

ONE GREAT MEAL

A Million New Opportunities



COOKING UP CHANGE®

Students Transforming the Future of School Food

**HEALTHY SCHOOLS
CAMPAIGN**

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Life-Changing Opportunities



In Cooking up Change, Chicago public high school culinary students create a healthy school lunch their friends love. Students learn teamwork and in-demand kitchen skills, gain knowledge of healthy cooking and connect with professional chefs. Perhaps most important, they see the smiles—from their peers, from restaurateurs and from members of Congress—that their meal inspires.

Cooking up Change gives students practical skills and new confidence. For many, it also serves up life-changing opportunities and a powerful new awareness of their own potential.

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Life-Changing Opportunities

SPOTLIGHT: NYAH GRIFFIN

Nearly a decade ago, Nyah Griffin helped lead her team to a first place finish at the first ever Cooking up Change Chicago competition. Her team from the Chicago Vocational Career Academy (CVCA) put together a menu of red beans and rice, smothered cabbage and candied carrots—still the only vegetarian meal to win.

But it's what she's been doing since that big win that really highlights the life-changing abilities of the Cooking up Change program. Nyah returned the following year to help mentor the next team from CVCA, started her own catering company and now serves as the head chef at Mercy House. In 2015, she returned to judge the competition.



Nyah applies the lessons she learned in the Cooking up Change competition on a daily basis. "As a student competing in Cooking up Change, you learn a ton of things," she said. Nyah was recently promoted to the head chef of the culinary department at Mercy House, where she oversees a staff of six people and serves about 350 meals a day.

The meals at Mercy House follow dietary guidelines set by the state, so Nyah has to keep meticulous records of her menus—something she mastered during her time in Cooking up Change.

Nyah also started a catering company right out of high school. In 2014, she took a huge leap and incorporated the business. Since then, she's tripled her revenue.

Nyah's success—and her generosity in sharing her talent with the next generation of Cooking up Change students—exemplifies the power of the competition. We can't wait to hear what's next for Nyah and the many students she mentors and inspires.



RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Step by Step

KEY INGREDIENTS

- Culinary skills developed through CPS's Career and Technical Education Program
- Tight budgets
- Strict nutrition standards
- Ingredients commonly available for school food service
- Basic kitchen equipment
- Teamwork and dedication
- Encouragement and support
- Inspiration from family recipes and favorite foods
- Confidence to take a risk and try something new



SERVING SIZE

Serves healthy, student-designed lunches to 400,000 students across Chicago.

STEPS TO SUCCESS

1. Take on a new challenge.

Students begin developing, testing and perfecting recipes.

2. Work together as a team.

Working together, students finalize their meal and present it to judges at Chicago contest.

3. Make an impact.

Students change school lunch in their own school! The winning team's meal is served to 400,000 students across Chicago Public Schools.

4. Go to Washington.

Winning team travels to Washington, D.C., to compete in the national finals and meet national leaders.

5. Build confidence.

With tight time constraints and in an unfamiliar kitchen, the winning team prepares their meal and delivers a presentation to a panel of prestigious national judges.

6. Celebrate victory.

Winning team celebrates! All students are recognized for their work.

7. Raise your voice.

Winning team presents their meals at a briefing on Capitol Hill and shares their experience with members of Congress.

8. Take your skills to the next challenge.

Students take their new leadership and communication skills beyond the classroom and into the next step of their professional journey.



“Because of Cooking up Change, you get to learn new skills that you may not learn anywhere else.”

CASHAY, STUDENT CHEF

Tilden Career Academy, 2011



10 YEARS
of Cooking up Change

21 Chicago
public high
schools



750+
student
chefs



3,600,000+
student-designed
meals served in CPS



\$192,000 of
scholarships to
Washburne
Culinary Institute



10 YEARS *of Cooking up Change*



"Cooking up Change isn't all about winning. It's a lifestyle that we're working on—it's about being healthier all around."

Carmel, student chef, Prosser Career Academy, 2012

JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION

"Cooking isn't about competing against other people, but competing against yourself. . . You also want [students] to take away the dedication to the craft and something that will give them a long-term future, and be determined to make it happen."

Chef RJ Cooper, Rogue 24, James Beard Award winner and Cooking up Change judge

Southwest®

"What really resonated with me is that [a student I spoke with] learned so much about healthy cooking and she's taken that home to teach her mom."

Patty Greene, Manager of Community Affairs and Grassroots for Southwest Airlines, Cooking up Change Official Travel Partner



"I never knew how much fun cooking could be. Everyone was working hard and working together to make it here."

Marshawn, student chef, Washington High School, 2015



*“From Cooking up Change,
I learned that I love working
in teams and I want to go
into culinary arts.”*

LAKEISHA, STUDENT CHEF

Dunbar Vocational Career Academy, 2010 + 2011



NATIONAL REACH

Building Connections



Cooking up Change started in Chicago in 2007 and has since grown into a national program including 20 cities across the country!

NATIONAL REACH

Media Highlights



The 2015 Chicago competition garnered more than 9.8 million media impressions.

This comprehensive coverage includes TV, print, radio and online stories from both English and Spanish-language media outlets.

Highlights include coverage in the Chicago Tribune on the day the winning meal was served across Chicago Public Schools and a visit to the WGN studios where the students did a cooking demo of their winning meal.

NATIONAL REACH

Notable Judges



- **Karen Duncan**

Former Cooking up Change Honorary Chair, Wife of former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

- **Gale Gand**

Pastry chef, restaurateur, cookbook author and James Beard Award winner

- **Paul Kahan**

Chef and Restaurateur, Avec, Blackbird

- **Carrie Nahabedian**

Executive Chef, NAHA

- **Audrey Rowe**

Administrator for the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

- **Takashi Yagihashi**

Executive Chef, Slurping Turtle

LIFE-CHANGING CONNECTIONS

Building New Networks



Cooking up Change introduces students to a new network of academic, professional and personal connections. For many students, the contest represents the first time adults outside their family or school recognize their skills, applaud their work and encourage them to pursue their chosen field. In some cases, chef mentors and judges may connect students with new professional opportunities.

Cooking up Change connects students with a wide network that includes chef mentors from the local culinary community, elected officials at the local and national levels, food service directors in the students' school districts, and attendees at local and national events.

WHO WE ARE

History of Success



Healthy Schools Campaign (HSC) is dedicated to making schools healthier places where all children can learn and thrive. HSC engages school stakeholders—students, teachers, school nurses, parents and many others—in leadership development and advocates for better access to nutritious school food, physical activity, school health resources and clean air to support children’s lifelong learning and health.

Healthy Schools Campaign launched Cooking up Change in Chicago in 2007 to engage student chefs and the broader community in a dialogue about critical changes needed in our nation’s school meal program. Cooking up Change creates new opportunities for aspiring chefs and spotlights remarkable student talent while bringing attention to the challenges of serving fresh, healthy school meals that students enjoy.

JOIN US

Together, we can re-write the recipe.



For Cooking up Change photos, behind-the-scenes stories, winning recipes and a video spotlight on the life-changing impact of the competition, visit cookingupchange.org/chicago.

To learn more and be part of Cooking up Change, contact Halsey Ward at halsey@healthyschoolscampaign.org or 312-419-1810.



*“This competition gives
us a voice. I want to
keep promoting healthy
lunches at school.”*

MENAJAH, STUDENT CHEF

Harper High School, 2011

