



The Culinary School  
at the Food Bank of Delaware

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Food Bank of Delaware celebrates its 34<sup>th</sup> graduating culinary class**

**Newark, Del.** (October 8, 2013) – The Culinary School at the Food Bank of Delaware celebrated the accomplishments of ten students today at a graduation ceremony at the food bank’s Newark facility.

Guest speaker, State Senator Margaret Rose Henry, described the program as “life changing,” and said, “the students now have the foundation to make their dreams come true because of the Food Bank of Delaware.” She advised students to be a team and continue learning for the rest of their lives.

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.

“Our culinary graduations are some of our most meaningful events we hold here at the Food Bank of Delaware,” said President and CEO Patricia Beebe. “This is what we’re all about – providing adults the opportunity to gain skills that will lead to sustainable employment making a living wage.”

“The students have taught me so much about patience and having fun,” said Wilson. “They have worked so hard to get to today’s graduation, and I am so proud of the accomplishments of all of our students. Already there have been some employment offers for our graduates.”

“I have a background that isn’t good at all,” said Orville Smullen. “No one probably would have thought I’d have this opportunity. With my background and to have a second chance – it’s just awesome.”

In addition to learning hands-on skills in the food bank’s industrial-sized kitchen, the students also worked alongside some of Delaware’s top chefs at the Rehoboth Beach Inspired Chefs Initiative inaugural Taste of Rehoboth event, served more than 200 guests at Evening in the Garden at the University of Delaware and helped chefs from Iron Hill Brewery & Restaurant prepare and serve guests at the food bank’s annual Blue Jean Ball.

Following today’s ceremony, guests were served a lunch prepared by the graduates. The students featured a menu of chicken egg rolls, veal scaloppini, seafood pasta, eggplant parmesan rolls, ratatouille, a two-tiered cake and more.

The mission of The Culinary School is two-fold. First students are taught skills that are highly desirable to employers in the food industry and 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.

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*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](http://www.fbd.org) or call (302) 292-1305.*