



El Monte Union High School District

Community Committed to College and Career

PRESS RELEASE

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Rosemead High Students Explore Culinary Arts, Entrepreneurship Running Panther Café

EL MONTE – Rosemead High School students and staff who start their day at 6:50 a.m. will enjoy freshly baked treats and nutritious breakfast items courtesy of the Panther Café, run by the school's culinary arts students who use the facility as a training center to learn kitchen techniques and entrepreneurial skills.

"Culinary arts students are learning all aspects of running a kitchen, how to prep, what ingredients to order, which knife to use," Rosemead High School food management teacher Patricia Sahagun said. "The program is really allowing the kids to learn a lot about the catering business and they are bringing those lessons back home to share with their families."

Averaging nearly 150 food items sold per day, the Panther Café receives enough revenue from sales of breakfast bowls, chicken noodle soup, oatmeal and bakery items to stock its kitchen with fresh ingredients. Student chefs also have access to homegrown vegetables from Rosemead's herb garden, run by students in the Best of Thymes club.

"It's a great hands-on learning experience," Rosemead senior Cristina Pagan said. "The skills we learn in the kitchen we get to take home. My mom loves my chicken noodle soup!"

The culinary arts program will receive a boost in funding from the El Monte/South El Monte Chamber of Commerce, which will donate partial proceeds from its "A Taste and Sound of El Monte/South El Monte" event, to be held **Thursday, March 22**.

The culinary arts program is among more than a dozen career technical education (CTE) pathways available to El Monte Union High School District students. Rosemead's program features two courses – Intro to Cooking, which concentrates on the basics of food preparation, and Culinary II, which focuses on the practical experience of running a restaurant.

The Panther Café adheres to all California school nutrition guidelines. At the end of the first semester, students with a B or better are offered the opportunity to take the food safety training course required to receive a California Food Handlers card. At the end of the second semester, students receive a certificate that lists the tangible skills they have learned in class.

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Rosemead’s newly renovated state-of-the-art kitchen, which was funded by the \$148 million Measure D facilities bond passed by El Monte voters in 2008, is equipped with six instructional stations for students and a prep area for dishes on the Panther Café’s menu.

“Being in the class has taught me that we need to be up and ready to get to work every day,” Rosemead senior Christy Lam said. “It has also made me more responsible and patient with others.”

Upon graduation, culinary arts students have pursued post-secondary programs at such educational institutions as Los Angeles Trade Tech College, Culinary Institute of America and the Collins College of Hospitality Management at Cal Poly Pomona, as well careers as chefs and line cooks at local restaurants.

“Rosemead’s culinary arts students are not only learning a trade, but they are also learning responsibility and accountability – two characteristics of highly successful professionals,” Principal Dr. Brian Bristol said. “I want to thank our teachers and staff for helping our culinary arts students develop meaningful skills that can lead to rewarding and lucrative careers.”

The “A Taste and Sound of El Monte/South El Monte” will be held from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Grace Black Auditorium, 3130 Tyler Ave., El Monte. For more information, call (626) 443-0180.

PHOTO CAPTION:

031918_EMUHSD_CULINARY: Rosemead High School Culinary Arts students prepare freshly baked treats so be sold at the student-run Panther Café. The café, which provides nutritious breakfasts for early-rising Rosemead students, faculty and staff, is staffed entirely by Culinary Arts students, who are learning the basics of food preparation and entrepreneurship through the program.

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The vision of the El Monte Union High School District is to empower and motivate our students to be resilient, college and career ready, lifelong learners and contributing members of our global society.