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Regional excellence with Edesia Global Nutrition Solutions

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Saving the world is no small task and in New England, there are many dedicated to doing just that. In Providence, one business owner has found this mission to be her *raison d'Ãatre*.

Navyn Salem, an accomplished businesswoman, found inspiration at a 2007 Clinton Global Initiative meeting and used that to launch an ambitious effort to save the world's starving children. It is her passion and something she works hard at every single day.

Owner of Edesia Global Nutrition Solutions, in the busy Royal Little Drive commercial center off Interstate Rte. 95 in Providence, Salem's factory and nonprofit organization are dedicated to treating and preventing childhood malnutrition worldwide.

After attending that Clinton Initiative, she decided to open a factory in Tanzania, her father's homeland. She built that company from the ground floor up, and upon handing its leadership over to local authorities, returned to Rhode Island and opened a factory here in Providence.

That company now employs 38 people, most of whom are local residents. It has been manufacturing an increasing line of products since March 2010.

Her complete line of ready-to-use foods include Plumpy'Nut, Plumpy'Sup, Plumpy'Doz and Nutributter are distributed through humanitarian partners such as UNICEF, World Food Programme and USAID.

The life-saving and sustaining food products are given to more than 1 million children in 26 countries, including Ethiopia, Pakistan, Haiti, Guatemala, Sierra Leone, Chad, Senegal and the DR Congo. (See map) Her Plumpy'Nut therapeutic food product is made up of peanuts, milk powder, whey, soy, sugar, vegetable oils and a fortified vitamin and mineral mixture. It has been endorsed by the World Health Organization as a vital food to treat children with severe acute malnutrition.

Salem's mission is quite simple but enormous, "to treat and prevent malnutrition for the most vulnerable children in the developing world." Her ultimate vision is a world without hunger and where all have access the "basic human right of food and nutrition."

Earlier this year Salem was singled out for several prestigious awards, in recognition of her excellence. She received the New England Business Woman of the Year award by Bryant University, the Roger E. Joseph Prize from Hebrew Union College, and an honorary doctorate in social sciences from her Alma Mater, Boston College. For more information on Edesia and Navyn Salem, visit www.edesiaglobal.org.

Angel Taveras is the mayor of Providence.

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