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COMMUNITY GUIDE



A LEGACY OF
LEADERSHIP

MAYOR A. KEITH McDONALD

BARTLETT HIGH SCHOOL'S CULINARY PROGRAM IS ^{ON TOP} OF CURRENT LABOR TRENDS

Now is a good time to enter a rapidly growing field

What does the future look like for people wanting to go into the hospitality field? It's a vast industry that not only hires hotel managers, wedding and event planners, and tour guides, but also executive chefs, food and beverage managers, pastry chefs, and others in the culinary arts.



Fortunately, prospects are bright for culinary arts graduates. In a recent report from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics the food and beverage industry is one of the fastest growing segments in the country, with growth outpacing the economy. The employment of chefs and head cooks is projected to grow 25% from 2020 to 2030, which is faster than the average for all other occupations.

This data is music to the ears of Clark Knight, Career and Technical Education Supervisor for Bartlett City Schools. "We've grown from being a simple food service program into a full culinary arts curriculum," says Knight. "And over the years we've seen a lot of growth and interest in this area of education."

Bartlett's program is particularly attractive to students who are drawn to a hospitality career but may not be interested in a four year college degree. They have options. The high school has recently partnered with the University of Memphis and its specialized culinary arts program, and Bartlett students are able to pursue one of several career paths upon graduation.

Students can opt for a certificate in the program, or they can continue with their earned post secondary credits toward either an Associate's or Bachelor's Degree. All three options will allow them entree into a growing and well paid field.

The original program, which was created 25 years ago, was modest. It started with a few classes offering an overview of the industry, as well as food prep, safety and sanitation. By the late 1990s it had developed into a robust curriculum with three levels of study and a full culinary kitchen.

"We now have a schedule with over a hundred students taking classes from our culinary instructor, Pam Diebold," says Knight. "She's a great asset to

industry and the foundational skills necessary to become a banquet chef, food and beverage manager, caterer, or executive chef. Other courses take a deeper dive, ranging from safety and sanitation, kitchen tools and equipment, recipe basics, ingredients, and kitchen staples. Students also learn advanced cooking principles, food presentation, and culinary professionalism. They're additionally coached on the types of business opportunities available to them, specifically related to which educational direction they pursue.

When students complete the culinary arts program, they will have accumulated a bRd. range of knowledge and skills enough to start building a professional portfolio. Knight says he's excited about the quality of the program, and its future. The dual enrollment partnership with the University of Memphis will help professionalize their program even further, and set them apart from other schools.

"Right now there's not a tremendous amount of culinary programs like ours out there at the high school level," states Knight, "but that could certainly change." With the Bureau of Labor Statistics projecting around 19,000 annual openings for chefs and head



BHS students learning the various cuts of poultry with a hands on approach. This and other fundamentals are taught in the culinary program.

our program, and she's injected a lot of passion and enthusiasm into our students taking these classes.

Diebold's curriculum is comprised of Culinary Arts I, II, III and are part of a program of study in Career and Technical Education (CTE) called Hospitality and Tourism. Classroom studies cover a bRd. range of topics including the history of the food services

cooks over the next decade, Bartlett High School's culinary arts program is on top of the labor need and is poised for success. **1**