



# Future Chefs

## OVERVIEW

**FOUNDED** 2008 | **CURRENT REVENUE** \$200,000

**DESCRIPTION:** Future Chefs (FC) is a high-impact, school-to-career program that prepares motivated youth for quality early employment and post-secondary educational opportunities in the culinary field, where the demand for skilled professionals is consistently high. Serving primarily disadvantaged youth in trade-oriented high schools, FC provides guidance to students who lack support and professional networks and who are often overlooked for other college access and school-to-career opportunities. Since 2008, FC has engaged approximately 200 students and recent graduates from six Boston-area high schools, and it aspires to reach 340 youth by the end of 2013. FC’s vision is that one day, all low-income youth in greater Boston will receive adequate support to transition successfully from high school to adulthood—and into careers that allow them to be both economically self-sufficient and personally fulfilled.

**INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY:** FC aims to raise \$600,000 over the next two years to achieve its goals, including moving to a centrally located space that will allow FC to reach more students, broaden its program offerings, and plan an earned income, youth-led catering enterprise to help support the organization in the future.

## THE NEED

Research shows that successes or failures during the transition from adolescence to adulthood establish patterns that can last a lifetime. Yet, many disadvantaged youth lack the necessary support to navigate their future and secure postsecondary education or meaningful employment. This is often the case for young people from low-income backgrounds or youth in trade-oriented high schools who are pursuing a non-traditional, non-college bound path.

- In Massachusetts, 59,000 students are in trade-oriented classrooms, and 10,000 live in Boston.
- At the 16 trade-oriented schools in greater Boston, each guidance counselor serves an average of 189 students. These schools lack the capacity to offer individualized career planning or internships with professionals in the field.
- The costs of not having a post-graduation career plan are high. In Massachusetts, as in Boston, one in ten youth ages 18 to 24 is not working and not in school.

## THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

Culinary arts and the food service industry present a consistent demand for skilled labor, with numerous entry-level positions and opportunities for career advancement.

- In 2010, 9% of all Massachusetts jobs were in this sector.
- The culinary arts and food service sector will create 22,000 new jobs in Massachusetts by 2020.
- In Boston, median salaries for restaurant managers and chefs range from \$54,000 to \$79,000.
- With its youth development approach and a professional network of dozens of restaurants, chefs, suppliers, and other industry partners, FC is uniquely positioned to take advantage of this opportunity to connect youth with culinary careers.

## TWO-YEAR GOALS

- Expand program to reach 55% more youth by 2013
- Move to a centralized Boston location to broaden program offerings and involve unaffiliated participants (students who lack in-school culinary programs)
- Establish a formal one-on-one mentoring program linking industry professionals with youth participants in the critical transition period following high school
- Develop and implement a strategic fundraising plan to attract major donors, increase the number of grants, and grow corporate sponsorship
- Introduce a robust evaluation system to strengthen program effectiveness

## WAYS TO INVEST

### Financial

- \$25,000 – Pays salary and benefits for a part-time Food Educator or Marketing and Development Assistant; Covers over six months’ rent on new program space
- \$5,000 – Funds a scholarship for a graduating senior to attend college or postsecondary training
- \$1,000 – Sponsors travel and food-related costs for *four* field trips to visit colleges, industry partners, or community service sites

### In-Kind

- Marketing and development expertise
- Meeting and event space
- Website redesign



*“I’m going to Newbury College Accepted Students Day on March 28<sup>th</sup>....You have touched my life and helped me get on my way to success. Thank you for being so understanding. Thank you.”*

–Youth participant Mark Deleon Kellam, age 18

## SOCIAL INNOVATION IN ACTION – THE FUTURE CHEFS MODEL

**Targeting and Recruitment:** At present, Future Chefs targets disadvantaged youth studying the culinary arts through partnerships with local high schools. Partner schools for the 2010-11 academic year include Everett High School, Madison Park Technical Vocational High School (Roxbury), Quincy High School, and Somerville High School. While the recruited students display great potential, they often lack a plan for after high school or the necessary support to find a career path. In the 2011-12 school year, FC aims to expand its program to engage eligible, interested students who do not have culinary arts offered at their schools – some of whom have already approached FC.

FC achieves its impact through a three-phase approach. Throughout this approach, FC supports youth participants with skill development, industry connections, high expectations, and opportunities to work and learn. Participants emerge from the program with the experience and confidence to pursue careers that allow them to be both economically self-sufficient and personally fulfilled.



### Phase I: Exploration & Commitment

In Phase I, during tenth and eleventh grade, students explore the culinary arts and food service sector through industry-related field trips, school meetings, and events. Participants demonstrate their commitment through required attendance at after-school meetings and progressively more challenging skill demonstration events, which foster positive relationships with program staff and youth across the three phases. Participants who have graduated from high school often return to volunteer at events and support their peers.

### Phase II: Developing a Career Plan

During Phase II, FC works with each twelfth grader to create concrete, individual plans for taking the next step after graduation – including finding a job, applying to college or postsecondary training, and securing financial aid. FC also provides general career-related opportunities and mentoring, filling the gaps in vocational education programs and helping participants establish early patterns of success. This encompasses training in key “soft skills” for the workplace, such as interviewing, communications, résumé development, and networking. Students also practice the “hard skills” needed in high-end food services. Through partnerships with high schools and industry members, students complete a step-by-step progression that includes job shadowing, internships, networking with professionals, and apprenticeships.

### Phase III: Working the Plan

After participants graduate from high school and transition to work, school, or postsecondary training, they move into Phase III of the program, which focuses on coaching and advising to ensure youth succeed in taking the next step. Furthermore, FC involves participants who have graduated from high school as key volunteers and peer leaders. These young people frequently help out at events, communicate often with their peer cohort, and serve as role models for incoming participants.

As a result of Future Chefs’ efforts to reach disadvantaged youth, 83% of participants come from low-income backgrounds and 37% are immigrants or first-generation Americans. The youth population served reflects the diversity of greater Boston:

<b>26%</b> African-American	<b>3%</b> Asian	<b>36%</b> Caucasian	<b>31%</b> Latino	<b>4%</b> Other
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## TEAM AND GOVERNANCE

Executive Director and Founder Toni Elka understands that life after high school is a risky time for students without a safety net, a plan, and adult support and guidance. In 1995, Toni created an innovative, arts- and voice-centered prevention program for girls in inner-city middle schools called Circle of Girls—one of 10 programs selected for a three-year Girls Initiative sponsored by the Fireman Foundation. In 2004, Toni became the Program Director for the Anthony Spinazzola Foundation’s Culinary Apprentice Program (CAP). Through CAP, Toni organized a community of motivated youth, supportive teachers with high expectations, attentive parents, and local chefs and restaurateurs. When the Spinazzola Foundation closed in August 2007, there was no question that Toni would continue this effort. She sought and singularly found the funding and support to launch Future Chefs. In addition to several years of experience in the culinary field, Toni holds a B.F.A. with honors from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design and a Certificate from the Institute for Nonprofit Management and Leadership at Boston University.

School-to-Career Program Manager Ann DiClemente holds an Ed.M. from Boston University and a B.A. in political science from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Ann possesses nearly 10 years of experience in the food service industry and the youth development field.

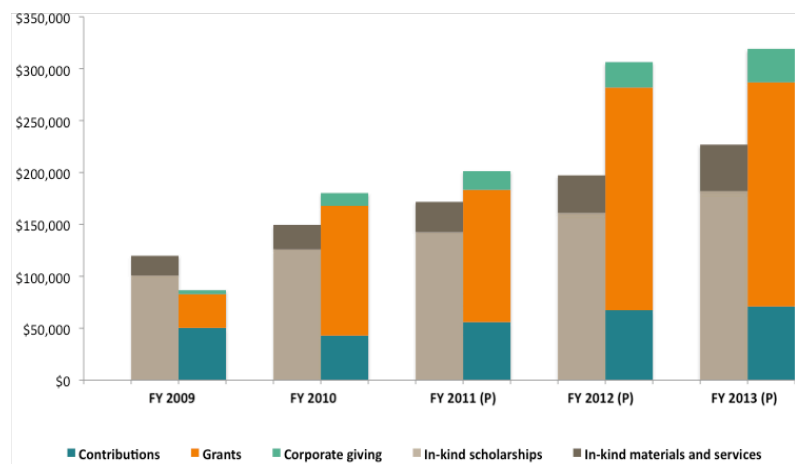
Abbie Waite joined the FC team in early 2011 as the Marketing and Development Assistant. Before she crossed over to the nonprofit world, Abbie was employed by a popular Cambridge-based restaurant group, where she developed and managed marketing and events for their six establishments. Abbie holds a B.A. in sociology from Northeastern University and a Professional Chef Certificate.

FC also boasts a strong and committed Advisory Council composed of a diverse mix of food service industry professionals, business people, restaurateurs, and FC program representatives. Juelle Cummins, a FC alumna and Hilton Back Bay employee, serves on the council. Other council members include Patricia M. Keegan, Senior Vice President at ClearRock Consulting; Will McAdoo, publisher of The Boston Foodie; Nestle Waters Manager Ellie O’Keefe; Gabriel Dym, Esq.; Emily Lebo, Director of Vocational and Technical Education at Boston Public Schools; and Chef Chris Douglass of the Ashmont Grill and Tavolo Ristorante.

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

FC is a young, yet financially resilient organization. After its initial operating year, during which FC received major seed funding, the economic markets collapsed – and FC found itself without a sponsor. Through the tireless efforts of its Executive Director, Toni Elka, FC won the support of several local foundations and numerous individual donors during the most challenging economic climate in recent history.

Over the past two years, FC has grown and diversified its funding base. FC is now at an inflection point, transitioning from a start-up to an early stage organization. In this phase, FC will build organizational capacity, move into a new space, and add services to make its youth program more robust in serving participants. To achieve this growth, FC will target larger foundation grants while also pursuing major donors. Furthermore, FC is taking steps to strengthen its ties to large food service companies to increase the amount of corporate sponsorship dollars and in-kind program support.



In January 2011, FC hired a part-time Marketing and Development Assistant to focus on these goals, with a plan to convert this employee to full-time status by the end of FY 2011. Within five years, Future Chefs also aims to add an earned-income element, such as a youth-led catering service, to its financial strategy.

*“I cannot thank you enough for being by my side, always believing in me, and being my biggest supporter.... I believe God sent angels in my life to help me, and you are one of them.”*

–Youth participant Suellen Sarmento, age 18



## PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

**Program Performance and Organizational Health:** Below is a summary of the key measures that Future Chefs will track to demonstrate progress, capture lessons learned, and make course corrections as needed. Note: Fiscal year is October 1 – September 30.

	FY 2011	FY 2012 (P)	FY 2013 (P)
<b>Program Performance</b>			
Increase number of participants in all three program phases	90	110	140
Expand number of internship, job shadowing, and job placement sites secured through Future Chefs' outreach	15	18	21
Increase percentage of high school seniors obtaining scholarships and grants for post-secondary education	71%	90%	90%
Increase number of partnerships with referral agencies (academic support, social services, counseling, etc.)	---	2	4
Formalize mentoring program with industry professionals	Recruit mentors	15 mentors	30 mentors
<b>Organizational Health/Capacity-Building</b>			
Acquire centrally located, permanent home for program with office space, youth meeting room, and kitchen	Explore potential sites and funding	Bid on site; move to new space	Fully operational in new space
Add Food Educator staff position	---	Search, hire PTE	PTE
Develop and implement strategic fundraising plan	Develop	Implement	Revise and implement
Increase corporate sponsorship dollars	\$18,000	\$24,000	\$32,000
Increase number of grant applications submitted	30	40	45
Increase number of major donors making gifts of \$2,500+	3	5	7
Extend Fundraising/Development staff position	---	Convert PTE to FTE	FTE
Increase percentage of Advisory Council members who raise \$1,000+ per year	13%	25%	50%
Institute program evaluation system	Reach out to graduate schools	Student team designs evaluation system	Launch system and analyze results
Increase total revenue	\$201,000	\$306,000	\$322,000

## SOCIAL IMPACT

Currently, FC uses the metrics below to measure its impact. One of FC's short-term goals is to develop a more robust evaluation system to better understand its program and ensure program effectiveness.

Indicator	2011
Percentage of Phase II and Phase III participants pursuing practical industry experience through internships or jobs	91%
Percentage of Phase III participants who are pursuing, enrolled in, or have completed post-secondary education/training	90%
Percentage of Phase III participants taking part in FC coaching and advising services (team and individual)	78%



### Success Story: Aquila Collins

When Aquila first joined Future Chefs in her senior year at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, she had a GPA of 1.79 and no interest in attending college. Yet Aquila loved her culinary classes and was recommended to FC by a culinary instructor. FC helped Aquila explore her options and ignited her passion and focus by connecting her to successful chefs and opportunities to continue her studies after high school. Through FC, Aquila earned a half-tuition scholarship to Southern New Hampshire University. She has since completed her associate's degree with honors. She is now a year away from earning her bachelor's degree in hospitality management and is poised to enter a coveted kitchen internship at the Seaport Hotel, a FC partner. Aquila is an active and engaged member of FC's postsecondary cohort and a positive role model for other students in the program.