



Honokaa High Culinary and Ag classes invited renowned Chef Olelo pa'a, Faith Ogawa to share her mana'o preparing a luncheon with the students.



It's a culinary explosion. On Oct. 29, the Honokaa High & Intermediate school's Culinary, teacher Xenia Bremseth, and Agriculture, teacher Manuel Jadulang, classes joined together to explore tastes, for the senses, mind and emotional spirit, being shared by Chef Olelo pa'a, Faith Ogawa. Invited these students heard, in the moment, someone being so passionate about farming and the preparation of what we do and can grow. This passion strengthens sustainability. It is an art to pass on from generation to generation. Chef says, "I prepared locally grown braised grass fed beef; braised with cinnamon leaves and other spices from Wailea Ag Farm, topped with a Nakano Farm Tomato Salsa, chimichurri sauce & Big Island Goat Cheese. Accompanied with Luau Hummus, Polenta, a green salad, Wailea Ag hearts of palm, Bonk farm Sweet Waimea Corn, Sweet Potatoes from the school garden and Honokaa Orange Vinaigrette Dressing."

Senior Gary Torres is in both the Culinary and the Business classes. He tells yours truly, that in these classes students see the connection between preparation and cooking of a meal and the costs involved. According to Senior Isaiah Bettino determining the value of the meal, "is watching proportions, define the 'business proportions or value,' and know that the plate holds "a little bit of everybody- manager, cook, and waiter. All together it is the big picture." Isaiah hopes some day to have a bakery or restaurant where young people can come to work and learn.

Helping prepare the food 10th grader Patrick Cootey says, "Yes I can taste the caraway seeds a little bit, a new taste for some. Chef Olelo poses this wish, "that we can bring light to farming on Hawaii Island and support education in this area. Many of the students never tasted the dishes we prepared that day. The fresh ingredients such as the spices, goat cheese, hearts of palm and luau in a hummus was exciting for them to be exposed to.

“Let’s redefine farming” to being fun, enjoyable and healthy. It can be our life and a relaxing way to experience our livelihood. “I propose a garden work day with all of us coming together to prepare and plant the soil. We will decide what to plant and what to cook. Let’s make it fun! Who wants to take charge of the garden day?” Future Farmers of America, FFA, Juniors Landrick Puahala Osaki and KaMele Sanchez offer to lead. “We will hear from them on the day chosen and the request made for volunteers.”

High School Senior, Samantha Miguel explains, “that we live in a culture where the food comes from all different places. There are ‘many tastes’ that a cook can take from as they prepare a meal. Yes, I plan to go to Culinary School in Kona for two years then transfer and continue” Chef follows “The plate of food presented to each student was low in fat, balanced in ‘flavors, colorful and tasty’; these are comments the students made.”

The Honoka’a High School Ag Program Project E Ulu Pono O Honoka’a focuses on sustainability in areas of food

production and the environment. Through the University of Hawaii at Manoa College of Education’s Kūlia I Ka Nu’u project, Honokaa High School’s Career Tech Educational Programs, and The Kohala Center, the program has made great strides in providing learning opportunities for students to gain exposure to the field. The program infuses science, Hawaiian culture, and place-based learning, weaving them into the curriculum by providing student opportunities in careers that may lead to jobs in the Agriculture and Natural Resources fields.



Faith says, “As you may know, we import about 90% of our foods to our Hawaii Islands. This is sad to me. In the ancient days, the Hawaiians were living here with abundance of food. It is time to find ways that we can be sustainable. The dishes I prepared used over 90% of locally grown foods from Hawaii Island.”

Relating to the Culinary and Chef Ogawa’s presentation, Kehaulani Marshall, Program Coordinator at Ulu Mau Puanui, relayed that “she, Chef, made herself ‘Ono’ so that the students see the food is Ono. The students begin to realize how the land relates to the food prepared for the table. Then there’s the flash of recognition, on their faces, as the students made this experience relevant to themselves. They hear with a different voice.”

Shereena Bird is realizing during this, her senior year, that there is a lot more out there to explore and taste. Her thought is the US Marine Corps will bring her those experiences along with travel; education in many fields as well as a healthy life style- much physical activity. After this career there will be time for the opportunities presented.

Isaiah’s sights are set on studying at the Le Cordon Bleu Hospitality School which according to Wikipedia ‘is the world’s largest hospitality education institution, with over 50 schools on five continents serving 20,000 students annually. Its primary education focus is on hospitality management, culinary arts and gastronomy.’

He then finishes up with, “there is no wrong way in culinary” as with life, “there is my way, there’s the customer’s way and maybe just flip it to anybody’s way.”

Photo Information

1. Culinary students Tatiana Wilson, Isaiah Fernandez, Samantha-Shea Miguel, Mia Nakachi, Chef Olelo pa’a, Gary Torres and Elijah Fernandez. Chef Olelo pa’a brought the beef braised in cinnamon leaf and baked polenta and then directed the students in preparing and plating the rest of the meal.
2. Samantha-Shea Miguel and Chef Olelo pa’a display a completed plate.