

Hannaford Supermarket



Bob Molinario
and Jody Minor

586 Lower Plain, Bradford • (802) 222-3370 • Store Manager: Bob Molinario

Most retailers cite customer service as an important element in their day-to-day operations. To Bob Molinario, it's more than a motivational slogan.

Molinario is the store manager at the Hannaford Supermarket in Bradford, and oversees the daily operations there and at the state liquor agency inside. Tucked in between the customer service area and the front-end pharmacy, the agency recently celebrated its first year of operation, making it the fourth Hannaford in Vermont with a liquor store.

"Organizationally, we're only a year old, but we're behaving much older than that," Molinario says of how the store has adapted to its new addition. "I was fortunate – when I worked in the Burlington area, we had a liquor store in the Williston market."

Molinario, who grew up in the Barre area, played a key role in bringing the liquor agency to the 35,000-square-foot grocery

store. The Hannaford itself opened in June of 2013. Molinario then learned that a shop in Bradford that was previously the local liquor outlet would be departing, so he began working through the corporate office to inherit that status. After a quick remodel to make space, the agency opened on June 29 of 2016.

"I would say the differentiator for us, as it affects the agency itself, is we get to bring Hannaford's expectation of customer service levels to it," he says. "Not that other agencies don't have good customer service, because they do, but we add to it, along with the same customer service level that you'd find in any other department in our store."

"There's a huge focus on that. We bring our retail knowledge to that area – there's always great availability and we work hard to make sure we don't fall short of anyone's expectations."

And while he may oversee daily operations, Molinario – who has been a store manager for eight of his 27 years in retail – is quick to dole out credit to the team that works the store each day.



Written by Bill Burke
Photos by Matthew Thorsen

"I have one full-time person who owns the department as such," he says. "She's been killing it."

Jody Minor, he says, does all the ordering, maintains inventory levels and ensures that customers either find what they're looking for, or are provided with appropriate recommendations for whatever event they may be shopping for.

"She's a quick study," Molinaro says of Minor. "We all know that customer service comes first, but then she's great at suggesting items to customers. They all do a really good job, but Jody does a great job pointing out new items. I think the state is happy with our growth trajectory."



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The manager's wine and spirits background is strictly self-taught. However, that focus has come in handy over the past year that the agency has been open. The shelves are stocked with a wide range of products, and workers have found that locally-produced spirits tend to draw customers to the aisles.

"I'm a Barr Hill fan," Molinaro says of Hardwick-based Caledonia Spirits' well-known gin. "The Tom Cat Gin is pretty spectacular. I'm not a huge drinker, but I do like mixing it up. I've tried most all of the Vermont offerings in there. That WhistlePig is something else. We just got the WhistlePig FarmStock. Our clientele is very supportive of the local stuff."

In the end, though, it all comes back to customer service – a mantra, of sorts, among the workers who report to the Bradford supermarket daily.

"Our greatest growth engine is the relationships we have with our licensees," he says. "We feel we've raised the bar when it comes to catering to their needs, letting them call-in orders and making sure we have it ready for them when they get there. Time is valuable, and we want to make it as simple as possible even for large orders." ☺

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