



The Culinary School  
at the Food Bank of Delaware

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Food Bank of Delaware celebrates second  
Milford culinary class graduation**

**Milford, Del.** (April 15, 2014) – Six members of The Culinary School at the Food Bank of Delaware celebrated their achievements today during a graduation ceremony for the second class at the Food Bank's new Milford facility.

Guest speaker for the occasion was Chef Jay Caputo, owner of The Jay Caputo Restaurant Group in the Delaware resort region. His restaurants include Espuma in Rehoboth Beach and Rose & Crown in Lewes.

"I'm proud to be associated with the food bank and the culinary program headed by Chef Tim and Brenda," said Caputo. "To know that the students are getting a chance to better their lives through donations, grants, and the support of our community just reiterates the family connection we have here in Delaware."

Under the instruction of Food Bank of Delaware Chef Instructor Tim Hunter and the guidance of Brenda Palomo, Culinary School program manager, the students spent the past 14 weeks developing their skills and passion for the culinary arts. From proper knife handling techniques to Serve Safe certification and completing a two-week internship, the students prepared for entry-level jobs in the food industry.

Chef Hunter was pleased with this class.

"Though this was a small class, each one of the students has a lot of potential. Some of them may need longer than others to embrace their potential, but it's definitely there. Hopefully they will realize it sooner rather than later, because they have a lot to offer," he said.

Food Bank President and CEO Patricia Beebe praised the students and their families. "The successful graduates you see at today's ceremony are supported by a community. They put in the work, but they are encouraged by our staff and members of the food service industry, like Chef Caputo. I have no doubt they will continue to work hard and build upon what they've learned here at The Culinary School," she said.

Michael Cook, the class's honor graduate, was pleased with this educational opportunity.

"The Food Bank of Delaware Culinary School at Milford has been a real blessing to me. I've learned a lot of new techniques, how to use the latest equipment, and gained knowledge of important culinary cornerstones. Just as important to me, is that I've gained a lot of confidence here at school. Chef Tim and Brenda Palomo work very hard at instilling a positive ethos in all the students and I really appreciated that."

In addition to learning hands-on skills in the food bank's industrial-sized kitchen, the students took field trips to food processing plants and urban food markets.

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Following today's ceremony, guests were served a lunch prepared by the new graduates. The menu featured roast leg of lamb with fresh rosemary, meatballs green beans and red-skinned potatoes, roasted vegetables, Greek salad with feta cheese, fresh cannolis and other assorted desserts.

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.

The graduates are: Paula Walston, Uriah Parker, Phillip Kizer, Michael Cook, Kelley McCallum and Ellen Roland.

**Special awardees:**

Culinary Excellence: Michael Cook and Phillip Kizer

Academic Excellence: Michael Cook and Phillip Kizer

Most-Improved: Ellen Roland

Leadership Award: Ellen Roland

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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.*