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First Lady Carla Markell provides keynote remarks for 36th graduating class of The Culinary School at the Food Bank of Delaware

Newark, Del. (May 28, 2014) – First Lady Carla Markell helped to celebrate the accomplishments of six students who successfully completed the food bank’s 14-week culinary training program at a graduation ceremony held this morning. Three distinguished alumni were honored for their contributions to the program post-graduation.

“A strong Delaware is a state where our citizens are trained and ready for the workforce,” said Markell. “Jack and I both applaud the efforts of the Food Bank of Delaware to make sure we not only meet the emergency food needs of our residents, but the need for workforce development programs like The Culinary School.”

Under the instruction of Food Bank of Delaware Chef Instructor Nicole Wilson, students have spent the past 14 weeks developing their passion for the culinary arts. From proper knife handling techniques to Serve Safe certification and completing an internship, the students are prepared for entry-level jobs in the food industry.

Graduates had the opportunity to cater the VIP tent for the Wilmington Grand Prix and an event for the Delaware Stars. Two graduates, Nelson Velazquez and Andrew Morley, competed in the male cook-off for the New Castle Moose Lodge.

“I would recommend The Culinary School to anyone,” said Morley. “It is a great way to learn a marketable skill and gain employment and a great first step on the way to a successful career.”

“Providing Delawareans with high-quality job training is central to our mission at the Food Bank of Delaware,” said Food Bank of Delaware President and CEO Patricia Beebe. “We know we cannot end hunger until we are able to ensure that Delawareans have access to jobs that provide a sustainable wage. We are proud to provide skilled employees to Delaware’s food industry.”

The mission of The Culinary School is two-fold. First, students are taught skills that are highly desirable to employers in the food industry. Second, these newly-developed skills have the potential to lead to jobs in the industry that provide job security and economic sustainability. Students are referred to the program through the Criminal Justice Council, Delaware Department of Labor, Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and other community-based organizations.

Following today’s ceremony, guests were served a barbeque-themed lunch prepared by the graduates. The menu featured Caribbean jerk chicken, pesto shrimp kabobs, barbeque ribs, tri-colored orzo salad, black bean and roasted corn salad, strawberry shortcake sliders, mixed berry cobbler and more.

Today’s graduates:

- Jailil Bailey
- Erick Coleman
- Brandon Collins

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- Andrew Morley
- Nelson Velazquez
- Rosalind Williams

Distinguished alumni:

- Maureen Brown
- Orville Smullens
- Patrick Hulton

To learn more about The Culinary School, please visit <http://www.fbd.org/the-culinary-school/>.

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About the Food Bank of Delaware:

The Food Bank of Delaware distributes millions of pounds of products each year to its network of 477 hunger-relief program partners throughout the state and also provides thousands of meals a month for children through the After-School Nutrition Program, the Summer Food Service Program and the Backpack Program. The Food Bank's hunger-relief programs directly provide for 241,600 Delawareans at risk of going without meals each year. For more information about the Food Bank of Delaware, visit www.fbd.org or call (302) 292-1305.