

Hawthorne Food and Drink delivers second chances

Hawthorne Food and Drink is in its eighth year of delivering delicious meals while staying true to its mission of giving back to the community.

The restaurant located at 60 Richmond St. East dishes up food made from local, seasonal and sustainable ingredients. As the local Social Enterprise arm of Hospitality Workers Training Centre, Hawthorne provides free training and career development for people in need of skills and employment.

Current Chef/ Instructor Donald Williams works with job seekers who experience barrier to employment through applied training, he prepares them for entry level jobs in the city's jobs.

“I can relate, to many of the trainees, because like them, I have faced struggles and barriers which helped me to exercise patience and support towards success in the industry.”

Chef Williams says he works to equip trainees at Hawthorne with the skills employers want and expose them to what it is really like to work in a restaurant.

He is proud to pass lessons to the trainees such as “making sure they are satisfied with the dish before it reaches the customer

and that food should be prepared with care and professionalism” he outlines.

Olga Stojka MiHalyne, a past trainee and now employee at the restaurant (Server), fled her homeland of Hungary and came to Canada as a refugee. After two years of improving her English as a volunteer she was ready for training towards employment. Olga shares “My caseworker referred me to Hawthorne training, it has been magical and has changed my life.”

Sixty-seven participants completed practical training as cooks, servers and dishwashers in 2017.

During training, participants receive relevant industry certification such WHMIS Food Handlers and Smart Serve. A huge component of the training is the placement with restaurant and hotel partners which is most times arranged as a trial towards employment.

Hawthorne participates in Meal Share as well OCTA’s FeastON program. The menus change often and take inspiration from the farms of Ontario. It is a full service restaurant that offers breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as catering services.

