

PRESS RELEASE

October 28, 2015



Media May Contact:

Jeremy Borling, Healthy Schools Campaign

jeremy@healthyschoolscampaign.org

708-446-0225

Tatum Wan

tatum@tatumwanco.com

818-590-1530

Chicago Students Present their Vision for a Healthy Future of School Food at Healthy Schools Campaign's Cooking up Change Competition

*16 High School Culinary Teams Vie for the Opportunity to Have their
Meal Served to their Peers across the Entire CPS District*

Students from 16 Chicago public high schools will compete in Healthy Schools Campaign's Cooking up Change healthy cooking contest on Thursday, October 29, at the Bridgeport Art Center (1200 W. 35th St.) in Chicago. Over 700 guests will sample the student chefs' creations and be on hand when the winning team is announced. Cooking up Change is made possible through a partnership between Healthy Schools Campaign and the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) department of Nutrition Support Services and the Career and Technical Education Culinary Program.

The Cooking up Change contest challenges high school culinary students to create healthy school meals that appeal to their peers while meeting high nutrition standards for school food. The students take on this difficult challenge using commonly available food service ingredients and kitchen equipment, and simple preparation methods so that their meals can be replicated in real school kitchens. They must accomplish all this while adhering to a strict budget of just over \$1 per meal. The winning meal will be served to students across the entire CPS district. Hugely popular among their peers, past Cooking up Change winning meals have been incorporated into the school district's regular menus. Cooking up Change provides a tasty road map for how school districts across the country can create healthful and delicious meals that students will enjoy.

"Through their participation in Cooking up Change, students aren't just learning how to cook, they're gaining a better understanding of nutrition, health and wellness. And it's an opportunity for them to inform the menu. At the end of the day, kids are looking for flavor," said Leslie Fowler, director of nutrition support services at CPS.

Student chefs begin menu planning and preparation at the start of the school year, working side-by-side with their culinary instructors and local chef mentors. Along the way, their meals must stand up to peer taste tests as well as professional nutrition analysis. On the day of the competition, the students present their meals to a panel of judges, including chefs, school food experts, civic and business leaders and fellow students.

Cooking up Change Chicago is the first in a series of 10 competitions that will take place in cities across the country and will culminate with the Cooking up Change National Finals in Washington, D.C., in June. While in Washington, students will present their meals to members

of Congress and will have the opportunity to speak to a national audience about their Cooking up Change experience and the importance of healthy school food.

"Cooking up Change is an important opportunity for students to present their vision for the healthy and delicious meals they'd like to eat in school every day," said Rochelle Davis, president and CEO of Healthy Schools Campaign.

Cooking up Change gives these talented students an important voice in the national dialogue about healthy school food. In addition to sharpening their culinary skills, student competitors develop public speaking, teamwork and problem solving skills that prepare them for future success.

"Cooking up Change is fun and challenging at the same time," said Sara Muñoz, a student chef from Roosevelt High School. "We were given restrictions on what ingredients we can use, so we really had to think outside the box."

2015 Cooking up Change Chicago Participating Schools

Chicago Vocational Career Academy
Clemente Community Academy
Corliss High School
Dunbar Vocational Career Academy
Juarez Community Academy
Manley Community Academy
Marshall Metropolitan High School
North-Grand High School
Prosser Career Academy
Richards Career Academy
Roosevelt High School
Simeon Career Academy
Southside Occupational Academy
Tilden Career Community Academy
Vaughn Occupational High School
Washington High School

Cooking up Change Chicago is supported by Presenting Sponsor [Aramark](#); Patron Sponsor [Aetna](#); Hero Sponsor [Sammons Financial Group](#); Champion Sponsors [School Health](#) and [Whole Foods Market](#); as well as national sponsors: Official Travel Partner [Southwest](#); Official Culinary Partner [James Beard Foundation](#); and Silver Sponsor [American Federation of Teachers](#).

The 2015 Cooking up Change Chicago competition will take place on October 29 at the Bridgeport Art Center (1200 W. 35th St., Chicago) from 6-9 p.m. Tickets (\$100 per person) will be available for purchase at the door.

About Healthy Schools Campaign

Healthy Schools Campaign (HSC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that all children have the opportunity to learn and thrive in a healthy school environment. HSC believes that health and wellness should be incorporated into every aspect of the school experience. Founded in 2002, HSC advocates for children to have better access to nutritious school food, physical activity, school health resources and clean air to shape their lifelong learning and

health. HSC facilitates collaboration between students, parents, teachers, administrators and policymakers to help prepare this diverse group of stakeholders to lead change for healthier schools at the school, district, state and national levels. For more information, go to healthyschoolscampaign.org.

###