

A Guide to Growing Good Food Jobs in New York City

CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute with Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, LISC NYC, United Neighborhood Houses

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The CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute works with partners to provide evidence to inform municipal policies that promote equitable access to healthy, affordable food. It leverages the expertise and commitments of CUNY faculty, staff and students to solving urban food problems and is based at the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and Settlement Houses (SHs) strive to create strong, healthy communities that make it easier for their residents to find healthy affordable food and good jobs. To advance work on achieving these two goals, the CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute at the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy, Local Initiatives Support Corporation New York City (LISC NYC), United Neighborhood Houses (UNH), and the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation (Restoration) partnered to identify promising models for integrating workforce development and healthy food access. The goal of such integration is to expand the capacity of these organizations to grow and nurture new approaches to creating more good food jobs, approaches that have the potential for being developed, expanded and sustained in low-income neighborhoods across New York City. While our focus in this report is on New York City, we believe that the models and strategies described here are also relevant to other cities in the United States.

Good food jobs are jobs that offer a living wage job and benefits, provide safe working conditions, and produce, distribute, or sell healthy, affordable food and make it more available to low-income communities.

The strongest argument for a good food jobs strategy is that it contributes to solving simultaneously three major social problems facing New York City and other cities. First, it increases employment within the food sector. Second, it improves wages, working conditions and benefits for these food workers. Third, it promotes access to affordable healthy food to residents of low-income neighborhoods. In practice, of course, these goals can conflict, making it important for all those who can benefit from more good food jobs to work together to develop effective and equitable strategies for expanding this sector.

This guide describes five approaches to integrating healthy food access and workforce development at CDCs and SHs across New York City. For each approach, it provides a description, rationale, and some examples of how this strategy is being used at CDCs and SHs in New York City. The purpose is to assist CDC and SH leaders and staff, policy makers and funders to identify options for integrating healthy food access and workforce development initiatives and to select the model or models most appropriate to their mission, assets and their experience in these two domains. The five approaches, each illustrated with profiles of existing examples, are: Youth Food Programs, Retail Food Job Programs, Institutional Food Programs, Community Chef Programs, and Food Business Incubators.

Good food jobs programs prepare participants for career advancement, professional growth and enhanced earning power. They also seek to provide trainees with the knowledge, skills, competencies and credentials needed to succeed in the food sector. This includes “soft” skills like critical thinking, leadership, and the ability to work as

part of a team. The guide describes some of the training programs that can assist in realizing these goals and the partnerships that CDCs and SHs are creating with these programs, with a focus on academic programs at City University of New York, an institution committed to providing access to post-secondary education to the people of New York City.

Today CDCs and SHs in New York City are actively exploring how to link food system jobs in urban agriculture, food production, food service and sales and how to prepare the people they serve to be ready for these jobs. The good food jobs approach to workforce development is one based on values related to equity, fairness, and job mobility. To move beyond a niche effort, these programs will need additional support, attention and planning from CDCs, SHs and the organizations that support and fund them. Several organizations have already demonstrated success in creating various types of good food jobs initiatives and provide grounds for optimism that with support, this sector can grow.

By ramping up and coordinating the many small-scale efforts to grow food jobs in community-based organizations, CDCs and SHs can transform these now mostly separate efforts into a cohesive incubator and catalyst for food system change. Our assessment of current practice highlighted some characteristics of successful programs. By adapting these practices, leaders of CDCs and SHs can help to create stronger, bigger and smarter good food jobs programs. Key characteristics of successful programs include:

1—Provide enthusiastic support for the development of a good food jobs program prior to implementing any programs in your organization. No program can be successful without broad leadership support. To help leaders play this role, program planners need to keep leaders informed about progress and problems.

2—Match the skills and learning strategies developed with the needs of the program participants. Identify what soft and hard skills are required for the specific good food job employment niches and develop tools, materials, and curriculum to teach those skills. Evaluate the success of these tools and adjust the curriculum accordingly.

3—Engage the participants enrolled in training programs in the design, implementation and evaluation of these programs.

4—Train the trainer models are efficient, cost-effective, and productive approaches for impact. For example, several programs have trained community chefs to train other community chefs; therefore, reducing the burden on staff as new leaders emerge to help run programs. This

strategy also helps to build morale among program participants, which is particularly important when hard-working youth still struggle to find employment. The “train the trainer” model allows these star students to receive valuable leadership experience, which they can include on their resume.

5—Collaborate with other local organizations. By partnering with the many organizations working in the healthy food and workforce development sectors, CDCs, SHs and other community organizations can leverage limited resources and connect program participants with other services that partner organizations may offer.

While the good food jobs strategy is only one component of the transformation our food system will need to support healthier, stronger and more sustainable communities, it is a practical, accessible and engaging approach for the thousands of organizations working in New York and other cities to improve the well-being of low-income populations.

The existing healthy food access and workforce development programs in these organizations can become engines that drive meaningful changes in health outcomes and financial mobility in underserved neighborhoods. Furthermore, several trends support growth in the good food jobs sector including the rise in fast casual, often healthier restaurant options, increases in the numbers of farmers’ markets in New York City and nationwide and the expanded use of healthy institutional food with programs like the City’s universal free school lunch program. These trends indicate a growth in opportunities for workers in jobs that offer a living wage and benefits, provide safe working conditions, produce, distribute, or sell healthy, affordable food and make healthy food available and accessible to low-income communities.

We find ourselves in a unique moment, one where critical shifts are underway in food sector jobs. Food workforce development programs at CDCs, SHs and similar organizations are in a prime position to take advantage of these changes to prepare those that they serve to find employment in the emerging good food jobs field.

INTRODUCTION

Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and Settlement Houses (SHs) strive to create strong, healthy communities that offer healthy food and good jobs to all residents. To advance work on achieving these two goals, the CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute at the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy, Local Initiatives Support Corporation New York City (LISC NYC), United Neighborhood Houses (UNH), and the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation (Restoration) partnered to identify promising models for integrating workforce development and healthy food access. The goal of such integration is to expand the capacity of these organizations to grow and nurture new approaches to creating more good food jobs, approaches that have the potential for being developed, expanded and sustained in low-income neighborhoods across New York City. While our focus in this report is on New York City, we believe that the models and strategies described here are also relevant to other cities in the United States.

Good food jobs are jobs that:

- Offer a living wage job and benefits
- Provide safe working conditions
- Produce, distribute, or sell healthy, affordable food and make it more available to low-income communities



Figure 1. The Good Food Jobs Nexus

As shown in Figure 1, the sweet spot for expanding good food jobs is at the intersection of three interconnected food system goals: increasing employment opportunities in the food sector, improving job quality for food workers, and promoting access to healthy affordable food. In practice, expanding any one or two goals is also a worthy objective and often a transitional strategy for achieving all three. For example, an initiative to pay institutional food workers better and increase their healthy food preparation skills may not by itself increase food employment but would contribute to better jobs and healthier food for preschool children and seniors.

Many cities have looked to the rapidly growing food sector (restaurants, food retail, grocery wholesale, food production, food manufacturing) as a promising source of new employment, particularly for residents from low income and underserved neighborhoods. Fast food employment in New York City increased by 87 percent between 2000 and 2014, reaching almost double its level 15 years earlier.¹ However, growth in fast food and other food sectors has come primarily in the form of low-wage, insecure jobs that offer workers no benefits and little to no opportunity for advancement. Despite declining food sector wages, these jobs remain an attractive option for young people, immigrants, and the unemployed due to their relatively low barriers to entry.

In addition to food jobs being among the least unionized in the country,² those in the fast-food sector comprise primarily low-wage workers producing unhealthy food that contributes disproportionately to diet-related diseases (obesity, diabetes, heart disease, etc.) among people of color and in low-income communities. These conditions are among the leading causes of premature deaths and racial and ethnic inequalities in health in New York City and the United States.^{3,4}

The strongest argument for a good food jobs strategy is the capacity for this approach to improve employment opportunities, wages, and working conditions. In practice, of course, these goals can conflict, making it important for all those who can benefit from more good food jobs to work together to develop effective and equitable strategies for expanding this sector.

What are some of these potential conflicts? Improving the healthfulness of food can lead to higher food prices and does not necessarily improve pay or benefits for food workers. As a result, healthier food produced by well-paid workers is often only available to more affluent consumers. Improving wages and working conditions for food workers can drive up food prices, making healthy food even more inaccessible for vulnerable populations. Good food jobs can only grow and flourish in an environment where there is increased employment in food sector jobs that produce affordable, healthy food and offer workers a fair living wage. It is a promising strategy for a city like New York that aspires, as Mayor Bill de Blasio has said, to be the fairest big city in America.⁵

ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERS

The organizational partners for this guide constitute a bulwark against poverty and a force for community development in New York City's low-income neighborhoods. These organizations have long supported workforce development and job training efforts, and in more recent years, have added an explicit focus on healthy food access and nutrition to their work with CDC and SH partners. Finding new ways to leverage their resources to create and sustain good food jobs will enable CDCs and SHs to address some of the greatest challenges facing New York City today: reducing inequalities in income, health, diet, employment, and living conditions for the communities they serve.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC NYC)

The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) is a national nonprofit organization that equips struggling communities with the capital, strategy and know-how to become places where people with low and moderate incomes can thrive. With residents and partners, LISC forges resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity across America – great places to live, work, visit, do business, and raise families. The local New York City program, LISC NYC, works with nonprofit, community-based organizations to develop affordable housing, commercial enterprises and community facilities. Since it was founded in 1980, LISC NYC has invested over \$2.7 billion, leveraging an additional \$6 billion in low-income communities. This has resulted in nearly 40,000 affordable homes built and preserved as well as 1.8 million square feet of retail and community space created. LISC NYC nurtures effective collaborations to spur improved health, environmental sustainability and economic development to ensure that low-income residents share in New York City's growth and prosperity. A recent report *Communities for Healthy Food: The Toolkit* summarizes the lessons learned from four years of strengthening community food work at five CDCs in New York City.⁶

United Neighborhood Houses (UNH)

UNH, founded in 1919, promotes and strengthens the neighborhood-based, multi-service approach to improving the lives of New Yorkers in need.⁷ Its network of 39 settlement houses and community centers serves more than 750,000 residents each year, and UNH supports this work through policy development, advocacy, and capacity-building programs and activities. One area of UNH's work focuses on engaging residents of low-income communities and those living in public housing to improve their communities. Recently, UNH began exploring how to integrate its food, workforce development, and youth projects to better serve its constituencies.

Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation (Restoration)

Located in Central Brooklyn, Restoration is the nation’s first community development corporation created in 1967. Restoration forcefully pursues strategies to close gaps in family and community wealth to ensure all families in Central Brooklyn are prosperous and healthy. The organization’s vision is a flourishing Brooklyn community consisting of strong families, businesses, and institutions, and anchored in a culture of equity and inclusion.⁸ In the last 10 years, Restoration has also developed an active portfolio of food programs, in response to both diet-related health challenges in the community, as well as issues of access to affordable healthy food as a result of food gentrification. Food gentrification occurs when wealthier people move into a neighborhood, increasing the demand for more expensive food and displacing the more affordable (but often less healthy) food.⁹

Rapid gentrification is particularly acute in Central Brooklyn, and Restoration’s parallel efforts to ensure adequate access to affordable housing, healthy food and employment can help to reduce the economic burdens that gentrification imposes. More ambitiously, by taking on the multiple forces that promote gentrification, Restoration seeks to shift some local economic power back to long time Bedford Stuyvesant residents.

METHODS

This guide builds on the Institute’s previous work on good food jobs.^{10,11} It is informed by our efforts to describe and analyze how three major New York City organizations, Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation (Restoration), Local Initiatives Support Corporation New York City (LISC NYC) and United Neighborhood Houses (UNH) have approached the task of bringing together their work in healthy food access with their workforce development experience. Using the activities taking place at CDCs and SHs as our evidence, Institute staff used several methods to document opportunities, successes and limitations for expanding good food jobs in New York City. These methods and their goals are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Methods and Sources of Evidence for this Report

METHOD	SOURCE	GOAL
Identify CDC and SH sites in New York City that sponsor both healthy food and workforce development programs	Scan of 112 CDCs and SHs served by LISC NYC and UNHNYC UNH member	Create a typology of types of food workforce programs at CDCs and SHs
Identify academic programs at CUNY and elsewhere that help food workers to advance their careers	Interviewed leaders of CUNY food programs and reviewed websites	Explore potential for partnerships between CDCs and SHs for academic partnerships and analyze career trajectories
Conduct an online survey of CDC and SH staff with experience at the intersection of healthy food access and workforce development	110 staff at 62 sites invited to respond to online survey; 36 responded	Synthesize lessons learned and best practices across sites and identify sites for additional investigation
Produce brief profiles of several successful approaches to integrating healthy food access and workforce development at CDCs and SHs	Visited 4 sites, interviewed staff and observed activities to prepare 4 program profiles	Summarize effective approaches to integration of healthy food access and workforce development and identify common obstacles
Elicit feedback on analysis and recommendations from staff at Restoration, LISC NYC and UNH.	Reviewed draft Guide by staff of 3 partner organizations	Define appropriate roles for intermediate organizations in supporting good food jobs strategies at CDCs and SHs

Based on our review of the scan and the survey, we identified five categories of food workforce programs at participating CDCs and SHs:

1. Youth Development & Food
2. Institutional Food
3. Food Retail Workforce
4. Community Chefs
5. Food Business Incubators

Although some CDCs and SHs combined two or more of these categories in a single program, in the next section we take the approach of describing the five types individually in more detail.

This report has several limitations. First, our survey response rate of 33 percent indicates that a significant portion of CDCs and SHs did not respond to our survey. However, conversations with staff at LISC NYC and UNH suggested that programs doing the most to integrate health food access and workforce development were included in our sample. Second, we interviewed only two or three key staff at the four programs we visited and observed activities for a few hours. More in depth investigation of these sites may have revealed more or different details about successes and limitations. Finally, our examination of these programs took place in 2017; as federal, state and city food and workforce programs change, new or different opportunity or obstacles may emerge. In addition, as federal support for these efforts is cut back by the Trump Administration, the landscape for the creation of good food jobs may become more challenging. Overall, however, our use of multiple methods, our distinct framing of this issue using the major characteristics of good food jobs, and our synthesis of a wide body of experience in our view make this report a useful and unique addition to the understanding of the intersection of community work in healthy food access and food workforce development.



STRATEGIES FOR INTEGRATING HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

This section describes five approaches to integrating healthy food access and workforce development at CDCs and SHs across New York City. For each approach, it provides a description, rationale, and some examples of how this strategy is being used at CDCs and SHs in New York City. The purpose is to assist CDC and SH leaders and staff, policy makers and funders to identify options for integrating healthy food access and workforce development initiatives and to select the model or models most appropriate to their mission, assets and their experience in these two domains.



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1. Youth Development and Food Programs

Description

Youth food programs at CDCs and SHs introduce young people to job opportunities in the food sector and provide them with skills and experience in urban farming, food services, and retail operations or related areas. These opportunities typically lead to part-time or summer work, develop “soft” and “hard” job skills, and introduce participants to career opportunities. Most youth food programs fall into three categories: food retail (such as supermarkets and farmers’ markets), restaurant work, and urban agriculture.

Rationale

Youth food programs engage young people early in their careers, providing them with more opportunities for success and career growth by exposing them to several food job pathways. Their experiences may inspire them to pursue formal degrees in the culinary arts, nutrition, or in food science through higher education, or engage in certificate programs that cater to youth job development. This approach also fits well with the extensive experience of many CDCs and SHs in youth development, an approach to community development that views young people as a critical asset for empowering young people while strengthening communities and families.¹²

Example of Job Titles

Urban Farm Crew Assistant, Food Service Worker, Farmers' Market Manager, Retail Sales Associate

Current Salaries

Salaries range in this sector for most jobs. Some are unpaid volunteer positions or offer stipends rather than a salary. Others pay minimum wage. Typically these jobs are part-time.

Possible Career Ladders

With certification and/or culinary degree possible career ladders include: procurement manager, director of operations, produce manager, cook, pastry chef, commercial greenhouse manager, supervisory positions, and kitchen managers.

Biggest Opportunities

In addition to the connections formal culinary training programs have with the food industry in New York City, there are other opportunities for youth to obtain employment in the food sector. Fast casual restaurants that offer high-quality dishes that are prepared to order and that provide decent pay and benefits like Chipotle and Panera Bread, provide entry-level job opportunities that support educational pursuits by, for example, arranging shifts around academic schedules. Additionally, the small but growing industry of commercial urban agriculture producers are providing a variety of jobs from harvesting produce, to packaging and delivery.¹³

Biggest Challenges

Advancement in the culinary arts sector most often requires some type of culinary training, and Department of Health (DOH) certification, which can be quite rigorous and demanding. Organizations looking to develop programs in this area may find it challenging to secure resources like training space, supplies/ingredients, and related items. Additionally, youth that take this path will be competing with more seasoned workers for available jobs and may be at a disadvantage in those instances. Similarly, some commercial urban agriculture jobs require a high degree of know how that can include biology, engineering and other types of highly specialized controlled environment agricultural knowledge.

Opportunity Areas

Youth Food Retail

Youth food retail programs prepare young people to work in supermarkets and farmers' markets. Programs preparing youth to work in food retail environments often focus on soft skills such as customer service, communication, and teamwork. Youth brush up on their math skills as they learn how to calculate customer sales, often without an electric Point of Sale (POS) system. Youth who thrive in this area can go on to support inventory tracking and order placement, a required skill for food retail or restaurant management. In some cases, youth food retail training also includes basic nutritional, environmental, and agricultural training.

Youth Restaurant Work

Organizations such as The Door (described below) and Queens Community House (featured in a Program Profile), connect participants with paid training that prepares them for restaurant work. Degree and non-degree training programs across New York City also offer courses on food safety and culinary arts that prepare young people for work as prep cooks, line cooks, sous chefs, bakers, and butchers.

Youth Urban Agriculture

Many, and possibly most, community urban agriculture initiatives across New York City have a strong youth component. East New York Farms (profiled below), Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation, and Green City Force (GFC) among other organizations, recruit young people to work in community gardens, and urban farms. Youth learn how to tend to and grow these gardens, which serve as an important meeting space for community residents and in some cases, an important source of income for residents who use the space to grow food to sell. For example, GFC recruits, trains, and manages AmeriCorps youth who serve as Urban Farm Corps Members. These

young people help execute farm programming at New York City Housing Authority sites while GFC provides support to Corps Members and follow-up services that last on through the post-graduation period.

Examples

GrowNYC Youthmarket

The Youthmarket training program prepares young people to plan and operate a farm stand business while educating them about health, nutrition, the environment, and regional agriculture. This not only provides seasonal employment when school is not in session, but also offers opportunities for the development of soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and commitment. Youthmarket training emphasizes the importance of fruits and vegetables to a healthy lifestyle and encourages participants to bring the message of good diet to their friends and customers. The training program also helps youth to think critically about the food in their corner stores, bodegas, and supermarkets and the benefits of eating locally-produced fruits and vegetables. On the operations side, Youthmarket's business training focuses on promotion, merchandising, and customer service; providing hands-on training for young people to learn the basics of operating a food retail business.

The Door

The Door provides a paid certificate-training program in culinary arts in conjunction with University Settlement House. This paid training for youth between the ages of 18-24 focuses on DOH certification, hard kitchen skills as determined by industry needs, and soft skills focusing on job retention, and lays the groundwork for additional formal training.

East New York Farms

East New York Farms hires young people through a 9-month intensive program that offers hands-on learning about the environment, health, community development, leadership, and social justice. Trainees work at one of ENYF's three urban farms, which includes its flagship half acre urban farm, and at ENYF's two weekly farmers' markets. The youth work in multi-cultural and multi-generational teams and many stay in the program for several years, taking on new leadership roles each session.

Program Profile—Queens Community House

The Queens Connect Young Adult Food Sector Employment Initiative (YAFSEI) is an employment program of Queens Community House that trains and prepares out of school and out of work youth for careers in the food service and manufacturing sector. Queens Connect is the collaborative arm of the program, which includes four settlement houses: QCH, Jacob Riis Neighborhood Settlement, Sunnyside Community Services and Ocean Bay Community Development Corporation. YAFSEI began operation in 2015.

Program Structure

YAFSEI is a six-week training program that is offered four to five times a year. The training is followed by an eight-week paid internship with the option to receive a food handler's certificate. The training includes central educational skills such as safety techniques, kitchen basics and using equipment.

Youth are asked to complete an intake form that determines what factors will help and which will block their active participation in the program and whether the program is the right fit for them. After the assessment, youth attend an orientation and review the schedule of training dates. Youth meet three days a week for four hours a day. Typically, one session a week is dedicated to essential skills, another session prepares them for food handler certification, and the remaining session is spent in the kitchen with a chef instructor learning culinary techniques and commercial kitchen processes. Currently, the program is run in two locations: 1) Entrepreneur Space, a food business incubator that includes classrooms and commercial kitchen space in Long Island City, Queens and 2) Starbucks Community Store located in Jamaica, Queens.

2. Retail Food Job Programs

Description

Retail outlets such as farmers' markets, grocery stores, supermarkets, and food coops, provide jobs and job training opportunities for people who are un- or underemployed. Retail outlets, especially in the food sector, not only fill a community need, but can also lead to further community development, improved access to healthy food, and increased employment.

Rationale

The retail food sector provides an entry-level job opportunity to young adults

and immigrants, among other populations. CDCs and SHs support programs that promote the development of social enterprises that operate in the realm of food retail, such as farmers' markets, catering companies, and urban farms, which offer career pathways into the food sector.

Possible Job Titles

Retail worker, retail manager, receiving, custodian

Current Salaries

Grocery team members at Whole Foods earn up to \$16 per hour; Trader Joe's crew members up to \$20 a per hour; Youthmarket mager \$15.00 per hour.

Possible Career Ladders

Skills developed through CDC and SH programs can lead to positions in supervisory, receiving, and managerial positions at fresh format supermarkets, those with a wider variety of fresh produce and premium products such as Whole Foods, Fairway, and Sprouts, which tend to offer higher than average wages for the food retail sector and benefits.

Biggest Opportunities

The growth in farmers' markets, fresh format supermarkets specializing in fresh, local products, and fast casual restaurants have created opportunities for jobseekers searching for decent wages and benefits in the food retail sector beyond what is typically found at traditional grocery stores and fast food chains.

Biggest Challenges

The jobs offered by farmers' markets, fresh format supermarkets and fast casual restaurants still only represent a small fraction of the food retail industry. Most jobs in this sector still do not offer a living wage and provide few benefits.

Examples

Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation

Restoration supports the development and growth of urban garden and farmers' markets in Central Brooklyn communities, thereby increasing access

to healthy food while also providing a source of income for urban farmers and market operators.

The Center for Family Life

The Center for Family Life supports the creation of retail entrepreneurial enterprises and worker owned coops in the food sector to create new pathways to economic stability and opportunities for leadership. They also created a gourmet catering company that offers cooking classes that draw on the different cultures within their community.

NEBHDCo

The Northeast Brooklyn Housing Development Corporation runs a 10-week long course for prospective entrepreneurs to learn the critical skills needed to start their own food business. They have also worked with several food businesses to start the process of converting to a worker coop model.

Program Profile—Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation

Restoration is in the process of implementing a new Healthy Living Career Track ("The Track"). The purpose of this program is to provide services and access to resources to Brooklyn residents with the goal of promoting healthy lives. Restoration defines healthful living holistically as having healthy financial households, good jobs, healthy bodies, and healthy minds. The Track will leverage synergies and tie together the work of several of Restoration's key strategic departments including its Economic Solutions Center, Brooklyn Business Center, and Center for Healthy Neighborhoods.

Program Structure

1—The Economic Solution Center handles screenings and enrollments, financial counseling, education, job training, job placement and retention services to the residents of Brooklyn and beyond. The Center currently has between 40-50 staff members and has a dedicated employment initiative, which provides integrated services to under and unemployed residents at four sites across Brooklyn. The Economic Solutions Center also works with the business community to provide employment opportunities for residents.

2—The Brooklyn Business Center provides services to entrepreneurs looking to start a business or launch a new business. Entrepreneurs visit the BBC for business consulting and access to capital. The BBC also hosts events, workshops, and business classes. Additionally, the BBC aids businesses in attaining minority-owned and/or women-owned business enterprise (MWBE) certification, a designation that helps provide better bid access on government contracts.

3—The Center for Healthy Neighborhoods (CNH) focuses on community health. The department takes a systems level approach to improve access to healthy foods and promote physical activity in Central Brooklyn. Projects overseen include the Restoration Plaza Farmers Market, Farm to Early Care program, bike share promotion, and free exercise/fitness programming. CNH plays a central role in developing food partnerships and connecting these to our Economic Solutions Center where appropriate.

The Track works with these three departments to encourage residents to take on jobs in the food industry while benefitting from the wrap-around support services Restoration has to offer. The first track that is currently being implemented as part of the program is a Food Service Career Track. Participants in the program begin by taking a 2-week job readiness class that includes resume building, customer service, networking, applying online, and workplace behavior. After they have completed the class, they begin the Food Handlers Certification Training, which is offered in partnership with the Restaurant Opportunities Center, an organization focused on helping food workers to achieve financial independence and improve their quality of lives. They are then offered wrap-around support including financial counseling, screening, food benefits and additional services that strengthen the financial household. Restoration hopes the job skills learned through the program will increase their connectedness to additional licensures and certifications that will ultimately improve their success in the workplace and their search for a job.

3. Institutional Food Programs

Description

New York City serves more than 245 million meals and snacks per year. In addition to the over 171 million meals and snacks served in schools, New York City either directly or through its non-profit partners serves an additional 74 million meals in homeless shelters, childcare centers, after-school programs, correctional facilities, and public hospitals and care facilities.¹⁴

Rationale

In 2014, the latest year for which data were available, New York City spent an estimated half a billion dollars on the food served and the labor required to prepare these meals and snacks. At least 10,000 people work to produce and serve these meals, not including the suppliers and distributors, truck drivers, administrators, farmers and food processors, who are also involved in this vast system. Institutional food training programs

can support the development of various types of food sector jobs through workforce development efforts aimed at positioning trainees to take advantage of the wide range of job opportunities within the institutional food sector. Institutional food settings, especially when it comes to food preparation, encourage and often require certification in safe food handling, and the sort of hard culinary skills that can lead to career advancement.

New York City has procurement requirements for all meals and food supplies that are purchased, prepared or served in agency or other institutional food programs funded by the city. These requirements provide an opportunity for institutional food training programs to supply trainees with a competitive advantage when searching for jobs by ensuring that they are trained to meet the city's procurement standards. Institutional food training programs can provide a pathway towards access to jobs in the supply, delivery, manufacturing, and growing of food.

Finally, many institutional food jobs are within the public sector and provide living wages, health insurance and other benefits including membership in labor unions that can advance the collective interests of workers in this sector.

Possible Job Titles

Food service worker, cook, lunch helper, loader, supervisor, food services manager, school food procurement manager, director of operations, cafeteria manager.

Current Salaries

Salaries in this sector range from Food Service Worker: starting at up to \$19 an hour depending on entry level Cook food service titles, Food Service Administrator: \$64K per year and up. Managers in the New York City Department of Education's school food program earn a starting salary of \$37,000 to \$40,000 per year.

Possible Career Ladders

With certification and/or culinary degree possible career ladders include supervisory positions, kitchen managers, procurement managers, and director of operations. Additional opportunities exist for porters and receiving staff.

Biggest Opportunities

Institutional food programs provide entry-level employment opportunities to immigrants, youth, and unemployed or underemployed individuals and those just entering the workplace. Basic culinary skills, such as knife skills, produce prep, and an understanding of basic cooking techniques are foundations upon which job growth and career advancement can also occur.

Biggest Challenges

Many institutions currently get their food from large food service corporations with centralized supply chains and low-paying jobs. Jobs with these sorts of companies may be appealing to some but may provide challenges for those seeking to re-enter the workforce, those in need of flexible scheduling options, and workers with childcare responsibilities.

Examples

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House provides institutional food services using a farm-to-table model. Through their healthy meals program, which encompasses 90 percent fresh produce, 40 percent of which is sourced locally, they prepare and serve over 400,000 meals annually to their low-income clients, who can eat, access, and learn to cook healthy nutritious food to improve their overall health. Their Teaching Kitchen provides training, consulting, and technical assistance to local organizations that have institutional food programs, to help them convert to a farm to institution model. Their curriculum is tailored to kitchen staff who prepare food.

Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation

For the last five years, Restoration has worked with Head Start programs in Central Brooklyn to help them transition away from using a conventional procurement model to one focused on purchasing fresh produce from local and regional farms. Some 30 child care and Head Start programs have participated and their staff have received additional training on preparation of fresh, low fat, low sugar and low salt foods for the children they serve and their staff.

Program Profile—Lenox Hill Neighborhood House

The Teaching Kitchen (TK) was developed at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, a settlement house that now offers a training and technical assistance program to help organizations involved with transforming their food services programs into ones that create fresh, healthier meals using a "farm-to-institution" model. More specifically, TK trains groups to include more plant-based meals, smaller meat portions and more diverse grains sourced locally and regionally when possible. The program was launched in November 2015. By the end of 2017, TK trained 20+ organizations that serve millions of meals a year to low-income New Yorkers. Participants in TK include daycare centers, supportive housing organizations, and groups serving senior center meals and homeless shelters.

Major goals of the program include:

- 1—Training organizations with institutional kitchens to serve healthier, fresh and regionally procured foods without increasing the cost of meals
- 2—Improving food preparation and scratch cooking skills for cooks in institutional kitchens
- 3—Creating a community of people working in institutions interested in serving healthier foods for themselves and their clients
- 4—Increasing the number of organizations sourcing their food from regional food hubs, which in turn strengthens the food shed and sustains jobs in the region

Program Structure

The Teaching Kitchen focuses on training head cooks or chefs in institutional kitchens. These individuals often do not have formal culinary training however they are responsible for preparing and planning a large portion of the meals at the institution. TK also requires an administrator or program director from the organization to attend the training. This ensures that staff members with different organizational roles will influence menus, ordering, vendor approvals, and facility improvements and also receive the information needed to make the changes in the kitchen. In this way, TK hopes that the information from the training will be disseminated through the organization and not just to the kitchen or administrative office alone.

Staff work with each participant over a two-day course on creating goals tailored to their institution. Lynn Loflin, Teaching Kitchen Chef, conducts visits to each organization three months post-training. During the visit, Ms. Loflin helps organizations look over their goals and identify whether changes need to be made or if new goals need to be established. Organizations receive training, one-on-one feedback, goal setting and one year of technical assistance. In addition to follow-up from TK, participants can also interact with one another and ask each other questions on an online forum. Trainees can also view recipes, videos and workshops online as well.

4. Community Chefs Programs

Description

Community Chef Training programs teach community members, including both youth and adults, how to facilitate workshops about local, seasonal eating and cooking; basic nutrition; fruit and vegetable identification; recipe selection and creation; knife skills; and food storage and preparation.

Rationale

Community Chefs encourage and assist their local community members to shop for, prepare and eat healthy and nutritious meals for themselves and their families. Once trained, Community Chefs can conduct cooking demonstrations, provide community assistance, and lead workshops and discussions about the value of eating healthy foods, and the impact of diet on overall health. They connect with the community at health fairs, schools, farmers' markets, hospitals, and community events. Community Chef training programs offer employment opportunities to young adults and can be an entry point into food sector employment.

Possible Job Titles

Community chef; community food educator; food service worker.

Current Salaries

While the average Food Service Worker wage is an average of \$13.50 per hour, wages for Community Chefs vary widely. Many chefs are paid \$25-\$50/hour for a 2-3-hour schedule. Though the hourly rate is substantially higher than most food service jobs, it does not include benefits, the chefs arrange to pay their own taxes, and many chefs only receive 3-10 hours of chef work per week and typically work another job.

Possible Career Ladders

Community chef positions are often part-time and short-term but can serve as a jumping off point to other food-related jobs. With certification and/or a culinary degree, possible career ladders include line cook, or more permanent employment either catering or working in an institutional food setting. Additional roles include support staff, porters and receiving staff.

Through cooking demonstrations and similar activities, community chefs are often exposed to aspects of food service that are uncommon for those who prepare food, which may encourage and promote further career development. Community chef jobs can also lead to retail positions with farmers' market vendors, which are often year-round.

Biggest Opportunities

Community development corporations and settlement houses that have an investment in the health of the communities they serve can utilize community chef training programs, with their emphasis on healthy food preparation, to address specific health concerns that exist in their community. CDCs and SHs such as Northeast Brooklyn Housing Development Corporation, New Settlement Apartments, United Community Centers, and Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation have all hired community chefs (from the various programs listed below) to lead nutrition and healthy cooking workshops at after-school programs, food pantries, staff events, community festivals, senior centers, and farmers' markets.

Biggest Challenges

Community chef training programs focus narrowly on preparing healthy home cooked meals, a feature which may disadvantage program participants interested in restaurant jobs. Additionally, community chef jobs are often part-time and seasonal in nature and do not supply benefits.

Examples

Myrtle Avenue Community Chef training program

This training program teaches participants how to lead cooking demonstrations that focus on basic nutrition, seasonal cooking, fresh produce identification, recipe selection/creation, knife skills, and food storage and preparation. Community chefs then go on to lead cooking demonstrations at farmers' markets, CSAs, emergency food pantries, community events, and community-based organizations in their neighborhood. Several Myrtle Avenue Community Chefs have gone on to receive their Food Handler's Certification, opening the door to even more Good Food Job opportunities.

Just Food Community Chef Training

Just Food's Community Chef training program empowers community residents to lead healthy cooking workshops in their own communities after completing a three-day intensive training. This training focuses on basic

nutrition, knife skills, food storage and preparation, creating culturally-appropriate and seasonal recipes, and teaches chefs how to handle a variety of potential challenges that may arise during workshops.

Family Cook Productions

FamilyCook Productions, through its programs and curricula, trains young adults and community residents to implement nutrition education through hands-on cooking classes in schools, community organizations, farms and in other settings.¹⁶

Program Profile—The Community Chef Experience at NEBHDCo

This excerpt from LISC-NYC Communities for Healthy Food Toolkit describes the experience of one community chef.

Ribka Getachew, a 27-year-old Crown Heights resident and long-time supporter of NEBHDCo's work, participated in one of NEBHDCo's Community Chef training sessions in 2016. The training challenged her to bring personal stories, knowledge, experiences, and expertise into the kitchen. Ribka was encouraged to make connections with everything from how food has helped her heal, to the food traditions that her parents brought from Ethiopia, to a commitment to dismantling racism. These reasons are exactly why Ribka became a Community Chef. Although Ribka was already a certified health coach with strong culinary and nutritional knowledge, NEBHDCo's Community Chef training provided a curriculum to build her leadership skills and give her tools to teach her craft in the community. Since becoming a Community Chef, Ribka has taught NEBHDCo's culinary course for adults and cooking demos all over the community—at early child care centers, farmers' markets, health fairs, and more. Through Ribka's relationship with NEBHDCo, she has obtained more work, including a regular job teaching culinary education at an afterschool program.

In 2014, NEBHDCo brought 18 community members to a community chef training program run by Just Food Community Chef program and then hired them to lead their culinary courses, workshops and cooking demonstrations. In 2016, NEBHDCo itself trained community chefs and in late 2017, 20 community chefs were active. In 2018, they expect to train an additional 45 chefs.

5. Food Business Incubators

Description

Food business incubators provide affordable commercial kitchen space and business support to help food entrepreneurs mitigate initial high-investment costs and start-up risk. Food business incubators provide kitchen space; professional equipment (mixers, blenders, knives, ovens, etc.); dry, refrigerated, and freezer storage, and product development (such as packaging and labeling). Some incubators provide business support, including: help securing required licenses, marketing, customer acquisition, and business plan guidance. Space is typically rented out hourly or per shift (8am-4pm, 4pm-midnight, midnight-8am) and costs between \$160-250 per 8-hour shift, depending on the time of day.

Rationale

Commercial kitchen space is extremely expensive in New York City, added to an already capital-intensive culinary industry where margins are tight. By providing affordable kitchen space, entrepreneur counseling, business support, and a space for various types of food entrepreneurs to network and learn from each other, food business incubators can help new food entrepreneurs launch their business with lower investment costs and more practical knowledge, increasing their chance of success.

Possible Job Titles

Cook; baker; business manager; business owner.

Current Salaries

Varies widely depending on the position (e.g. employee, management, food entrepreneur, coop shareholder).

Possible Career Ladders

Most clients of food business incubators are individuals or small groups who own some sort of food enterprise. Food incubators are intended to help these businesses grow, expand their number of clients, and reduce costs by increasing efficiency. Working with a food business incubator can help connect food entrepreneurs with other food businesses, which can lead to partnerships and new clients. Once a food business reaches a certain level of success entrepreneurs tend to establish their catering company, bakery,

restaurant, or other food business within a traditional commercial space leased solely for their use.

Biggest Opportunities

With commercial retail space prohibitively expensive, food business incubators are the only affordable option for many small food businesses. CDCs and SHs that have access to or can build commercial kitchens are in a unique position to support small food business entrepreneurs in their communities. These organizations also often can provide incentives for food businesses to produce healthy foods to sell in local communities. Furthermore, subsidies for low-income food entrepreneurs can make incubator programs more accessible and appealing to residents. Additionally, the New York City Housing Authority's (NYCHA) Food Business Pathways offers free business support for NYCHA residents to start and grow food businesses by providing five months of free kitchen-incubator space in one of four partner incubators. These include the three examples described below, Hot Bread Kitchen, The Entrepreneur Space and Bronx Cook Space at WHEDco.

Biggest Challenges

Despite providing relatively affordable space, pricing can still prove challenging for small food businesses and low-income residents. Moreover, prime daytime shifts can also be in very high demand, leaving only undesirable overnight shifts that can prove especially difficult for entrepreneurs who have small children and/or maintain another job. In some cases, high demand can result in a waiting list for daytime shifts. Operational costs are also a challenge. Food business incubators are costly to run and may require substantial grant funding to keep rental prices affordable.

Examples

Hot Bread Kitchen Incubates

Hot Bread Kitchen Incubates (HBKI) operates a commercial kitchen in East Harlem, providing space, professional equipment, storage, and business support programming to its tenants. HBKI also offers clients support to market their products and provides them with access to sales opportunities by facilitating introductions to caterers, restaurants, and buyers from major retailers. To make programs accessible to a wider range of food business owners, low-income members receive subsidies on kitchen rental and storage.

Entrepreneur Space

Administered by the Queens Economic Development Council, the Entrepreneur Space offers a 5,500-square foot professional kitchen incubator

where small and start-up food manufacturers and small businesses can rent space in eight-hour shifts on a 24/7 basis. Located in Long Island City, Queens, Entrepreneur Space also rents office and classroom space for workshops, meetings, and events, and all clients have access to on site resources which include business counselors, classes and networking opportunities.

Program Profile—WHEDco's Bronx Cook Space

Bronx Cook Space (BCS) is a commercial grade kitchen food incubator project of the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco). BCS rents out workspace to small food businesses and provides technical assistance to support those businesses as they grow. The 4,000 square foot kitchen is divided into four workspaces, or bays, that can be rented alone or in combination. The kitchen has been open in some form since WHEDco's Morissania building opened in 1998. The Cook Space started as a traditional workforce development program where WHEDco trained people to work in the food service industry. It ran its own outside catering service, so individuals would learn skills and work for the catering company while gaining experience. The former program closed while the demand for a commercial kitchen space simultaneously grew in the South Bronx neighborhood. The current Cook Space program developed over time to meet residents demand for a licensed kitchen space to legally prepare and sell foods at local street fairs and/or church functions in the Bronx.

BCS now provides caterers, bakers, and food and beverage manufacturers who would otherwise not be able to afford the commercial kitchen space or equipment they need to start and grow their business. It has operated in its current form for the past six years. Each of the four workspaces in the cook space can be rented on an hourly basis. The kitchen is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year. Rental prices vary from \$21/hour to \$25/hour based on the day and time of the week.

To use the space, potential tenants must complete a kitchen application and show proof of insurance, business formation documentation and their license. BCS staff helps in completing the application and gaining licensure and insurance as well. Once the initial criteria are met and the application is completed and processed, the tenant may be approved. Tenants must sign a rental agreement and book hours on a calendar to rent the space.

KEY STEPS IN GOOD FOOD JOBS PLANNING PROCESS

In this section, we describe some ways that organizations that want to implement a good food jobs program can develop a plan to get started. The first step in the planning process is to identify key steps that will lead to the development of a successful program. While this may seem like an overwhelming process, the steps outlined below help break down the process into manageable step-by-step tasks that build upon each other and can be assigned to different members of the GFJ team.

Table 2. Key Steps in Good Food Jobs Program Planning Process

STEP	PLANNING STAGE
Identify a Lead: Identify an internal staff member to lead the initiative. While the overall GFJ program, from planning to execution and evaluation, will be completed by a larger team, the program leader is responsible for the general management and oversight of the larger GFJ team.	Institutional Readiness
Develop a GFJ Team: Assemble a team of individuals who will oversee planning and executing the GFJ plan. The team should include members from across the agency, and could include staff from Human Resources, Community Development, Youth Services, Workforce Development, and/or a Healthy Food Initiative if one exists.	Institutional Readiness
Amass Leadership Support: Identify a leader within the agency who can champion the GFJ efforts across the agency and to leadership. Full leadership support is needed to secure the required infrastructure, staff, and funding for the creation and ongoing success of a GFJ program.	Institutional Readiness
Conduct an Environmental Evaluation: Determine why your organization is interested in developing a new GFJ program. Why is it important? What are the goals of the new program? How does a GFJ program align with the organization's overall strategic goals and mission?	Institutional Readiness
Evaluate Current Workforce Profile: Does your organization currently have a workforce development (WFD) program? If so, what are its current skills and competencies? What are its strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and needs? What are the priorities of the current WFD program? How would a GFJ program align with the current WFD program?	Institutional Readiness
Enlist External Support: Enlist support from local, state, and national organizations with experience in GFJ programs. They may be able to share learnings and justifications that could be useful to the development and execution of your program and assist in making a case for creating a new or expanding an existing GFJ program.	Institutional Readiness; Partnerships
Conduct a Needs Assessment: Identify gaps in knowledge, skills, and abilities among agency staff. Does the agency work with any partner organizations that can fill in these gaps? Major gaps should be addressed through the GFJ's training schedule and curriculum.	Institutional Readiness

Develop a Communication Strategy: Establish a communication strategy to keep staff, leadership and stakeholders informed. This strategy should employ a diverse mix of delivery approaches, such as employee newsletters, social media, and agency website announcements.	Communications
Implement and Monitor the Program: Identify an individual person or agency division who will oversee tracking the program's progress along with the tracking mechanism that will be utilized (e.g. an Excel spreadsheet, Access database, or another type of management system).	Evaluation
Evaluate the Program: Establish qualitative and quantitative evaluation measures and an evaluation schedule. Use these metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the GFJ program according to this schedule and update the plan accordingly.	Evaluation

Adapted from the ASTHO Workforce Development Plan Toolkit¹⁷

CONNECTING GOOD FOOD JOBS PROGRAMS TO ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Good food jobs programs prepare participants for career advancement, professional growth and enhanced earning power. They also seek to provide trainees with the knowledge, skills, competencies and credentials needed to succeed in the food sector. This section describes some of the training programs that can assist in realizing these goals and the partnerships that CDCs and SHs are creating with these programs.

A variety of academic training programs for various categories of food sector workers are offered by the City University of New York (CUNY) and other institutions. Such programs are available to residents of New York City and are located throughout the city's five boroughs and at State University of New York (SUNY) programs outside the city. These programs offer training in the skills necessary for success in the food industry through both degree and certificate programs in culinary arts and events management.

A few training programs illustrate the range of options available for community organizations that want to send participants in their workforce development programs to obtain a certificate or degree. The first two are based within academic programs the final three in other types of organizations.

- **Kingsborough Community College offers an Urban Food System: Greening Certificate.** Four courses are required for a certificate that supports the development of a food service workforce trained to design and implement the new operational and financial changes needed to keep this sector healthy in the 21st Century. The four courses are Greening the Cityscape through Sustainable Urban Farming, Reviving Urban Food Processing Operations with “Green” Culinary Professionals, Greening Commercial Kitchens and Training “Green-Savvy” Hospital and Hospitality Staff, and the “Green” Triple-Bottom Line for Industrial Food Service Managers. Each course costs \$75 and all four together cost \$250.¹⁸

- **Hostos Community College offers Culinary Arts Skills Training,** an introductory course designed to give students the fundamental skills and practical working knowledge to enter the Food Service Industry. The course focuses on the many tiers of food preparation including: ingredient selection, knife skills, edible design, recipe creation, kitchen communication, facility maintenance, and health and safety factors. The 118-hour courses also prepare students to take the New York City Department of Health’s Food Protection exam. The cost of the course is \$1200.¹⁹

- **The Job Corps Culinary Arts career training program** takes 12 to 15 months to complete and requires training in several subject areas including nutrition, culinary math, culinary measurement, tools and equipment, basic knife skills, culinary fundamentals, and preparation of fruits and vegetables. The program reports that graduates have a salary range for various careers of \$26,000 to \$29,000 annually. The Job Corps, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Labor offers housing, meals, and basic medical care, and a biweekly living allowance.²⁰

- **Fortune Society, an organization that serves people returning from incarceration,** offers a Culinary Arts training program not based in an academic institution. Clients receive hands-on training in an industrial kitchen, as well as education about the culinary industry. Completion of this program can lead them to earning both ServSafe and New York City Food Handler’s certifications.²¹

- **Dishes by Doe is a food focused social enterprise operated by the Doe Fund,** an organization that provides paid transitional work, housing, educational opportunities, counseling, and career training to people with histories of homelessness, incarceration, and substance abuse. Operated as part of Doe’s Culinary Arts career track, Dishes by Doe, while not technically an academic program, does allow participants to work as part of the Fund’s catering corps while training for professional licenses in the culinary arts.

These and other similar programs offer CDCs and SHs an opportunity to develop food workforce development partnerships that bring together community-based training experiences, academic or organizational programs that lead to a certificate or degree and work experience. By creating the right mix of options, community organizations can launch participants in their food workforce development programs on a career trajectory that enables them to support themselves and their families, advance their careers and promote community well-being.

By establishing linkages with academic programs that offer credit-bearing courses and certificates, CDCs and SHs can also assist participants in their food workforce development programs to begin the path towards earning a college degree, an increasingly important credential for life success and adequate income. Table 3, developed by the City University of New York, lists food-related degree programs at CUNY.

Table 3.
Programs at CUNY that Prepare People for Jobs in the Food Sector

Source:
Dann-Messier C. Career Maps for Cooks and Chefs. CUNY, 2016.²²

KEY		CONTINUING EDUCATION/NON-DEGREE				ASSOCIATE DEGREE					BACHELOR'S DEGREE		
		FOOD SAFETY / PROTECTION	DIETARY MANAGER	CULINARY ARTS*	BUSINESS / ENTREPRENEURSHIP*	CULINARY ARTS	DIETETICS / FOOD / NUTRITION	FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENT	HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT	BUSINESS / ENTREPRENEURSHIP	NUTRITION / FOOD SCIENCES	HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT	BUSINESS / ENTREPRENEURSHIP
MANHATTAN	1				■					■			■
	2									■			
	3	■											■
	4				■								■
	5									■			
	6										■		
QUEENS	7		■		■		■	■	■	■			
	8										■		■
	9						■			■			
	10				■								■
BROOKLYN	11										■		■
	12			■	■	■			■	■			
	13				■					■			■
	14	■							■		■		
BRONX	15						■			■			
	16	■		■						■			
	17				■						■		■
SI	18	■							■			■	

* Kingsborough offers several Continuing Education Culinary Arts-related programs including specialty cooking courses; an undergraduate culinary arts certificate that awards 12 credits that can be applied to the Associate Degree program in culinary arts; and Kitchen Ventures, an initiative that helps retail and food entrepreneur hopefuls to build and grow their own businesses.

NOTE: THIS TABLE IS ACCURATE FOR THE 2014-2015 ACADEMIC YEAR. AS CUNY CONTINUOUSLY UPDATES ITS DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE OFFERINGS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, PLEASE CONSULT EACH INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL'S WEBSITE FOR THE MOST CURRENT LISTINGS.



Photo Credit: Community Chefs by NEBHDCo

Academic and training programs, both degree and non-degree (certificate) programs, offer a crucial pathway to food sector work by providing a relatively quick training -- usually up to six months of hard skills training -- to prepare individuals for entry-level positions in the food sector. Because these programs have established relationships with the food industry, graduates have access to entry-level jobs that pay New York State minimum wage and can offer benefits and career advancement. Additionally, students in two-year associate programs who earn credit in Tourism and Hospitality can have these credits transferred to a four-year college within the CUNY system. Tuition runs between \$4,000 to \$5,000 per year for full-time students, and \$200-\$300 per credit hour for part-time students. Tuition assistance is available.

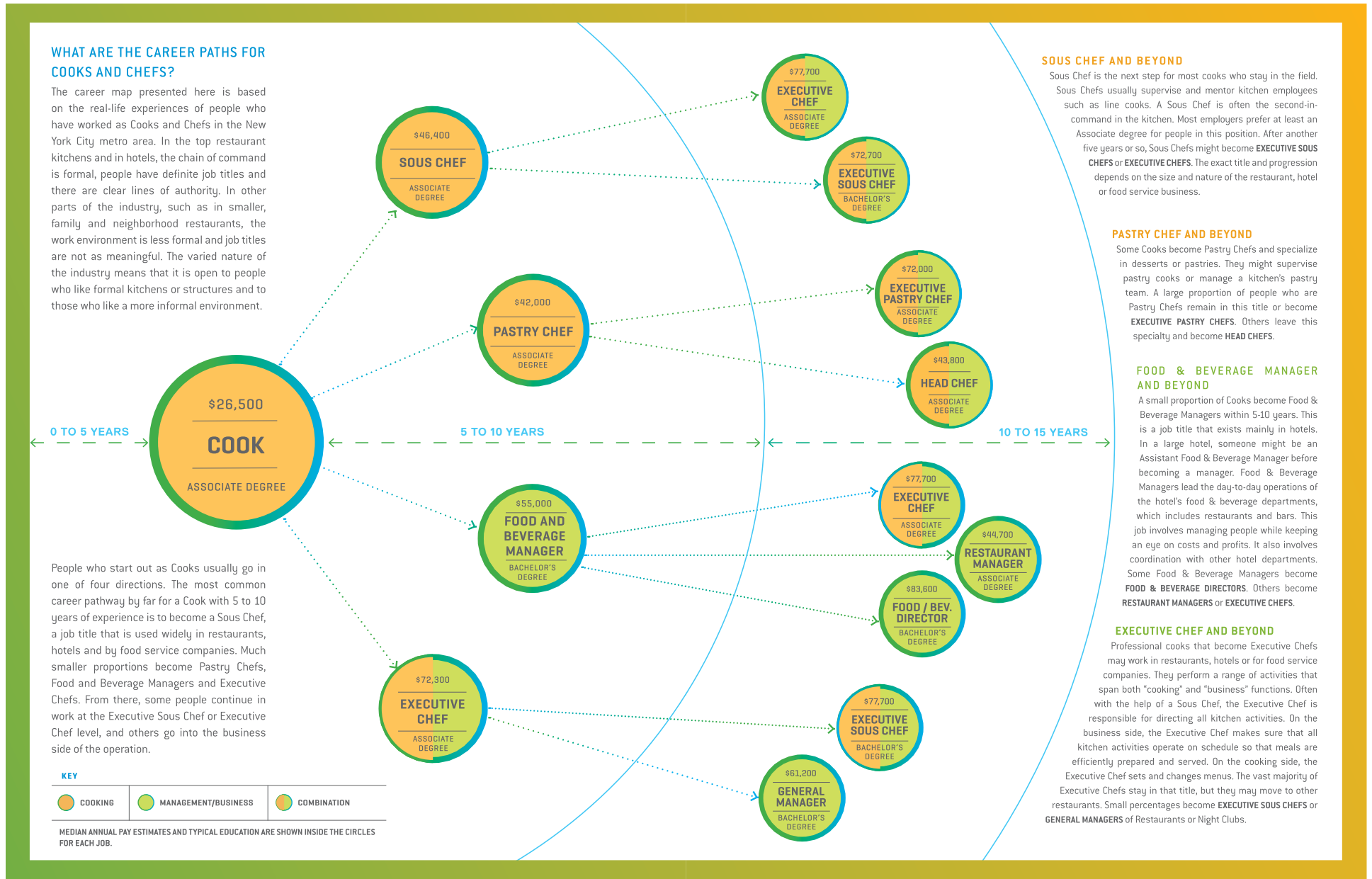
Figure 3, created by Curtis Dann-Messier, Assistant Director, CUNY Office of Continuing Education, shows that by analyzing the career trajectories of people working in the food sector, it is possible to map alternative careers for participants in food workforce development programs, trajectories that promise better paying and more fulfilling jobs rather than low-wage jobs in fast food chains. By working with industry groups, academic programs, and labor unions, CDCs and SHs can identify the opportunities and pathways in which they have the capacity to contribute.

—Continues on page 38—



Photo Credit: Prepared Food Counter by Rouses is licensed under CC BY 2.0

Figure 3. Career Pathways in the Food Sector



Source: Dann-Messier C. Career Maps for Cooks and Chefs. CUNY, 2016 ²³.

CONCLUSION



Photo Credit: Broccoli by Foodism360

A Good Food Jobs strategy has the potential to contribute to the solution of three major problems confronting low-income communities in New York City and elsewhere: creating more and better employment opportunities for unemployed and underemployed workers, contributing to local sustainable community and economic development, and increasing access to healthy affordable food.

Several trends support investing human and financial capital in this strategy now:

- The growth of a public and non-profit food sector including farmers' markets, expanded institutional food programs in schools, child care centers and senior programs, and other community-based healthy food options;
- Increased food worker organizing leading to hikes in the minimum wage;
- A growing interest and demand for healthy food in low and middle-income communities;
- Significant changes in food retailing as a result of online food ordering, supermarket consolidation and home deliveries;
- New policy maker and community interest in using food as a tool for community economic development

While there is as yet no known comprehensive assessment of the number of good food jobs available now or projected for the next decade, these trends show the potential for growth in the number and quality of good food jobs over the next several years. With their deep roots in low-income communities, their extensive experience in workforce development and their developing capacity to promote access to healthy food, CDCs and SHs are well positioned to provide leadership for the growth of this sector and to spark the creation of the infrastructure and policy support to move Good Food Jobs into the policy mainstream.

Today CDCs and SHs in New York City are actively exploring how to integrate their current work in healthy food access to their workforce development initiative. The Good Food Jobs approach to workforce development is one based on values related to equity, fairness, and job mobility. To move beyond a niche effort, these programs will need additional support, attention and planning from CDCs, SHs and the organizations that support, and fund them. Several organizations have already demonstrated success in creating various types of good food jobs initiatives and provide grounds for optimism that with support, this sector can grow.

By ramping up and coordinating the many small-scale efforts to grow food jobs in community-based organizations, CDCs and SHs can transform these now mostly separate efforts into a cohesive initiative and catalyst for food system change. Several approaches are being used to coordinate across boundaries. Geographic approaches seek to integrate diverse healthy food and workforce initiatives at the community level. Restoration's emerging Central Brooklyn Institutional Food Network and local food hub are examples. Product specific efforts focus on growing a particular type of local food production. Hot Bread Kitchen's effort to produce, sell and train others to bake quality breads illustrates this approach. Finally, some Good Food Jobs initiatives seek to develop a specific sector. Children's Aid Society and Lenox Hill Neighborhood House have each contributed to upgrading the skills and eventually the compensation of cooks in schools, childcare and senior programs to prepare healthier more appealing institutional food. Each of these approaches warrants further development.

Our assessment of current practice highlighted some characteristics of successful programs. By adapting these practices, leaders of CDCs and SHs can help to create good food jobs programs that have a greater impact on employment, community development and health. Key characteristics of successful programs include:

- Provide enthusiastic support for the development of a good food jobs program. No program can be successful without support of its leaders. To help leaders play this role, Good Food Jobs program planners need to keep leaders informed about progress and problems.
- Match the skills and learning strategies developed with the needs of the

program participants. Identify what soft and hard skills are required for the specific good food job employment niches and develop tools, materials, and curriculum to teach those skills. Evaluate the success of these tools and adjust the curriculum accordingly.

- Engage the participants enrolled in training programs in their design, implementation and evaluation.
- Train the trainer models are efficient, cost-effective, and productive approaches for impact. For example, several programs have trained community chefs to train other community chefs; therefore, reducing the burden on staff as new leaders emerge to help run programs. This strategy also helps to build morale among program participants, which is particularly important when hard-working youth still struggle to find employment. The “train the trainer” model allows these star students to receive valuable leadership experience, which they can include on their resume.
- Collaborate with other local organizations. By partnering with the many organizations working in the healthy food and workforce development sectors, CDCs, SHs and other community organizations can leverage limited resources, create more sustainable programs and connect program participants with other services that partner organizations may offer.

While the good food jobs strategy is only one component of the transformation our food system will need to support healthier, stronger and more sustainable communities, it is a practical, accessible and engaging approach for the thousands of organizations working in New York and other cities to improve the well-being of low-income populations.

The existing healthy food access and workforce development programs in these organizations can become engines that drive meaningful changes in health outcomes and financial mobility in underserved neighborhoods. Critical shifts now underway in the food sector offer workforce development and healthy food programs at CDCs, SHs and similar organizations an opportunity to take advantage of these changes to improve employment opportunities, community economic development and health.

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