



Dr. Susan Hardwicke, Inventor of the Fuser Energy Micro-Bar

by Libby Carty McNamee

could put this in a lunchbox and it tasted like a cookie," the idea for the Fuser Energy Micro-Bar was born.

Originally dubbed the "smart cookie," the Fuser Bar took on a life of its own, mushrooming into an enterprise in its own right. Pursuing her natural spirit of entrepreneurship, Dr. Hardwicke formed a separate nutraceuticals company called Virginia Bionutrients, LLC, to manage its explosive growth. She enthuses, "The Fuser Bar is great for everyone—kids, adults, athletes, computer programmers, as well as pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers."

The Fuser Bar comes in four different flavors: chewy chocolate, double chocolate almond, choco-coconut, and cinna-pump. Flavored with organic cocoa and sweetened with organic honey, the Fuser Bar contains essential fatty acids. Its active ingredients are in the patent-pending Fuser Focus Blend of ingredients. These add phosphorous, ribonucleic acids, and amino acids for a rapid "brain boost."

In addition to physical energy, she asserts that the bar helps provide mental energy and concentration—without the jitters or crash associated with the use of caffeine, artificial sugars, stimulants, or protein isolates. She has found the results to be astounding in helping children and adults increase their focus, yielding significant improvements in a multitude of activities.

Released in November 2006, the Fuser Bar is already available in more than 100 locations. The Vitamin Shoppe, a national chain with local stores at Virginia Center Commons, Libby Place, and West Broad Street, recently began carrying the bar. The bar is also available at Good Foods Grocery at Gayton Crossing and Stony Point, as well as at gas station convenience stores alongside other energy products. Sales representatives also sell them to doctors' offices and medical companies to combat fatigue and enhance energy.

Dr. Hardwicke and her staff at Virginia Bionutrients are now hard at work developing other products, such as a liquid version of the bar. With Dr. Hardwicke at the helm, more developments are surely on the horizon—and soon. "We want to put Richmond on the map—and be the Elliott Yamin of energy bars," she declares with a chuckle. You can bet she will.

For more information or to purchase a Fuser Energy Micro-Bar directly, call 804-747-9507 or log onto fuserbar.com. For additional info on the kSero Centers for the Mind, refer to ksero.net or call 804-360-5976. ▼

Richmond native Susan Hardwicke is one smart cookie. Armed with a B.A. from the University of Virginia and an M.A. and a Ph.D. in psychology from George Washington University, Dr. Hardwicke has pursued her lifelong interest in nutrition by studying vitamins and supplements for 30 years. She has also proven her ability to combine her business acumen with psychological services, founding two successful education-related companies. The first was Edutest, an online educational testing company that was one of Richmond's dotcom successes. In 2000, she sold the company, which is now part of Plato Learning.

In 2002, she founded kSero Corporation to improve mental skills and learning at all ages. At the kSero ("I know" in Greek) Center in Innsbrook, she and her staff help people of all ages learn to focus, pay attention, think clearly, and succeed.

That same year, Dr. Hardwicke was diagnosed with breast cancer. She found that the chemotherapy had damaged her ability to focus and concentrate. She began conducting her own research on vitamins and supplements for recovery from "chemo-brain" and is working on a product that should reach the market later this year.

Always up for a challenge, Susan Hardwicke likes to seek out problems that haven't been solved elsewhere. Her latest venture, the Fuser Energy Micro-Bar, was developed only a year ago as an outgrowth of the kSero Center. She researched brain nutrition and the connection between food and mood, concluding, "If you increase protein, you improve learning and emotions." When assisting children at kSero Centers for the Mind, she gave them chewing tablets containing the future ingredients of the Fuser Energy Micro-Bar in order to help their focus and energy level. After one appreciative mother commented, "If only I

V Libby Carty McNamee is a local freelance writer and attorney who is looking forward to trying a chewy chocolate Fuser Energy Micro-Bar from The Vitamin Shoppe.