

# 2015 Achievement Awards Virginia Association of Counties

## APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2015.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

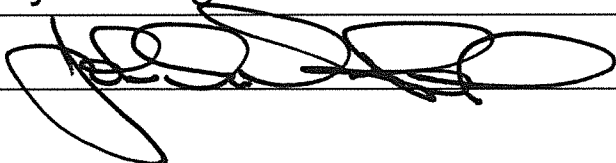
### PROGRAM INFORMATION

Locality: Henrico County  
Program Title: Culinary Experience: Serving Our Campus and Glen Allen Cultural Arts Center  
Program Category: Community and Economic Development

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Mac Beaton  
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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: John A. Vithoukas  
Title: County Manager  
Signature: 

## **Overview/Summary of the Program**

Students cater luncheons and dinners for various school and private functions to enhance their classroom knowledge. Chef Terran Evans of the Academy at Virginia Randolph has built a reputation for high-quality food and professional service resulting in increased opportunities for catering services. The culinary class under Evans' leadership has been in existence for almost a decade.

However, the catering and community outreach programs have changed dramatically over the years. One of those changes was best demonstrated by a project the culinary students undertook: running a restaurant during a local museum fair.

## **Problem or Challenge**

In 2014, the Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen was tapped to host the Richmond, Va.-area museum shoppers fair. During the planning process, center president K Alferio realized that with hundreds of people converging at the center to buy merchandise from area museum gift shops, shoppers would have no food options at lunchtime. In the past a caterer had rented space and provided food, but that service hadn't operated for several years.

Alferio wanted the event to be successful on all fronts including a successful sales weekend for the vendors. With no food options, shoppers might leave the fair to buy lunch. But, with no food provider onsite, how could this problem be addressed?

Alferio reached out to the Career and Technical Education (CTE) department at Henrico County Public Schools to talk about the possibility of a culinary arts class operating the kitchen and restaurant for the two-day event. A planning meeting was scheduled. Present were the director of CTE, the family and consumer sciences educational specialist, principal of the Academy at Virginia Randolph and the culinary arts teacher at the school. By the end of the meeting it was determined that this would be beneficial to the students, the cultural center and the museum shoppers.

**Museum Shoppers Fair:** The Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen offers

Richmond-area residents and visitors a tremendous opportunity to experience the arts, entertain new ideas, develop new talents and experience first-hand the best central Virginia has to offer.

The center was once an historic Henrico County school. Incorporating the unique school setting, the facility opened as The Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen in 1999, offering visual, literary and performing arts. The center presents excellent programming. It also features exhibit space and hosts concerts by nationally known artists, plays and musicals, modern and classic dance performances, shopping, arts education and more. The center has become a popular location for weddings, receptions, meetings, workshops and special events.

Collaboration began over in summer 2014 to discuss the logistics and feasibility of having the culinary students at the Academy at Virginia Randolph run a

restaurant on the weekend of the shoppers fair to provide meals for shoppers visiting the arts center. The shoppers fair occurs each year but the location changes. The arts center has a commercial kitchen and dining area that is not frequently used. The weekend of Nov. 8-9 2014, the students of the Academy at Virginia Randolph had full responsibility for the commercial kitchen and dining room. They named the restaurant, established roles of each student, established menu selection and pricing. The students and instructor surveyed the area to decide the best flow. They determined which students were best qualified to provide customer service to include small talk with guests, including making menu suggestions. The students made fresh panini, salads and various soups and combos. The students took inventory of items sold on day one. They used this to estimate and determine purchases needed to operate the business on day two.

The event brought in shoppers who are members and friends of a variety of Richmond-area museums:

- Agecroft Hall
- American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar
- Beth Ahabah Museum and Archives
- Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens
- Preservation Virginia
- Richmond Railway Museum

- Science Museum of Virginia
- The Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen
- The Edgar Allan Poe Museum
- The Virginia Shops at the Library of Virginia and the Virginia State Capitol
- Virginia Historical Society
- Virginia Holocaust Museum
- Virginia War Memorial

The Academy at Virginia Randolph culinary arts program is a two-year program in the family and consumer sciences division of the Career and Technical Education Department of Henrico County Public Schools. The program prepares students for careers as culinary professionals, or prepares them to enter post-secondary education to become chefs. Major emphasis is placed on the planning, preparing, processing and presentation of foods using a variety of cooking methods and emerging culinary technologies. First-year students are able to finish the year with the ServSafe Food Handlers certification, while second-year students would be eligible to take the industry assessment; they can earn the ServSafe Manager certification upon passing.

Instructor Terran Evans entered education as a career switcher. He worked for the U.S. Postal Service and decided to enter culinary arts school at Johnson & Wales University. Evans landed his first culinary position at the Country Club of

Virginia. In 2006, Evans began his teaching position at the Academy at the Virginia Randolph in the food occupations department. Evans serves approximately 30 students each year.

With the support of the school's principal and Mac Beaton, director of CTE, and of various others, the school transformed the residential kitchen and classroom into a commercial facility. With this change, the Academy at Virginia Randolph is better equipped to give students a real-world experience in a professional setting.

The program has several objectives: 1. to provide students with real-world experience in culinary arts; 2. to provide reasonably priced, high-quality cuisine to internal and external constituents, 3) to provide avenues for student to demonstrate their culinary skills to community members; 4. to generate funds which go back into the program to enhance student learning; and 5. to provide community connections wherein businesses and organizations can give back to the school system and help students gain valuable experience.

The program had the support of the Henrico County Public Schools Department of Career and Technical Education and the principal of the Academy at Virginia Randolph. Behind the scenes is a support network of school counselors, technical center administrators, central office administrators, as well as a host of other support personnel. They also help secure equipment, textbooks, professional development opportunities, funding management help and curriculum resources to ensure a solid learning foundation.

The Career and Technical Education Advisory Council and the Culinary Arts Advisory Council, comprised of business and industry leaders, serve as program partners. The function of the councils is to advise and assist in program planning, not to establish or direct policy. Advisory council members assist students by providing such things as current occupational information; placement assistance; recommendations based on interpretation of new developments in the occupation; and expanded public relations. Partners often serve as speakers for student organizations, career days and other activities, and they may represent the department at conferences or other event.

Other partners include constituents who use the catering services provided by the Academy at Virginia Randolph culinary arts class. These partners supply the necessary business to supplement program funding and allow students to practice real-world skills.

### **Response to Economic Downturn**

The economic downturn has also produced some rewards. All organizations and businesses are looking for ways to spend decreasing budget dollars in the wisest ways possible. The Academy at Virginia Randolph culinary program provides an alternative to higher-priced catering businesses. This ability to offer reasonably priced food made the academy's culinary program an attractive option for filling the void at the museum shoppers fair.

Additionally, the real-world catering experience gained by culinary students at the museum fair gives them an advantage when entering the competitive job market. Students who list these kind of real-world experiences on job applications, resumes, and post-secondary applications will have an advantage over applicants who have not had these experiences.

### **Use of Technology**

Communication with patrons is conducted via email with digital documentation. Food orders are procured online through the food service wholesaler's website. Students use technology in the classroom to research recipes and restaurant menus for event menu planning and conduct mathematical calculations to increase or reduce recipes depending on the size of the event.

The culinary arts program information, brochure and student photos may also be viewed at the HCPS Family and Consumer Sciences department website and the Academy of Virginia Randolph website.

### **Cost of the Program**

Facility operating costs are covered under the Academy at Virginia Randolph operational budget. This includes the costs of utilities as well as building and grounds maintenance. Faculty and staff salaries are paid by HCPS and vary according to the education and experience of the faculty or staff member. These figures are determined by the salary schedule as outlined by the school system.



CTE departmental funds are used to purchase equipment, consumable supplies and travel expenses incurred by staff members for professional development.

Federal Perkins funding is allocated to purchase state-approved equipment for the program. There was not a charge for using the facilities of the Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen.

Catered event expenses are paid by the client. A budget is set based on the size of the event and selected menu items. The client is billed a small markup over the costs of food, supplies and transporting students (a bus driver's fee). This ensures that funds are put back into the program to enhance the student experience. Clients are aware that the price of the event includes enough food for guests as well as enough to feed the volunteering students after the event. The program instructor works with each client to ensure a satisfactory and equitable bottom line.

### **Results**

The culinary arts program's increase in catering requests can be attributed to positive customer feedback and word of mouth from satisfied patrons. Satisfied guests at the shoppers fair have been very complimentary of the work and professionalism displayed by the students of the Academy of Virginia Randolph's culinary arts program.

These real-world opportunities are valuable for preparing our students for success in future culinary endeavors. The students feel successful and it helps to

fortify their self-confidence. As a result from this partnership, the cultural arts center has requested that our students to cater other events. The Academy at Virginia Randolph students were not able to commit to the most recent request, but another Henrico County school was able to cater the event. The initial shoppers fair partnership has created opportunities for Henrico County culinary arts students at various schools. Students are using skills learned in the classroom and applying them to real-life situations with patrons.

The Academy at Virginia Randolph culinary arts program is a unique and innovative program that has enhanced learning for students, provided a needed service to Henrico County and the Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen. The reasonably priced, high-quality lunch options provided a cost-effective solution to the shared concern of diminishing budgets. County agencies work together to conserve tax dollars and put funds back into the school system.

Nongovernmental organizations see the value in this educational program.

Partnerships formed with local industry professional are instrumental in developing a solid program. These same organizations are supportive of the Academy at Virginia Randolph culinary program because we are training future workers in the industry to meet growing needs. Without a doubt, the Academy at Virginia Randolph Culinary Arts program and the Glen Allen Cultural Arts Center collaboration was a big success.

It opened the eyes of students who may not have ever set foot inside the cultural arts center located just a couple of miles down the road. It gave them the experience of communicating with citizens with whom they would not have come in contact. It allowed them to see beyond their current personal, family, financial or academic struggles and to see there are opportunities beyond what they encounter in their daily lives.

The Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen now has a professional, low-cost catering option for the many events held there. This epitomizes what education is about: the schools and the community joining together benefit all stakeholders, especially our future professionals in the industry.

**Program Category:** Community and Economic Development

**Submitted By:** Mac Beaton, director of career and technical education

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