Welcome to our First Monthly Newsletter!

Is it Mid-October already?

It seems like yesterday we were in our opening meeting at South Eugene High.

As I continue to make my first visits around this District, I am amazed by the friendly, hard-working staff that we have in Nutrition Services! As I left behind an awesome group of people in my previous school district, I have “inherited” another awesome group of people! It has been an absolute honor coming here and working with everyone. I truly look forward to coming to work every day, and I from what I’ve seen, our staff truly does as well. We are so lucky! As I said in our opening meeting, we get to be the fun part of the student’s day!

So, as you receive this, I hope to hear back from you at some point to see what you think of this newsletter. Feel free to offer suggestions as to what you’d like to see in it.

Now that we have a month under our belt, we’re ready to meet the challenge of providing the best Nutrition services program available, while continuing to control our costs. One of our main goals is to continue to improve our communications to staff and community members.

What a good-looking group!

With that in mind, we’ve committed to “step it up” and provide a newsletter to let people know of what’s going on in our world. We’ll have opportunities for others to share in here as well. Coming soon, there will be an area in here from the Kitchen Coordinators, as they would like an avenue to share information as well that would come out of our Food Council Meetings. Your Management team (Javier, Nicole and I) will have regular updates as well. Hopefully this will be something you can look forward to each month as a tool to keep you informed.

Thanks for making me feel so welcome here,

-Rick

Our Mission:

“Working together in a respectful and ethical manner, Financial Services provides high quality financial, food and warehouse services to our students, staff and community.”

Voluntary Employee Benefits Company

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Meet the New Guy!

Rick Sherman, new Director of Nutrition Services

The “lowdown” on Rick: He has worked for Sodexo for thirty years. He started this journey in the Washington State Ferry System when he was in high school. He attended Western Washington University in Bellingham, WA and has a degree in Education. More recently, he has been the Nutrition Services Director in Albany (the past six years) and Dallas (OR-the ten years prior to that).

Rick has been a competitive distance runner for almost his entire life, and still competes at the Master’s level whenever he can. In the Summer he still competes in his college race, the steeplechase.

He has a wife (Jeanette) and two kids. His son Alex is away at college (Motorcycle Mechanic’s Institute) in Phoenix, while his daughter Stevie is staying at home while she embarks on her first year of community college.

Rick’s other passion is riding dirt bikes, something he shares with his son.

Other than that, Eugene is a “perfect fit” for him as he loves the lifestyle and healthy atmosphere of the people that live here. He frequently made pilgrimages here to run in meets at Hayward Field back in college, and he’s always wanted to be a part of the community.

Feel free to introduce yourself to him, or go on a run with him!

Nicole’s Nuggets

Times are certainly changing, and so are the types of entrees, snacks, and beverages being offered in school cafeterias. With the passage of the Oregon House Bill 2650, several restrictions and limits have been set regarding the types of items that are allowed to be sold in school cafeterias. Our school district was proactive in creating its very own wellness policy which sets a few more stringent guidelines to the ones that would be in place by the house bill. Sodexo, which is the food service management company that manages our Nutrition Services Department, has taken the very last step by teaming up with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation; which is part of the Clinton Foundation and is dedicated to decreasing the rate of childhood obesity by 2015.

So what sort of changes has been made in the cafeterias as a result of all these policies and bills? At the secondary level, the amount of a la cart items that are allowed to be sold has dropped dramatically. A few years ago, middle and high school students were allowed to purchase pizza by the slice, drinks of varying flavors and sizes and multiple types of chips and sweetened snacks. If you look at the snack bar offerings today, you will see that students are purchasing meals which come complete with a milk, side, and endless amount of fruits and veggies from the offering bar. At the elementary level, students are offered five different entrees each day. Two of those entrees are always a salad and a wrap, sub, or sandwich and two vegetarian options are also available on a daily basis. At both levels, the option of chocolate milk is no longer available during breakfast, breads and pastas are whole grain or 100% wheat, all breaded items are baked, and a daily offering bar filled with fruits and veggies is included with every meal.

School food service has been accused of being a leading cause of childhood obesity for some time now. Students, parents, and staff of our school district can feel comfort in knowing that our cafeterias have been moving in the right direction to help limit those kinds of stereotypes and should feel good about the food they eat when they come through our lunch lines.

For further information regarding the Wellness Policy, please visit our Nutrition Services home page located at www.4J.lane.edu/nutritionservices

Coming Soon: 4J Nutrition Services District Website!

A plan is in the works for having our very own District Nutrition Website very soon. This will be a page linked to the current 4J website. We are working with the communications department to enhance this portion of the 4J website to better communicate with Staff and parents of 4J kids.

We will be able to highlight some of the wonderful things we do in Nutrition services, and make a better tool by streamlining some things such as free and reduced application processes, and links to our menus as well as enhanced pay online features. Also, we will have links to educational resources available for classrooms that we’ve had available in the past. All this will be in one place where anyone can go online and find all things related to Nutrition Services in one place. Stay tuned!
Honoring Our People!

1st Annual Awards Ceremony

At our opening meeting, our new NS Director introduced our new annual awards ceremony. In it, the management team gave out a ton of awards to some very hard-working well-deserved recipients!

Some VIP’s were on hand to assist in handing out the awards, including District Manager John Stone from Sodexo, and 4J board member Beth Girot.

Award lineup:

*Perfect Attendance
*Double-Gold Safety Audits
*Perseverance Award

YET TO COME:

*High-5 award: the award for best cost-savings opportunity for employees, done each quarter

Employee of the Quarter: Quarterly employee who “steps it up” and performs at a high level.

Judging from the response and feedback received at the opening meeting and from building Principals, this format looks like it’s going to stay around for a long time!

We all know that we have high-performing individuals that work for Nutrition Services. It’s nice that we have a program in place to show how much we appreciate that hard work!

Random Thoughts

Whew! We opened! Now what?

As you can see by the graph, we are a little behind in the meals we served on an average per day from last September. This may be due to a higher absentee rate than last year.

To help this, we are offering many new and exciting programs this year. For instance, we’re “piloting” a new breakfast club promotion at two elementary schools in October. Students use a “punch card” to track meals for the month. If they get 16 breakfasts for the month, they get to pick a prize from the “treasure chest.” We’ll evaluate this to see if it was successful, and if so, we will roll this program out at other schools as well.

We are also excited about getting a visit from Delores Tesky, Sodexo’s area chef based out of Salem. She will visit our District and help us evaluate our serving standards and give us culinary advice where needed. She has been able to give her knowledge to districts before, providing training and support in this area which has provided results that make us have a better quality program.

Looking at next month’s issue for recaps of other promotions, staff photos, and an article by our Assistant Director, Javier Lopez.

Food for Thought

Wild Card: Recipe of the Month

Look here each month for something different. Employee spotlight, Highlighted school, etc.

From Rick’s Mom: “Dessert”

- 1C flour, 1/2 C Butter or Mrg., 1/4 C Sugar, 1/2 C Nuts. Mix, pat into 9x11 pan, bake 350 deg. 10 min, cool
- 8 oz cream cheese, low fat. 1 C pow. sugar, 9 oz lite cool whip: Mix & spread on above, chill 1 hr.
- 3 sm. inst. Choc. Pudding; 4 1/2 C skim milk, 1 t vanilla: Mix & spread on above
- Add like cool whip on top, with chopped nuts
Our First Annual Kid's Cooking / Elementary Culinary Competition!

Our Director of Nutrition Services ran this very successful program for the past six years in Albany. This is an “Iron-Chef” style competition where 4th and 5th graders submit recipes for healthy afterschool snacks. The finalists (the best three recipes of each school) will create their recipes for a distinguished panel of judges at a yet to be determined site on President’s Day, February 15th (Note, this is a new date). Stay tuned for this exciting promotion to help teach our students healthy eating habits!

Oregon Healthy Challenge

Coming in the month of November to a High School near you!

For the second year in a row, We are competing in the Healthy Oregon High School Challenge. This program is in correlation with Sodexo’s Healthy Choices program. This year, Sodexo’s will donate a plaque to the winning schools as well as a travelling trophy to display at the winning schools. Schools will be based on OSAA classification (1A-2A-3A & 4A-5A-6A). Forty-two of Sodexo’s Oregon high schools will be competing to win the grand prize. The challenge will run from November 1-30, 2009.

How to Win:
Points are given for combo meals purchased at Cross Roads Café as well as select healthy a la carte choices during the promotional period of November 1st and 30th. Adult purchases also count. The more meals and healthy snacks served will equate to more points earned. First place winner will receive the grand prize of a plaque and travelling trophy that will be displayed at the school.

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