

PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND JOBS FOR DISTRICT RESIDENTS

RAMWEF is the 501c3 foundation of the Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington (RAMW), a trade association representing over 500 restaurants and food service industry professionals in the District of Columbia and Northern Virginia.

We are a foundation committed to promoting unlimited opportunities in the hospitality industry – restaurants, hotels, and tourism – while advocating the art of foodservice. Through our partnership with District of Columbia Public Schools’ (DCPS) Career and Technology Education (CTE) program, we are dedicated to developing and facilitating a nationally-recognized, accredited certification program for DCPS high school students.

By focusing on academics and skills-building, RAMWEF and DCPS CTE formed a memorandum of understanding (MOU), choosing to implement ProStart initiatives in three (3) schools (Ballou, MM Washington, and Roosevelt). We also introduced LMP (Lodging Management Program) into two (2) schools (Roosevelt and Woodson).

ProStart, offered through the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation (NRAEF), is a nationally and industry recognized, academic-based curriculum promoting skills development with emphasis on reading and mathematics in relation to the hospitality industry. At present, there are more than 52,000 students enrolled in the ProStart program nationwide.

Similarly, LMP is a nationally and industry recognized, academic-based curriculum developed through the American Hotel and Lodging Association Education Institute (EI-AHLA), in conjunction with the Hotel Association of Washington, DC. At present, there are 22,000 students enrolled in the LMP program nationwide.

To supplement these programs, we have joined forces with local businesses and industry stakeholders to give students the opportunity to earn college credit and “real world” experience through internship and mentoring opportunities, workforce education, and other professional enterprises.

RAMWEF assisted DCPS CTE in designing its program curriculum and continues to advise, keeping in mind the social, economic, and community benefits of the programs’ success. We are taking a proactive stance in their future of our students by giving them tools for a well-balanced academic career.

Our programs allow for culinary workshops and field trips. They have the opportunity to visit area colleges with focus in hospitality training. One of the most exciting parts of our program involves challenging the students to participate in two (2) national culinary competitions: ProStart and SkillsUSA. This year RAMWEF sponsored a team from Ballou HS that participated in Charlotte NC in the National ProStart Student Invitational and the National Skills USA competition in Kansas City, MS.

Through cooperation with the NRAEF and EI-AHLA, RAMWEF also provides DCPS CTE teachers development and certification programs, bi-monthly workshops, externships, and grants and scholarships. **Additionally, we are pursuing other initiatives such as culinary facility installations, renovations and upgrades at Roosevelt, Ballou, and MM Washington High Schools, recruitment, fundraising, college fairs and financial aid planning, special events, and guest lectures.**

Our commitment to academics is crucial to achieving a successful transition from high school CTE graduate to post-secondary student. This pledge earned us a *Partnership of the Year* award from DCPS and Fairfax (VA) County Public Schools. Our priorities lie in sustaining programs with strong academic bases and industry-recognized certification including NRAEF's ServSafe Food Safety Management certification, ProStart's Certificate of Achievement, and LMP Certificate of Achievement.

RAMWEF's Purpose:

- To assist in promoting understanding and support of professional technical studies within the business community and the public.
- To assist the CTE administration in determining the needs of the community through courses in hospitality and tourism career and technical education.
- To advise the CTE administration regarding the adequacy of resources being applied toward existing programs and initiatives.
- To assist the CTE administration in correlating programs in hospitality career and technical education with programs and services of other associated industry stakeholders.
- To assist in the identification of long-term, measurable goals.

Identifying how RAMWEF's Partnership with DCPS Benefits the DC Community:

- CTE reviews the needs of all stakeholders involved in the development of these programs. This includes not only the students and schools, but also local businesses and community members by building mutually beneficial partnerships.
- The process of gathering community-related information, reviewing this information and initiating procedures to improve the situation helps to realize these needs.
- Student internship and mentoring opportunities with local restaurateurs result in shaping them for future employment in the DC hospitality industry and contribute to a better prepared, well-rounded workforce.
 - Last year, 80 students participated in our summer internship program, working with local businesses and organizations, including Friends of the National Zoo (FONZ), Clyde's Restaurant Group and the Folk Life Festival.
 - Groundhog Job Shadow Day is a nationally-recognized annual event pairing local hospitality-based businesses with students in work-based, learning environments. The objective is to expose them to the industry and begin preparing them to become productive members of the community.
- Students enrolled in Culinary CTE program are enrolled or have completed internships / Bridges summer work program with local hospitality-related businesses, including:
 - Clyde's Restaurant Group (Clyde's, Old Ebbitt Grill, 1789 Restaurant, B. Smith's, Oya etc.)
 - Star Restaurant Group
 - Sodexo USA
 - Guest Services, Inc.
 - FONZ (Friends of the National Zoo)
 - Georgia Brown's
 - McCormick & Schmick's
 - OYA Restaurant
 - The Vault Café
 - Cosi
 - Marriott Metro Center
 - Centerplate NBSE
 - American Express
 - B. Smith's
 - DC Convention Center

Scholarships:

Though articulation agreements with nationally-accredited post-secondary educational institutions, and partnerships with industry stakeholders, ProStart, and LMP, several scholarships will be available to graduating seniors at some of our country's top hospitality colleges and universities, including:

- Culinary Institute of America
- Johnson and Wales University
- Kendall College
- Le Gordon Bleu Culinary USA
- New England Culinary Institute
- Pen State University
- University of Houston
- University of Delaware
- University of Maryland, Eastern Shore
- Morgan State University
- Howard University
- University of the District of Columbia
- Art Institute of Washington
- Stratford University
- Northern Virginia Community College
- Anne Arundel Community College
- Montgomery County Community College

The work we do is vitally important to DC residents and in particular, those who will be joining the DC workforce in the coming years. We believe by taking an active role, our students will have the skills, preparedness, and confidence to pursue post-secondary education and/or enter the workforce. The students will one day contribute to our city's success, while earning respect in the ever-expanding hospitality industry. We will always measure our success through their achievements and hope that our vision will lead them to a rewarding career.

Submitted by: Frans J. Hagen, Program Director