



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CULINARY GRADS FIND JOBS THROUGH INNOVATIVE WORK EXPERIENCE

Orlando, FL – John Erickson graduated from Second Harvest’s Culinary Training Program and landed a job at Panera Bread. The program was Erickson’s ticket to earning a certification in food handling that helped him return to work and regain self-sufficiency.

Erickson was down on his luck living at the Salvation Army and graduated from the Adult Rehabilitation Program before entering the 14-week culinary school, where he learned about food safety, inventory control and how to staff a kitchen. He also received hands-on experience in the Darden Foundation Community Kitchen assisting in meal preparation and catered events.

CareerSource Central Florida offers the culinary students work experience opportunities, job placement assistance or training scholarships to continue their education at two-year culinary programs in Central Florida.

Since the Culinary Training Program began in April 2013, 28 students from the first three graduating classes have gained employable skills. A fourth class of 11 students is in progress.

Erickson said he never pursued a culinary education because he couldn’t afford the tuition, which can cost up to \$50,000. The Culinary Training costs about \$5,500 per student and is funded through grants and revenues from catered events at the Orlando food bank.

“This program allowed me to put another notch in my belt,” said Erickson, who rode the bus every day to attend the culinary school.

For more information about the Culinary Training Program, call 407-514-1037 or go to http://www.foodbankcentralflorida.org/site/PageServer?pagename=kitchen_culinary_training.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida is a nonprofit organization that collects, stores and distributes donated food to more than 500 partner agencies in six Central Florida counties: Brevard, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Volusia.

CareerSource Central Florida offers tools to find jobs and advance careers for residents of Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Sumter counties. On average, CSCF provides nearly 8,800 job seekers each month with services such as an online job bank, career counseling, recruitment events, training, financial aid, career assessments and internships. CSCF also assists an average of 1,300 employers each month with recruitment, retention and training. For more information, visit www.CareerSourceCentralFlorida.com.

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