



PRESS RELEASE
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Food Bank Celebrates Graduation of Community Kitchen Students *Culinary Job-Training Program Graduates 13 Adults as part of Class 40*

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – After 14-weeks of classroom curriculum, hundreds of hours learning to cook in a professional kitchen and the preparation of thousands of meals for children at-risk of hunger, the 40th class of the Rhode Island Community Food Bank’s Community Kitchen program has graduated.

Over the course of the previous months, the program's 13 students worked side-by-side as they learned the kitchen skills necessary to begin careers in the food services industry. As part of their hands-on cooking lessons, students prepared thousands of nutritious meals for distribution to children at-risk of hunger through Kids Cafe, a Food Bank after-school and summer feeding program.

“Community Kitchen is a way for individuals to get the training and skills necessary to get jobs that change lives,” stated Andrew Schiff, Chief Executive Officer of the Rhode Island Community Food Bank, as he addressed an audience full of proud family and friends. “The common ingredient in this class has been the tremendous desire of each student to change their life for the better.”

In addition to their meal production, classroom learning and life skills workshops, Community Kitchen graduates gained valuable work experience through internships at local restaurants and establishments such as The Capital Grille, Eastside Marketplace and the Crowne Plaza to name a few.

As everyone listened intently, graduate Joseph Faella, selected by his peers to deliver a class message, addressed the audience. “Words cannot express how I feel about what this program has done for me. We all had a common purpose, a common goal, and never gave up, no matter how challenging the times. We were focused on success and found it.”

“It’s amazing to think about everything our students have learned and accomplished over the past 14-weeks,” added Schiff. “They are expected to learn so much, everyday, and they never slowed in wanting to learn more. I know, firsthand, how ready they are to begin their new careers and couldn’t be more excited for them,” finished Schiff.

The Food Bank is currently recruiting students for class 42 of Community Kitchen, which will begin on December 13, 2010. For more information about Community Kitchen, please visit www.rifoodbank.org or call (401) 942-6325.

Currently, the Food Bank feeds more than 55,000 Rhode Islanders each month through a network of member agency programs across the state. This represents an increase of 50 percent in just two years.

The Rhode Island Community Food Bank is a non-profit organization located in Providence, RI. The Food Bank solicits, stores and distributes food products donated by supermarkets, wholesalers, food processors, local farmers and community food drives. The food is then distributed to the Food Bank’s network of more than 300 member agency programs. In the past fiscal year, the Food Bank distributed 9.7 million pounds of food. For more information about the Food Bank, please visit www.rifoodbank.org.

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