



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**TOP AREA CHEFS HELP PREPARE FAIRFAX COUNTY HIGH SCHOOLS' CULINARY ARTS TEAMS  
FOR FEEDING ACADEMIC SUCCESS CULINARY CHALLENGE**

Real Food for Kids is sponsoring its second annual Feeding Academic Success Culinary Challenge at 4:00 p.m. on March 13 at Falls Church High School in Falls Church, VA .

Teams of four students from five of the seven culinary academies and culinary programs in Fairfax County high schools -- Edison, Annandale, Chantilly, Falls Church and Marshall -- are competing with vegetarian/vegan entrées that can be adapted for use in the FCPS lunch program.

“Our Feeding Academic Success Culinary Challenge is to showcase the talents and creativity of our culinary students and to demonstrate the important role all students can play to help improve the quality and appeal of meals served in Fairfax County schools,” says JoAnne Hammermaster, executive director of Real Food for Kids.

To help prepare the students for the competition and give them a broader view of vegetarian cooking, Joseph Comfort executive chef, Lebanese Taverna Group; K.N. Vinod executive chef/co-owner Indique and Indique Heights; Janet Yu, executive chef/owner, Hollywood East; Todd Gray, executive chef/owner Equinox and Watershed, and Pati Jinich of Pati’s Mexican Table on public TV, will do Google Hangout cooking demos from their kitchens to the teams’ classrooms on February 25 to 28. These demos will focus on the chefs’ respective cuisines and will introduce students to a variety of techniques and ingredient combinations and some culinary history. The goal is that the information that the chefs share may help the students create their teams’ vegetarian dishes with more authority. The chefs’ cuisines reflect the diversity of the Fairfax County population.

Chefs Comfort, Vinod and Yu, will also judge the event along with Lt.Gen. Douglas Robb, Director of the Defense Health Agency for the Department of Defense, Alexandra Greeley, food writer and formerly, *Vegetarian Times* editor and Whole Foods’ Healthy Food Specialist, Jasmine Simon. The dishes will be evaluated for taste, visual presentation and nutrition, among other qualities.

Every competing team member will receive:

- A Victorinox chef’s knife as a gift from Swiss Army
- A Wüsthof paring knife

In addition, the prizes for the winning team are:

- A Victorinox Chef’s knife, boning knife and paring knife
- A Wüsthof Chef’s Knife
- A five-day *stage*, or internship, for each team member at one of the following restaurants:  
Willow, Arlington, VA, Chefs/owners: Kate Jansen (pastry) and Tracy O’Grady (savory)

- Nora's, Chef/owner: Nora Pouillon

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- Bastille, Alexandria, VA, Chef/owners: Michelle (pastry) and Christophe Poteaux (savory)
- Ris', Washington, D.C., Chef/owner: Ris LaCoste (savory), and executive pastry chef Bev Bates
- A tour of L'Academie de Cuisine, among the top ten culinary schools in the country, and lunch with L'Academie students followed by a meeting with Francois Dionot, director of L'Academie de Cuisine.

**About Real Food For Kids**

As the local face of the national school wellness movement, Real Food For Kids is committed to working collaboratively to increase the quantities of healthy foods in Fairfax County Public Schools and supporting programs that educate students and their families to make healthier lifestyle choices. Real Food For Kids has successfully advocated for an independent assessment of the current food program, aiming to find innovative ways to bring more fresh, less processed foods to students. It also has spearheaded the move to a soda-free school pilot in eight middle and high school that launched in fall 2013 and a pilot kitchen at George C. Marshall High School that opened in September 2013. More information on Real Food for Kids is available at [www.realfoodforkids.org](http://www.realfoodforkids.org)

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