

press release



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Media Contact

Becky Karlin
LiveWell Colorado
720-353-4128 x214
303-726-7577 (mobile)
beckykarlin@livewellcolorado.org

Denver High School Students Cook Up Change in EatWell@School Cooking Competition

LiveWell Colorado after-school program teaches students how to change their eating behaviors through healthy cooking skills

DENVER, Colo. (Nov. 14, 2012) – LiveWell Colorado, a nonprofit dedicated to preventing obesity through promoting healthy eating and active living, announced today that students from four Denver Public High Schools will compete in the third annual EatWell@School Cooking Competition taking place at the Culinary Labs at Johnson & Wales University at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, November 16.

The competition is part of a unique nine-week after-school program that teaches students basic culinary skills and nutritional education to prepare them for a lifetime of healthy cooking habits. As the culminating event of the program, the competition will challenge students from Martin Luther King Jr. Early College, Bruce Randolph School, Manual High School and KIPP Denver Collegiate High School to create a delicious, nutritious and affordable school lunch that aligns with the USDA's school nutrition guidelines and meets Denver Public Schools' budget of less than a dollar per meal.

"The EatWell@School Cooking Competition is a fun, engaging, and meaningful way to teach young, impressionable students how to prepare healthy meals using fresh, whole ingredients, which is quite different from the fast food teens typically eat," said Maren Stewart, president and CEO of LiveWell Colorado. "Cooking is a basic but important skill that will help them live healthier lives as adults."

For the past nine weeks, culinary students from Johnson & Wales University have served as volunteer mentors to the DPS students in the program. These mentors have instructed the students on a variety of culinary topics including, the intricacies of taste, food safety and sanitation, knife skills, developing a nutritious meal plan, healthy food sourcing and managing a cooking budget.

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“I am thrilled that our volunteer chef mentors are teaching students fundamental cooking and nutrition skills that will last a lifetime,” said Chef Jorge de la Torre, Dean of Culinary Education at Johnson & Wales University. “I look forward to tasting the teams’ healthy – yet delicious – creations and hope they inspire others beyond the program to bring healthy cooking to their communities, schools and homes.”

The meals will be judged by a panel of culinary experts, including Chef Jorge de la Torre, Chef Adam Fisher, Area Supervisor, Denver Public Schools, Food and Nutrition Services, Leigh Jones, local restaurant owner of Jonesy’s, The Bar Car and The Horseshoe Lounge, Paul Tamburello, LiveWell Colorado Board member, and a local celebrity chef. The winning meal will be served at LiveWell Colorado’s [fundraising luncheon](#) on Thursday, December 13 where the students will be recognized for their accomplishment. The winning team will also compete in Washington, D.C. in May 2013 on the national stage at the Cooking Up Change national healthy cooking contest presented by the Healthy Schools Campaign.

“We are very proud of the students for their hard work and dedication throughout this program,” said Stewart. “And we are extremely grateful to our EatWell@School Cooking Competition partners – The Anschutz Foundation, Denver Public Schools and Johnson & Wales University – for making this initiative possible and for helping to drive necessary, sustainable change in our fight against childhood obesity in Colorado.”

The EatWell@School Cooking Competition is just one part of LiveWell Colorado’s larger LiveWell@School Food Initiative, which aims to ensure all children in Colorado have access to and choose healthy food at school by 2022. Launched in 2010 with funding and support from the Colorado Health Foundation and further advanced by a transformational leadership gift in 2012 from Rob Katz, CEO of Vail Resorts, and his wife Elana Amsterdam, the initiative is helping to address Colorado’s growing childhood obesity epidemic.

About LiveWell Colorado

LiveWell Colorado is a nonprofit organization committed to preventing and reducing obesity in Colorado by promoting healthy eating and active living. Leading a comprehensive approach, LiveWell Colorado inspires and advances policy, environmental and lifestyle changes that aim to provide every Coloradan with access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity in the places they live, work, learn and play. LiveWell Colorado’s strategic partners and funders are the Colorado Health Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. For more information about LiveWell Colorado, visit www.livewellcolorado.org. “Like” LiveWell Colorado on [Facebook](#) or “follow” @livewellco on [Twitter](#).

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