



THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

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Wednesday, October 25, 2000

Clackamas Community College

Oregon City, Oregon

Volume XXXIV, Issue 3

Class teaches students to be kitchen friendly

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Staff Writer

Cooking and eating were part of the assignment for Clackamas' Young Parent Opportunity Program (YPOP) during cooking and nutrition classes taught last week at the Beavercreek Grange by local volunteer chefs and Operation Front Line, an anti-hunger organization.

Nine students came to gain new skills in cooking and nutrition and to sample foods they may never have tried before. The chefs began class with appetizers like sliced celery root, slices of fresh fennel, juicy star fruits and fresh figs. Students tasted cautiously at first but decided the edibles were surprisingly good.

While YPOP students snacked, chef Heather Scheer, of Sheridan's produce market, demonstrated how to make homemade, preservative-free baby food. All of the students are pregnant or already have a child and buy baby food from the store.

"One 75 cent squash makes about 12 servings of baby food," Scheer said. "In the stores this could cost you 39 to 59 cents a serving. (Making it at home) you're not only saving money, but you're feeding your baby healthier food."

YPOP student Veronica Partida

liked this part of the class.

"I like it because they teach us good foods to feed our children and how to save money," she remarked.

After the baby food demonstration, students went to cooking stations for hands-on experience preparing the recipe of the day, Teriyaki Stir-Fry. The kitchen was soon filled with the sounds and smells of cooking as Teriyaki sauce simmered, and spaghetti pasta was sizzled into crispy Chinese noodles. Students chopped vegetables

The chefs are actually cool and really make cooking fun.

Anne Liebo
YPOP STUDENT

and learned helpful hints like burning a candle while chopping onions, to absorb eye-watering juices.

"We want these girls to know that cooking doesn't have to be drudgery or boring or one more thing they have to do," said Flora Sussely, coordinator for Operation Front Line, "but (that) it can be creative, artistic, fun and sometimes even funny."

YPOP student Anne Liebo was having fun.

"The chefs are actually cool and really make cooking fun," she commented.

The goal of the volunteer chefs and Operation Front Line is to

teach healthy lifestyles and inexpensive home cooking as an alternative to expensive fast food. According to Sussely, they give their time and talent because of a personal interest in helping young people. Many times they use husband/wife or mother/daughter teams to model healthy relationships, which are often lacking for the YPOP students who therefore don't know how to begin with their own children.

"In past generations and other cultures, cooking was the fun part, the part that nurtured the family," explained Chef Linette True, of Delila's Catering.

By the end of class, the students presented an attractive gourmet meal they could be proud of. While they ate, instructors continued the class with lessons on nutrition, teaching the girls how to read nutrition labels and the meaning of additives like monosodium glutamate.

Before leaving, each student received a bag of groceries and the recipe she had prepared, as well as a list of ingredients needed to make the stir-fry at home. Sussely explained these gifts were generously provided by the chefs and



AMANDA GOSSER / Clackamas Print

Heather Scheer, chef from Sheridan's Produce Market, center, shows YPOP students, including Sara Houston, right, how to make homemade baby food.

Operation Front Line, as one more way to help the girls' learning experience become a practical skill too.

"We want to send these girls out kitchen friendly," she added.

Cooking and nutrition classes are just one part of the YPOP program at Clackamas. As an alternative education program offered to teen parents aged 15-21, it provides students the opportunity to continue their education, prepare for employment, and enhance parenting skills.

"If it wasn't for this program (YPOP), I would have never gone back to school," said student

Rachel Morgan. "We work at our own pace and it applies to our life right now."

According to YPOP Instructor Toni Krummenacker, the program offers students who didn't fit into the traditional school setting an alternative program to graduate and find success both as a young parent and as an individual.

Krummenacker stated the cooking classes would continue for YPOP students on Wednesdays for the next three weeks.

"If Martha Stewart observed our cooking class," she added, "she would say, 'This is a good thing!'"

Domestic violence affects men, women, children

JENNY CHAVEZ
Staff Writer

Clackamas' Criminal Justice Club has joined national efforts to remind the public that October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month by posting signs to inform students of hot line numbers they can call for help.

The month-long focus was designed by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) to connect those across the nation working to end domestic violence.

NCADV statistics show that men batter four million intimate partners every year. Six to 10 women are killed by a boyfriend or husband every day. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women and is the reason for one-third of all emergency room visits. In Multnomah County, 2 percent of all violent crimes are domestic violence. Numbers could be higher because data is based

only on reports from police and emergency shelters.

Advocates have worked hard to push for stricter laws against violent offenders. Nevertheless, continued high statistics of violent crimes against women indicate public awareness of violence by an intimate partner still needs to be addressed, according to the NCADV.

There are multiple causes of domestic violence, one being historical prejudices towards women. Until the twentieth century, society considered abuse as acceptable control of a wife. A common saying was, "Thou shalt not beat thy wife with a rod thicker than thy thumb." (Hence, the saying "rule of thumb.")

A court finally ruled: "While the husband was still obliged to teach the wife her duty and subjection, he could no longer claim the privilege to beat her with a stick, to pull her hair, choke her, spit in her face or kick her about the floor, or to inflict upon her other like indignities."

Reasons women don't leave a

violent situation sooner include the fear of greater harm for leaving than staying. According to NCADV, 75 percent of victims are more likely to experience severe injury or death when they try to leave. Women also remain in a dangerous situation for lack of shelter. There are not enough shelters to house all the women and children displaced by domestic violence. Low self-esteem, religious conviction, fear and lack of money all further contribute to women staying in danger.

There are many reasons men batter. Whether it is a power factor, or inability to control anger or learned behavior, it is still an act of choice and can be unlearned, believe battered women's advocates. Treatment programs are offered to offenders in lieu of prosecution. Batterer intervention programs exist in many communities, and sociologists insist society can make a big difference by standing up to violence and the offender.

In 1978, the Oregon Legislature passed the Family Abuse Prevention Act that made domestic violence a crime and decreed arrests would be made if there were a 50 percent certainty that bodily harm had been inflicted. This was one step towards reconciling past discriminations and changing society's views.

Current legislation, The Violence Against Women Act, bolsters prosecution for domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse, and increases resources for victim services and law enforcement. The act runs out in 2000 and needs to pass again in a Reauthorization Bill to provide another five years of enforcement. This and other legal efforts have helped reduce violent crimes against women. Crimes against women have been reduced from 1.1 million in 1993 to 876,340 in 1998.

Men are also victims of violence and account for 160,000 cases a year.

There are still holes in the laws. Domestic violence is a misde-

meanor unless a weapon is used. The crime's maximum sentence is one year in jail, and this is usually lessened if the offender enters a treatment program. Harsher penalties need to be in place.

The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic Violence (OCADV) is an umbrella organization for shelters and crisis hotlines throughout the state. The council consists of social and legal services to respond to domestic violence. Because only 10 percent of women's requests for help can be served, a push for more shelters, more prosecution and increased public awareness are OCADV's goals.

In the meantime, there are hotlines. The YWCA Women's Resource Center has emergency shelter and counseling available and may be reached at (503) 294-7444; Clackamas Women's Services, at (503) 654-2288. Offenders may call to get help too. A batterer's re-education program is offered by the Men's Resource Center at (503) 235-3433.