

More than a baker's dozen

Grassroot News N.W. - There are many non-traditional jobs where the common stereotype negates the complexity involved. A baker is included in this misconception but the life of Alexandar Hall, Jr., as a baker really breaks the mold. His career as a baker is truly remarkable. He rose from a bricklayer to become a well known professional and one of the Pacific Northwest's foremost bakers.

He started out as a clean-up man for a bakery owned by a partnership. One of the owners suggested that they train Hall to assist in the day to day functions of the bakery. Soon afterwards, the partnership dissolved and he stepped into the shoes of the baker. "This was my big break to run the place alone. The fellow who was teaching me never showed me all the formulas but each night I would take little by little of what went in each item. I would jot this down and soon I was completing formulas. I kept the place going until a fire destroyed it. At that time, I received four offers from baker's because in the early 60s there were very few Jewish bakers and my basic products were Kosher pastries - Your Challah, Egg breads, Applestroudles and bagels. These were all new to the Portland area in commercial bakeries."

Realizing the additional knowledge needed to become a baker producing a specialized product, he went to California and worked for six weeks free. He worked at another bakery for three years prior to going to Rose's in Portland.

"I was introduced to Rose before she sold her business. She had heard of this Black baker and had seen my merchandise and liked it. She told my wife if she had met me a year earlier she would have never sold.

I accepted the job and helped the business to expand from a restaurant to a full-time bakery. I developed my own formulas for Russian Bread in addition to what Rose had. I also created the fruit and cheese strip, along with the coconut haystack." It wasn't until Mr. Hall developed these items six years ago, that other bakeries put these pastries aside as commercial items.

A baker is an unique professional as Mr. Hall explained. "On most jobs, you can take your work home with you, or defer your work until morning, and even take a coffee break. A baker can't do that. You have to produce at all times and be a good thinker. You're mixing something over here, you also have something else in the oven and in your mind, your're preparing the item you will fix three hours from now, and you must remember that so many ingredients are perishable, so you must watch everything.

"A baker must want to be a baker and put his all into it. Our main purpose in life is to live and make the best of it we can. I know people who mow lawns and are junkmen but they are doing something they like. Remember, there are doctors and lawyers down on Burnside."

"Bakery is one profession where you can take all the credit for your work."

Mr. Hall feels that there is always a demand for good bakers. "I don't mean someone who comes in and says they're a baker, but someone who can follow instructions and formulas will always be able to find a job." According to Hall, a baker is not limited to the kitchen. Careers include purchasing, demonstrating new products and baking chemistry. Hall is also a successful property owner and a solid member of Sharon Seventh Day Adventist Church.



Alexander Paul, Jr., readies pastries for the oven.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Decision making workshop scheduled

Decision making will be the focus of a one-day Portland Community College Careers workshop Saturday, July 25, from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., at the PCC Sylvania campus, 12000 S. W. 49th Ave.

Catherine Sills, PCC careers counselor, will teach techniques on how to come to decisions regarding

home, family, education and careers.

Tuition is \$17.50 for the one credit workshop which can also be audited or taken for pass-fail.

For registration information call the PCC Sylvania Careers department at 244-6111.

Veteran's seminar

A veterans Employment Seminar sponsored by the National Alliance of Business will be held on Friday, August 7th from 1:30 to 4:30 pm at the Public Service Building, 2nd Floor Auditorium, at 920 S. W. 6th Ave.

Dress for success

Dressing for success gives every indication of becoming an increasingly important part of the business world in the 1980's.

The move toward higher standards of grooming does not necessarily mean a return to traditional or formal dress, according to Jack I. Copeland, President of National Educational Media, Inc., (NEM). "Our contacts with business communities everywhere suggest that increasing amounts of business will be conducted in informal attire," he says. Copeland's firm makes and distributes a wide range of training films in America and more than 100 countries abroad.

"Your Personal Appearance," a 10-minute color film, emphasizes the fact that it is in the first seconds of contact that customers or business associates gain their impression of the company and people with whom they are about to do business.

"Personal Grooming and Hygiene," is an 11-minute color film which NEM says provide men and women with concise but detailed suggestions for developing basic routines.

Information on the films and supplemental materials can be obtained by writing National Educational Media, Inc., 15760 Ventura Boulevard, Encino, California, 91436, or by calling (800) 423-3050.

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