



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Thirteen students graduate from The Culinary School
at the Food Bank of Delaware**

Newark, Del. (January 8, 2015) – Thirteen students will begin 2015 with careers in the food industry after successfully completing the Food Bank of Delaware’s 14-week culinary arts training program. Fourteen weeks of hands-on culinary training culminated today with a graduation ceremony held at the food bank’s Newark facility.

Under the instruction of Chef Instructor Sean McNeice, students have developed proper knife handling techniques, had the opportunity to become ServSafe® certified, learned culinary techniques and much more. Graduates also had the opportunity to work alongside chefs from Iron Hill Brewery and Restaurant preparing for the food bank’s annual Blue Jean Ball and catered a holiday event for 1,000 Capital One employees.

Ernest & Scott Taproom, Home Grown Café, Firestone, Desserts by Dana and Iron Hill Brewery are just some of the local restaurants students spent their two-week internships. With experience in the kitchen, classroom and special catered events, the students are prepared for entry-level positions in the food industry.

Kevin Davies, Founding Partner/Director of Culinary Operations for Iron Hill Brewery and Restaurant, provided keynote remarks. Davies and his team of chefs first met students back in October when the group worked together to prepare food for the Food Bank of Delaware’s annual Blue Jean Ball, presented by Iron Hill.

“This class has so much potential,” he said. “They all can do some really great things in their careers.” Davies also advised students to be dependable, work hard, hustle and do a good job working with others.

“What a great way to start 2015 with our 38th graduating class here at our Newark facility,” said Food Bank of Delaware President and CEO Patricia Beebe. “This has been a great class. I know these 13 students will have much success in the food industry. In the past month I have run into two graduates who now have successful careers at La Fia and the Christiana Hilton. I look forward to running into these students as well.”

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 Delaware Department of Labor, Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and other community-based organizations.

Graduate Seth Alexander says, “The Culinary School changed my life forever.”

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The graduates include:

- Seth Alexander
- Kevin Davis
- Kiante Howard
- LaKeshia Johnson
- Lavenia Johnson
- Christopher Lyles
- Milda Romero-Medina
- MaryAnne Mercadante
- Edna Mincey
- Brandi Pitt
- Tonja Scott
- Reginald Stevens
- Whitney White

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 550 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 provide for 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.