Brainfood Kitchen All Stars\* 2015-2016
Executive Summary

Brainfood is a youth development program that uses food and cooking as tools to build life skills and healthy living to Washington DC youth in a fun, creative, and safe environment. Through culinary-related activities, we strive to expand cognitive skills, encourage creativity, foster self-reliance, and empower youth as resources in their own community.

\*Brainfood Kitchen All Stars was renamed Cooks in Training in fall 2016.

2015 – 2016 Brainfood Kitchen All Stars Program Highlights:

- 95 students attended Brainfood Kitchen All Stars 2015-2016
  - 3 program instructors, 1 intern, 19 Weekly Classroom Assistants (volunteers)
  - 4 Brainfood classes at 2 program sites (Columbia Heights & Chinatown)

- 35 of 95 enrolled participants graduated Kitchen All Stars with a minimum attendance of approximately 65%

- 29 weeks of classes focused on a variety of cooking and nutrition topics including: baking, MyPlate and food groups, knife skills, vegan and vegetarian cooking, breakfast foods, whole grains, soups, meats, poultry, seafood, herbs & spices, salads and salad dressing, cooking on a budget, sauces, food justice, and international cuisine (including food from China, Thailand, Jamaica, Mexico, and more).

- Participants completed creative challenge classes including: "Create your own Pizza", "Plating and Presentation" "Pasta Bar" and "Make your own salad" challenge days.

- Brainfood hosted community service days where students made food to donate to Thrive DC.

- Brainfood had visits from multiple guest chefs and speakers who taught our participants new skills:
  - Chef Matt Baker of Gravitas shared about blue catfish as an invasive species and how we can be responsible consumers by choosing to eat and cook with it, leading a fish tacos recipe (April 12th and 13th)
  - Kinana Qaddour led a class Middle Eastern cuisine, teaching participants how to make baked chicken with potatoes, muhammara, fatoosh, hummus, and cacik (soup (May 5th)
  - Chef Aschara Vigsittaboot and Ralph Brabham co-owner) of Beau Thai led a workshop in about regional differences in Thai cuisine, including recipes for fried rice and papaya salad (April 27th)
  - Cookbook author Cathy Barrow of Mrs. Wheelbarrow's Kitchen led a workshop focused on homemade sausage and biscuits made from scratch, using heavy cream to make homemade butter (April 25th)
  - Chef George Rodrigues of TICO led a class in which he taught participants how to make tiradito with avocado mousse and crispy chicken tacos with fennel slaw (May 2nd)
  - Board Member and Chef Matt Adler of Osteria Morini taught a class focused on Italian cuisine, featuring ricotta gnocchi and escarole salad (May 3rd)
  - Brainfood Homegrown Food Production Lead Francisco Rivera and Kitchen Associate Ryan Williams taught a class featuring kale chips and buffalo caramel corn (April 7th)

- Food Systems Curriculum: This year, we continued building curriculum to give participants an opportunity to explore current food systems issues at Brainfood. Our curriculum track consisted of three segments:
  1) Introduction to the food system class for Food Day on October 24, 2015. Chinatown students visited the Brainfood Youth Garden as part of this curriculum, harvesting carrots and greens for the recipes that day. Columbia Heights students had guest speakers and a field trip instead, working with DC Central Kitchen Truck Farm and the City Blossoms Girard Street Garden.
  2) A class focused on the topic of food deserts with Myla, a Community MVPs students who focused on food deserts as her senior project at School Without Walls. Myla led an interactive game in which students received hypothetical situations and had to feed a family on a budget, and the class cooked recipes selected as example of how to eat

5 Brainfood classes at 2 program sites (Columbia Heights & Chinatown)
healthy food made from scratch that could realistically be obtained in a food desert: black bean quesadillas and tuna cakes.

3) A class on industrial vs. local food systems/supply chains, using the case study of a strawberry traveling from farm to plate in a local food system (the Brainfood Youth Garden), a regional food system (a farm in Pennsylvania), and a national food system (an industrial farm in California).

Special Events
- Brainfood hosted a **Holiday Celebration** in December 2015. The event had over 100 attendees (46 KAS participants, 34 guests, 16 volunteers, 6 staff) The week leading up to the Holiday Celebration, KAS participants voted on their favorite Brainfood recipes to make, and participants cooked the winning recipes for the event.
- Brainfood held its annual **Kitchen All Stars Graduation Celebration** in May 2016. This event included a menu for foods prepared by students for friends and family, as well and Chefs’ Challenge (Iron Chef-style cooking competition). Over 160 people attended our graduation celebration (56 participants, 28 volunteers, 8 staff, and over 70 friends and family members). 33 participants competed in the Chefs’ Challenge (35 participants qualified to compete in Challenge, but some were unable to attend because of previous commitments). All students were placed on teams by staff, and did not know whom they would be cooking with until the day of the competition. All 9 teams successfully created 3 original dishes within 1 hour and 10 minutes. The judges for the competition were Brainfood Board Members Dean D’Angelo, Kevin Smith, and Teddy Folkman.

**Participant Summary**
- **95 students enrolled and attended Brainfood Kitchen All Stars 2015-2016**
  - Attendance summary:
    - 39 of enrolled participants (out of 95) with a minimum attendance of 60%
    - 35 of 95 participants had 65% attendance or higher.
    - 12 of 95 participants had 75% attendance or higher.
    - 6 of 95 of participants had 85% attendance or higher.
- **96 students attended one of Brainfood’s orientation sessions in September 2015**
- **35 out of 95 enrolled participants graduated Brainfood Kitchen All Stars** with a minimum attendance of approximately 65% (the cutoff of 70% is typically used as a general guideline for graduation, but this year we used a threshold of 65% due to attendance challenges unique to this year, primarily the large number of students we had from a single school whose AP review sessions conflicted with Brainfood sessions. Individual students’ candidacy to graduate is determine by other factors such as when they joined the program, communication regarding attendance/schedule conflicts, extenuating circumstances, etc.)

**Ward Representation: 7 of 8 wards represented (n=98)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ward 1</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ward 2</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15.31%</td>
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<td>Ward 5</td>
<td>20.41%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ward 6</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Ward 7</td>
<td>13.27%</td>
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<td>Ward 8</td>
<td>31%</td>
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**Race/Ethnicity: (n=99)**
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 3%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 3%
- Asian or Asian American: 4%
- Black or African American (non-Hispanic):64%
- Hispanic or Latino/Latina: 31%
- White or Caucasian (non-Hispanic): 3%
- other: 2%
**Participant Demographics: (n=99)**

**Gender:**
- Female: 83%
- Males: 17%

**Grade level: (n=98)**
- 9th graders: 14%
- 10th graders: 32%
- 11th graders: 30%
- 12th graders: 23%

* Variation in “n” value is due to gaps in information from student survey results

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**Schools: Participants were from 9 DC area schools**

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<tr>
<th>School</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Banneker SHS</td>
<td>Friendship Collegiate Academy</td>
<td>School without Walls SHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell Multicultural SHS/CHEC</td>
<td>McKinley Technology SHS</td>
<td>KIPP College Preparatory (KCP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital City Public Charter School</td>
<td>Cardozo SHS</td>
<td>Dunbar SHS</td>
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**Developmental Outcomes:**

(Collected from pre- and post- written surveys. Pre-surveys were administered during the first week of class and post-surveys during the last 2 weeks of class. Unless noted, the percentages below represent the reported data from the post-surveys. The observations were recorded by program staff using the Brainfood Observation Matrix and Youth Development Outcomes framework from AED Advancing Youth Development Curriculum)

**Responsibility and Accountability**

A perception that one has some control over daily events and is accountable for one’s own actions and for the consequences on others.

- 98% of participants reported they could work out their problems.
- 100% of participants reported they could stand up for themselves without putting others down.
- 98% of participants reported they understand why they do what they do.
- 93% of participants reported that they accomplished their Brainfood New Year’s Resolution

**Civic and Social Ability**

The ability and motivation to work collaboratively with others and for the larger good and to sustain caring friendships and relationships with others.

- 100% of participants reported they try to understand how other people feel and think.
- 96% of participants reported they can work with someone who has different opinions than them.
- 100% of participants reported they try to understand what other people go through.
- 98% of participants reported they enjoy working with other students their age.

**Sense of Mastery and Future**

A perception that one is “making it” and will succeed in the future.

- 81% of participants rated their cooking skills as “I can cook anything” or “I'm pretty good”.
  - We observed large increases in the cooking confidence levels of participants at the end of the program. The number of participants who rated themselves as “I can cook anything” or “I’m pretty good” rose from 42% in September to 61% in May.
  - The number of participants who rated themselves as only being able to cook “a few things” at the beginning of the program (44%) decreased by the end (21%) and the number of participants who rated themselves as “I don’t know how to cook” dropped from 14% to 0%.
- 93% of participants reported they felt confident using a chef's knife at the end of the program.
- 100% of participants reported they can do most things if they try.
- 96% of participants reported that there is a purpose to their life.

**What is one thing you’ve learned about cooking here at Brainfood?**

- How to measure things precisely
- I’ve learned the proper way to cut with and hold a knife
- How to eat healthier by finding substitutes
- I’ve learned more about vegetarians, vegans, and pescatarians and their diets
- Learning about herbs and spices

**What is one thing that you’ve learned about yourself here at Brainfood?**

- One thing I learned about myself here at Brainfood is that I am open to everything
- That I have the capability to learn how to cook if I try
- I am capable of doing things I never thought I could
- I can focus on something and get it done while working with others
- I can really work with anyone and have a good time