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PHOTO BY LEONARD LATIN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Cedric Burton (left) and Aaron Peterson welcome customers to their new restaurant, 42nd Avenue Fish and Chips, which recently opened at 5302 N.E. 42nd Ave.

All Thumbs Up on 42nd Ave

A move to Northeast Portland's 42nd Avenue business district is turning out well for the operators of a black-owned restaurant that has found stability in a neighborhood that is providing them with a growing and diverse customer base, a long term lease and good food reviews.

42nd Ave Fish and Chips Owner and Founder Aaron Peterson and business partner Cedric Burton were in business for a year at Northeast 14th and Alberta when their property site was purchased for redevelopment by Kdamdukong Suh, the NFL star with the Miami Dolphins and former Grant High School football standout. A 90 day eviction notice required them to find a new location.

Peterson eventually found a site at 5302 N.E. 42nd Ave., and signed a 5 year lease with a 5 year option to give the restaurant at least 10 years of stability and maybe even more with the possibility of purchasing the

Restaurant grows with new location

building in the future.

After 15 months of remodeling to meet city permits and codes, 42nd Avenue Fish and Chips was able to finally open. The change of locations has proven positive, with more room for parking, and more customers.

Peterson said traffic congestion is much less than the old location, making it easier to park, and he's getting a diverse group of new customers, adding to the predominantly African-American base they enjoyed in the past.

He's happy everyone can just come in have a seat and enjoy their meal. It also helps to have a 5-star rating from Yelp, Yahoo and Facebook. The restaurant specializes in preparing Basa, a really tasty Asian fish,

along with Catfish, Tilapia, Cod and Halibut.

Peterson mastered his cornmeal fish recipes from his mother who he gives full credit as the key to his success.

The move to 42nd Avenue is also a return to a familiar neighborhood. Both Peterson and Burton are alumni from John Adams High School which was located just down the street from their new location. The business partners have known each other for 40 years.

Peterson, who was born in Los Angeles, says owning a restaurant is a blessing, especially when people love your food. As an entrepreneur for many years, his pursuit of the American Dream formerly included starting his own grocery store, doing promotions, operating a barbershop, a funeral home and starting a newspaper.

Burton was born in Selma, Ala., and previously worked for 30 years for Pendleton Woolen Mills.