

Fork in the road?

Food Week in Bend and Grand Ronde a recipe for future culinary careers

By Ron Karten

Smoke Signals staff writer

When the week began, Tribal member Anna Jeffers already knew that she wanted to be a pastry chef.

Jeffers, 15, was one of seven middle and high school students who participated in an Education Division-sponsored week of culinary experiences held July 20-24.

The program took students as far as the Cascade Culinary Institute in Bend and as close as the Elders' Activity Center kitchen on the main Tribal campus.

"My favorite part was making whipped cream by hand," Jeffers said.

Tribal member Waylon Curl, 14, also started the week dedicated to a culinary life.

"I love cooking," Curl said. "I bake. I fry. And I do exotic cooking, too." He counted Thai and Chinese dishes among the exotics.

Tribal member Rebecca Furtado, 11, like Jeffers and Curl, came to the program with rich cooking experiences at home.

"I do cooking with my mom (Tribal member Melissa Furtado)," she said. "I like to bake."

For Molly Matthews, Youth Education K-12 Program manager, "The biggest surprise is how open chefs have been to us." The group had just returned from the kitchen of Orchards Bistro in McMinnville.

"These were hands-on experiences," Matthews said, "and most kids learn best by hands-on work."

Matthews grew up helping in the family restaurant, Pirate's Cove just north of Garibaldi on the Oregon coast.

"It's great money for working a short period of time," she said, but because it usually involves evenings, it becomes a difficult occupation when you have a family.

In Bend, at the Cascades Culinary Institute on the Central Oregon Community College campus, the state's first accredited culinary



Photo by Ron Karten

From left, Mary Johnson (Siletz), and Tribal members Cody Haller, Anna Jeffers, Rebecca Furtado (partially hidden) and Jorden George make a toast at Anthony's Restaurant in Bend. The students learned how attractively presented dishes actually enhance the taste of food as well as the benefits of an open kitchen (in the background).

institute, students visited a dorm room as part of the experience, designed to show a little about what a culinary college career might have in store for them.

Program Director Julian Darwin, a certified executive chef and certified hospitality educator, introduced the program, and explained why squid is called calamari when it is served as food.

"Does squid sound like something you want to eat?" he asked.

Same with aioli. "It's mayonnaise," he said, "but would you go out to a restaurant to get mayonnaise?"

Darwin presented students with a realistic look into culinary school.

He said that the \$12,000 annual price tag of a culinary education in Bend was about a quarter of the cost of a similar education in Portland and elsewhere. The high cost of these institutions, he said, pays for food, which once prepared has to be replaced. Books used to prepare students for other occupa-

tions, for example, are used again and again.

He said that salaries offered for culinary jobs really depend on "what you ask for." Two of his students obtained jobs doing the same thing in the same restaurant and one was paid \$10 an hour and the second \$12.

"It depends on each individual," Darwin said. "You have to ask for what you want. Everybody's a free agent in the restaurant business."

Darwin recommended the group visit a local restaurant, Anthony's, not only for its exciting dishes, but for the way the food is presented, and, maybe most of all, for its open kitchen.

Waiter Mitchell Howard took the Grand Ronde students on a tour of the kitchen, one of many such tours the students enjoyed during the week.

"It was a really big kitchen," said Tribal member Cody Haller, 13. "What I liked was how the kitchen

was so clean and how the workers all got along."

Haller said she was even more impressed by the casino kitchen, when the group toured there.

"As the week rolled out," said Trinity Minahan, Academic adviser in the Tribe's Education Division and chaperone and co-coordinator for the campus visit to the Culinary Institute, "I saw the interest and enthusiasm that the youth participants expressed. They were definitely enjoying themselves, engaged and learning real culinary skills that will help them if they enter into that career or just personally."

At the beginning of the week, students researched a dish that they would make for week's end.

Haller was cutting strawberries on Thursday afternoon in the Elder's Activity Center kitchen for a mixed berry trifle with pastry cream.

Mary Johnson (Chinook), 13, was preparing an Italian breakfast fritatta with green onions, provolone and orzo.

Tribal member Jorden George, 15, had Cincinnati chili on noodles working. Curl pressed out the dough for his pizza Bianca with garlic and rosemary.

"There's no tomato sauce," he said. "It's a white pizza."

"Oven door open!" cried Tribal member and Food Services coordinator Kristy DeLoe. With everybody's attention, she reached into a large water-filled bowl holding wire whisks, and pulled out a knife.

"Please, no knives in with the wire whisks," DeLoe cautioned. "Last week, somebody cut themselves reaching in for a whisk."

Furtado ticked off a list of things she learned during the week: "Clean up your area; don't use the same cutting board for meat and vegetables; and I learned how to hold a knife."

"Put your napkins on your laps," Matthews told the group at Anthony's. "Table manners are part of the experience."

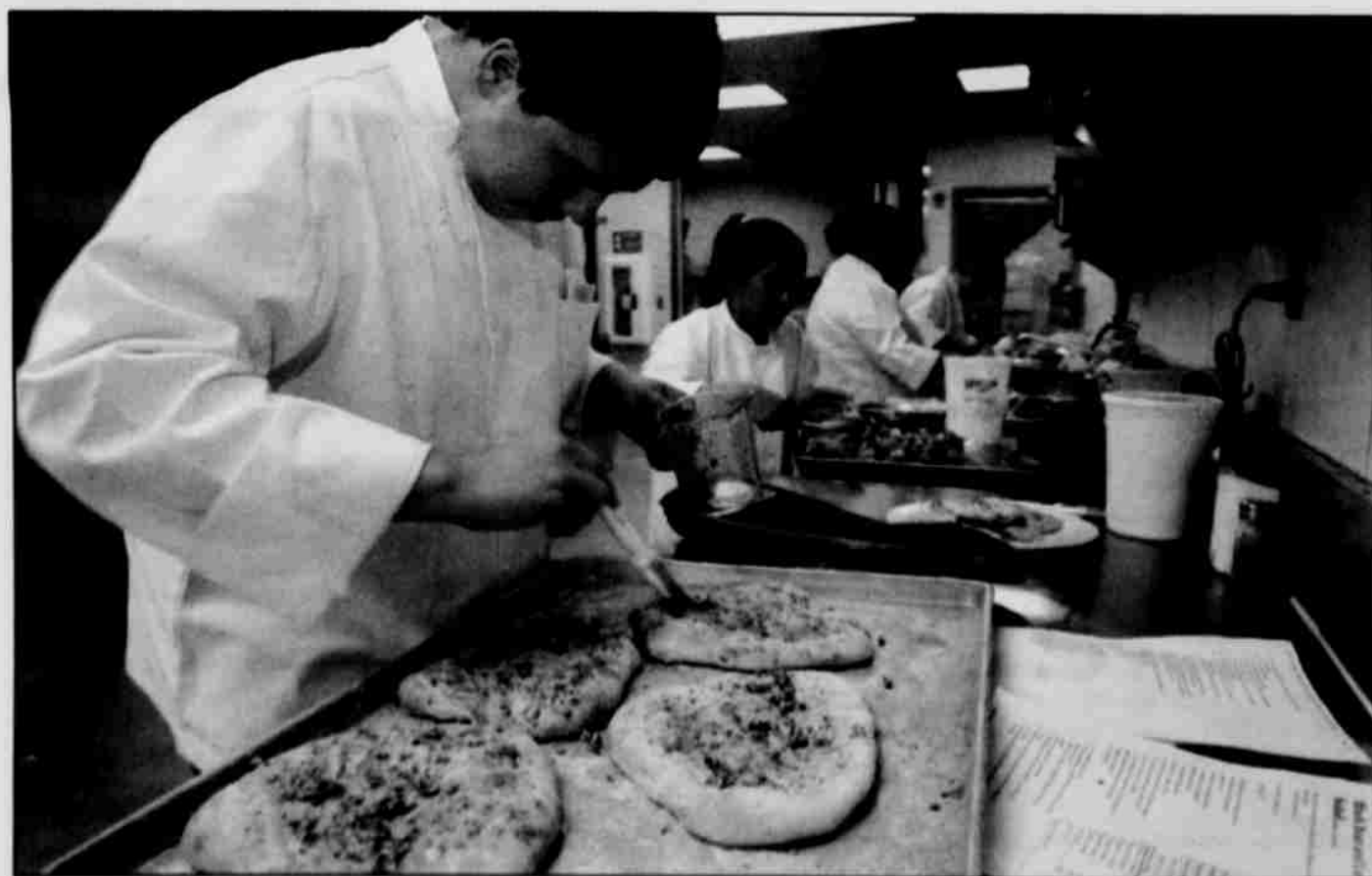
"Most cooking terms are French," Matthews told the group at another point.

Before this week, Johnson had thought she might pursue a career in medicine. As the week wore on, she started to reconsider.

"I'm up in the air now between cooking and anesthesiology," she said.

Education is important in the culinary world, Darwin said, but not necessarily book smarts.

"I love students with Cs," he said. "It's a funny thing about a culinary education. Sometimes people who are really good at books can't cook." ■



Tribal member Waylon Curl brushes an oil, rosemary and garlic mixture on the white pizza he made during the Culinary Arts & Cooking Camp on Thursday, July 23. The three-day camp was offered by Youth Education and on the last day the students made a recipe of their choice in the Elders' Activity Center kitchen.

Photo by Michelle Alaimo