EVENT OVERVIEW

Community college educators have long known the true value these institutions bring to citizens nationally and around the world. Since their founding more than 100 years ago, community colleges have provided quality, affordable and accessible educational opportunities to millions of students. They continue to exceed the changing expectations of the community and to promote local economic development through innovative programs and services.

Established in 1962, St. Louis Community College (STLCC) is the largest community college district in Missouri and the second largest higher education system in the state based on enrollment. STLCC annually ranks among the top 25 associate degree-producing institutions in the United States. At least one person in more than 50% of the households in the St. Louis area has attended the college. STLCC has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools since 1966. STLCC had a total Fall 2012 enrollment of 26,613 with the average age being 24. Over 2,570 certificate and associate degrees were granted during the 2011-2012 academic year.

The St. Louis Community College Foundation is an integral part of the college community. Our focus is on the future. We look for ways to make STLCC better, stronger and more effective for students and the St. Louis area. The Foundation forms partnerships with individuals and organizations in the community to attract private funding for scholarships and programs that benefit students and the community.

2015 will mark the 7th year for the STLCC Foundation’s signature fundraiser ‘Falling in Love…in Five Courses’. In 2014 over 23 St. Louis area corporations participated in this event, with 288 St. Louis citizens in attendance. Proceeds from this event provide scholarships for deserving students who do not have the funds to attend community college.

This exclusive culinary adventure will be prepared by Chef Lidia Bastianich, who will bring her unique style and flair to the Four Seasons St. Louis venue. Lidia Bastianich is an Emmy award-winning public television (PBS) host, a best-selling cookbook author, restaurateur, and owner of a flourishing food and entertainment business. Lidia has married her two passions in life – her family and food, to create multiple culinary endeavors alongside her two children, Joseph and Tanya. Lidia's cookbooks include Lidia’s Commonsense Italian Cooking, Lidia's Favorite Recipes, Lidia's Italy in America, Lidia Cooks from the Heart of Italy, and Lidia's Italy—all companion books to the three-time Emmy-nominated television series Lidia’s Kitchen, Lidia’s Italy in America and Lidia’s Italy.

Joining Chef Bastianich will be: Chef Gian Nicola, Four Seasons Hotel St. Louis; Executive Pastry Chef Casey Shiller, St. Louis Community College-Forest Park (2011 and 2013 winner of the Food Network’s ‘Cupcake Wars’); and students from STLCC’s highly acclaimed culinary arts program at the Forest Park campus.
2014 Student speaker Jackline Njoki talked about her family’s search for a better life, moving from the East African country of Kenya. Jackie experienced scholastic and leadership opportunities now available to her that she would not have experienced had she not enrolled at STLCC Wildwood Campus. Upon graduation from STLCC, Jamie plans to pursue a nursing degree at Barnes Jewish.

Chef Casey Shiller introduces STLCC Culinary students who assisted with the 2014 event.