Tax & Bookkeeping Service.

years her family-run business has turned into a community staple where she knows and handles every customer.

"I have seen and touched and signed every tax return that comes into the office," she said.

**What are the owner's plans for the business?** Eventually, Antonelli plans to pass Arlington Tax to the third generation.

Her daughter, a junior at Montclair State University, plans to start working full-time at the business after she gets her C.P.A. Antonelli promised her daughter she would always be around for tax season.

**What does the owner like best about the location and business?** When it's busy, Antonelli closes the doors at nine p.m.,

but she often stays in the office, filing taxes into the morning. Even if it means long hours and few breaks, she said she's happy the business has grown from its humble roots to a pillar of the community.

"When it's your business, you do what you have to do about the success of the business," she said.



DAN ROSENBLUM KW PHOTOS

**ARLINGTON TAX & Bookkeeping Service** is home to a growing hourglass collection. Left, the company's sign and storefront at its 764 Kearny Avenue location.

**staff**

Kendrick Ross Publisher  
Bruce Bartholomew Advertising Director  
Lois DiTommaso Editor

**contact us**

Advertising | 201.217.2537 | aslota@jjournal.com  
Editorial | 201.217.2568 | bayonneweekly@jjournal.com

**notices**

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