

## **KVCC Community Culinary and Nutrition: Program Content**

We are in the midst of a health crisis.

Poor health impacts our well-being and our economy. Lack of access to affordable healthy foods and the resulting poor dietary choices, contribute to the onset of preventable diseases and a reduced quality of life. In Kalamazoo County, over 63% of adults are overweight or obese. Across Michigan, more than \$3 billion is spent annually on medical costs associated with diet-related health conditions.

Food is a problem... and food is a solution.

In 2013, a partnership was created between Kalamazoo Valley Community College, Bronson Healthcare and Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. The Bronson Healthy Living Campus, completed in 2016, now serves as a catalyst for urban revitalization, community health, and workforce development. The synergies developed between project organizers, as well as, Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine, the City of Kalamazoo and others, serve to meet increasing demand for holistic approaches to healthy food and good health.

We are committed to enriching the lives of our students and communities through quality educational programs and services, by improving the well-being of the Kalamazoo community through integration of innovative programs that promote FOOD AS MEDICINE from production to preparation to consumption.

We meet our students and community where they are - understanding their socio-economic environment, barriers and key health concerns. Our programs teach that healthy eating and scratch cooking don't have to be difficult, time-consuming or expensive. Guided by the principle of Food as Medicine, chefs, dietitians, public health experts, and faculty work together to offer hands-on community classes that empower the preparation of delicious healthy meals at home. Community classes include Kitchen FUNdamentals, Meal Planning and Preparation, Healthy Eating on a Budget, Mindful Eating, Weight Management, Exercise Nutrition, and many more.

Developing strategies for using food to impact health beyond the walls of our institution, collaborative community projects include:

- West Michigan Cancer Center: Survivorwise Culinary Classes
- Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services:
  - Food For Thought: Culinary Classes for Practioners and consumers
  - Mobile Community Kitchen: Cookbook and mobile kitchen unit for culinary education with consumers in field
  - [Mobile Kitchen Cookbook](#)
- Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine:
  - Medical culinary sessions for all second year medical students

- Early Introduction to Health Careers - summer educational programming for middle and high school students.
- Bronson Healthcare:
  - Obesity Intervention program \*funded

Community partners directly served through Community Culinary and Nutrition programs include: Boys and Girls Club, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Bronson Healthcare, Family Health Center, Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Kalamazoo Academy of Medicine Alliance, Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home, Kalamazoo Parks and Recreation, Kalamazoo Valley Community College Medical Assisting Technologies, Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative, Southwestern Michigan District Dietetic Association, West Michigan Cancer Center, Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine, Western Michigan University Seita Scholars, and YMCA of Greater Kalamazoo

#### Guiding Principles:

- Collaborate with key anchor institutions (especially health care organizations, dietitians) and subject matter experts
- Pursue the necessary research to identify the most common, food-related, issues facing our community
- Intentional focus to "meet customers where they are"
- Create program content confirmed through "proof of concept" testing that is driven by:
  - Demand
  - Relevancy
  - Impact
- Establish a systematic approach to measure outcomes (quality and quantity) against objectives and ensure verifiable value to our program participants
- Incorporate the necessary flexibility to adapt as needs and priorities change
- Institute a process for continuous improvement
- Emphasize customer and program sustainability

Register for classes [here](#).

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