

PROSTART EDUCATOR NEWS BITES

News You Can Use for North Carolina ProStart Educators from NC HEF
 November 2017

ProStart students show off at Manteo to Murphy



Pictured above: ProStart students working at and enjoying the Manteo to Murphy event.

The 2017 NCRLA PAC fundraiser, Manteo to Murphy, was held on Oct. 23, at the Angus Barn in Raleigh. The fundraiser is held to raise money for the National Restaurant Association Political Action Committee. This annual event offers local ProStart students an opportunity to work alongside and learn from top chefs across North Carolina. For many students, this event is their first glimpse of what it might be like to work as an executive chef. Chefs are encouraged to talk with and teach the ProStart student assigned to their station skills related to their menu item for the evening. Guests of the event enjoy seeing your students at work.

This year, several ProStart schools had participating students at the event. ProStart students from Sanderson, Southeast Raleigh, Broughton and Triton high schools participated.

The ProStart program was recognized from the platform during the program and students were introduced to the crowd of hospitality industry professionals from across the state. This fundraiser gives a face to what the ProStart program is all about. Many of our chefs are so impressed with the students that as a result, offer students jobs at their restaurants and decide to give time and resources to the ProStart program through our competition and other industry connecting activities.

“There is a spiritual aspect to our lives... when we give, we receive. When a business does something good for somebody, that somebody feels good about them.”

*Ben Cohen,
 Co-founder
 Ben and Jerry’s Ice Cream*

Important Dates

- 11/3: Competition Skills Boot Camp, Charlotte, JWU
- 12/1: 2018 NC HEF scholarship applications open
- 12/15: NCPI 2018 intent to participate forms due to NCHEF
- 1/12: NCPI Team registration payment due to NCHEF
- 2/25-2/27: NCPI 2018 at JWU, Charlotte
- 3/14: Team NC boot camp
- 4/27-4/29: National ProStart Invitational, Providence, RI

Hospitality options for students

Thanks to Food Network and other various cable television shows, students have an idea of what it looks like to be an executive chef. During recent years, enrollment in post-secondary baking and pastry programs has finally stabilized but there was an upward spike in applications courtesy of "Cupcake Wars" and "Cake Boss." The ProStart curriculum thoroughly teaches culinary skills and upscale techniques. Many ProStart teachers do catering projects to reinforce large scale food production. The question is, what are we doing in our classrooms to open the doors of opportunity to the other career pathways in the hospitality industry?

When you consider the number of jobs within the hospitality industry, there are too many to count. A hotel or restaurant offers workers multiple pathways to grow and move up within their corporate structure. A student could begin working at Bojangles and become a shift leader within months. This doesn't include the job possibilities throughout the travel, entertainment and tourism segments. These options are truly endless.

Perhaps we need to offer students the opportunity to see more of the lodging and travel side of our industry. Since some of the curriculum focuses on the lodging industry, it might be a good idea to reach out to a local hotelier and invite them to your class as a guest speaker. This doesn't have to be an upscale property (although it can be) but an economy or suite style property would give students insight into another area of hospitality where they could find work that will set them on a career path.

If taking a field trip is not a possibility, consider showing a series of videos. The Hilton corporation has a "Careers at Hilton" series that you can find through YouTube. This could be a springboard to discussions about what these jobs are like. In an effort to offer more career exploration, consider ending class each day with a three-minute video to introduce students to the options available. Another suggested activity is to use TripAdvisor or Yelp with your students. Through TripAdvisor you can pick a destination and look at things to do. This activity may spark discussion into how the customer service skills they are using are applicable across the hospitality industry.

Branding to build enrollment

This is a busy time of year. Most schools have moved into the second quarter for grading and finished their mid-term exams. Preparations are under way for holiday programs and catering projects that include Thanksgiving dinners and homemade pie fundraisers. Competition teams are being selected and practice schedules are being set. Everything you do now within your ProStart program is helping to set the stage for high (or low) enrollment when the registration process begins for the next academic year. Branding a program will help to make it more recognizable around school and within the community. If you are looking to build your ProStart enrollment, here are a few suggestions to consider implementing to brand your program:

1. Create a school/class t-shirt that students can wear at events and around school.
2. Paint/print a ProStart banner unique for your school. Use the ProStart logo and add the mascot or logo of your campus. Hang this when you host bake sales, receptions or events.
3. Add pictures of your ProStart students engaged in activities to your school website.
4. Write articles and include pictures about your ProStart students for your local newspaper.
5. Host an event. It can be a community outreach activity like baking for first responders or donating food to a charity event. Give credit to your ProStart students.



Picture: Debra Hadley's kitchen at West Caldwell. Equipment is kept in organized bins on shelving instead of in each kitchen stage allowing for efficient use of tools.

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National website for
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