

Des Moines Independent Public School

Central Campus Culinary Arts and Restaurant Management Academy

Hospitality & Tourism Career Cluster

Overview

The Culinary Arts and Restaurant Management Academy in Des Moines, Iowa began in 2009 and brings students together from 25 high schools to offer an incredible array of work-based learning opportunities, while setting the bar high for academic and technical coursework. Through the dedication of the school's administration and a former chef who heads the program, and a strong partnership with the Des Moines Area Community College that allows seamless transitions for students, the Academy prepares students to become leaders in the hospitality and management industry.

Students (37)	Percentage
Male	35%
Female	65%
Low-income	55%
Minority	39%
Students with disabilities	19%

“Rigorous, Relevant and Meaningful”

The curriculum at the Academy utilizes ProStart and National Restaurant Association standards with support from the Iowa Restaurant Association, and goes above and beyond to include instruction based on the expertise of industry and business partners to keep the academic and technical courses relevant and aligned with national, state and local industry needs.

Through the Academy's Central Campus Advisory Committee and the Culinary Arts Advisory Council, leaders in local restaurant and hotel management are consulted regularly on curriculum and the lead instructor himself brings a breadth of experience and knowledge from his former position as a head chef at a large hotel. Academy staff also meets regularly with instructors from area high schools to ensure students are supported back in their home high schools.

“We hold tremendously high standards and make the program professional. Students should be so well prepared, they believe they are professionals and take on big challenges. It is crucial to demand a high quality and level of success... Everything should be rigorous, relevant and meaningful.”
– Aiddy Phomvisay, Assistant Director, Central Campus, Des Moines Public Schools

Certifications and Dual Credit Set up Students for College and Career Success

While the Academy upholds a rigorous curriculum, they also offer a seamless pathway to postsecondary education and the workforce through certifications and dual enrollment options. All

students in the program earn the National Restaurant Association ServSafe Food Handler certification within the first eight weeks of study, and most students go one step further and receive ServSafe Manager Certification. Upon completion of the two-year program, students are eligible to receive the ProStart National Certificate of Achievement, increasing collegiate, job placement and scholarship opportunities.



The program of study begins in middle school, where in as early as sixth grade, students are introduced to health, nutrition and food preparation courses. In high school, students gain the basic knowledge and skills through Food Prep 1 and 2 coursework before entering the Academy and honing in on their technical skills. Once enrolled at the Academy, students can take up to three years of courses and earn up to **34 credit hours** that transfer to the Des Moines Area Community College Culinary Program, where students will enter as sophomores.

Work-Based Learning Foundation of Successful Program

Armed with dual credits and certifications, students are also able to prepare for their future through real-world application of their course material. The Academy exposes students to real world work experience through researching, designing, planning, preparing and hosting regular catering and Central Campus Café luncheons. At least once a week, students prepare a full course gourmet lunch for over 60-80 customers in the school's Café, while also remaining responsible for special programs for visiting guests and dignitaries.

Through active career guidance, students are placed in internships and local job placements in some of the top restaurants and country clubs in the area. Furthermore, a host of industry and business partners from country clubs and restaurants to amusements parks offer students mentorship, site visits and guest lectures. This multitude of authentic and quality work-based learning experiences allows students to gain exposure to a wide array of career opportunities, apply their academic and technical skills, work in a team with their fellow classmates and display the leadership skills necessary to succeed in a future career.

Success by the Numbers

The Academy's seamless transition between secondary and postsecondary education, focus on academic and technical rigor, exemplary work-based learning opportunities and certification offerings prepare students for a lifetime of success in the culinary world.

Data based on 2014-2015 school year



100%

Earned Postsecondary Credit



100%

Earned an Industry-recognized Credential



100%

Participated in Work-based Learning



100%

Graduated High School



89%

Enrolled in Postsecondary Education