



A FOCUS ON
FOOD

IT SUSTAINS OUR BODIES, SHOWCASES OUR FAMILY AND ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS, AND HELPS US BUILD COMMUNITY WHEN WE “BREAK BREAD TOGETHER.” IN THIS ISSUE OF *HEART*, YOU WILL MEET SACRED HEART ALUMNAE OF DIFFERENT GENERATIONS WHOSE WORK WITH FOOD INCLUDES GROWING ORGANIC PRODUCE, DEVELOPING AND DISSEMINATING HEALTHFUL RECIPES, EDUCATING ABOUT THE LINK BETWEEN FOOD AND CULTURE, AND COMBATTING FOOD INSECURITY IN CONNECTICUT. YOU WILL ALSO READ ABOUT HOW ALLEVIATING HUNGER IS WOVEN INTO THE SCHOOL’S SERVICE ACTIVITIES, AND SOME OF THE WAYS THAT FOOD FINDS ITS WAY INTO THE CURRICULUM.





THEIR FOCUS IS ON

FOOD

FROM GROWING ORGANIC SALAD GREENS, TO CATERING DINNERS FOR A HUNDRED GUESTS, TO HELPING RUN A NON-PROFIT THAT FEEDS THE HUNGRY, SACRED HEART ALUMNAE ACROSS THE GENERATIONS ARE INVOLVED IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE WIDE WORLD OF FOOD. IN THESE PAGES, YOU WILL READ ABOUT SIX WOMEN WHO HAVE TURNED THEIR CREATIVITY, WISDOM, AND BUSINESS ACUMEN TO MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER-FED AND BETTER-NOURISHED PLACE.

Stephanie Berluti '07

ORGANIC FARMER



Stephanie selling fresh produce, flowers, and microgreens at the downtown Phoenix Public Farmers Market.

Farming, says Stephanie Berluti, is not for the faint of heart. “If you forget to send an email at your desk job,” she points out, “you can probably fix the situation. But if you don’t cover your lettuce fields in time before a hard frost, your whole crop is probably dead.”

Stephanie’s path to farming began in her junior year at Sacred Heart, when watching *An Inconvenient Truth* in Sally Tyler’s current events class motivated her to help reduce carbon in the atmosphere. After obtaining a degree in global studies at Providence College, with a minor in public and community service, Stephanie went on to become program and events manager for the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut (CT-NOFA). There, she executed grants to provide training to Connecticut farmers with less than ten years of experience, organized educational events and fundraisers, and ran the organization’s social media outlets.

“I had never dreamed of farming myself,” Stephanie says. “The only outdoor labor I had done was mowing my grandfather’s lawn.” But, after three years of working at a non-profit, she began to think that she wanted to get her hands dirty — and to see if she would be mentally and physically strong enough to pursue the life of a farmer.

So, in 2015, Stephanie apprenticed at Serenbe Farms outside Atlanta, Georgia, which specializes in suburban farming in an “agrihood.” In 2016 she moved to

Martha’s Vineyard, where she learned to grow organic salad greens, flowers, and mushrooms. From there, she moved to Phoenix, to train in urban/market garden farming. These experiences taught her that farmers are “renaissance people” who need knowledge and skills in everything from meteorology and plant science, to plumbing, accounting, and branding.

“The stereotype of the farmer,” she says, “is a middle-aged guy on a tractor. But I’ve worked mostly with women and on women crews. Sacred Heart taught me how to communicate and work in groups, and how not to be afraid of challenging myself. At the end of the day, covered in dirt, I feel strong.”

Next year, Stephanie plans to bring her skills back to her hometown of Orange to start her own farm in 2020. She will focus on market garden farming and educating customers and the community. “I get great satisfaction from interacting with customers,” she says. “For instance, when we give out samples, watching the faces of kids who have never tasted a real carrot before. We want people to know what real food tastes like.”

And then there are the moments of looking over the fields and being able to see the literal fruits of her labor. She knows that farming in unpredictable New England weather will be a different undertaking than farming in Arizona, but relishes the challenge. “Wherever you farm, you get to do something different every day,” she says. “If you are bored with farming, you are doing it wrong.”

“Sacred Heart taught me how to communicate and work in groups, and how not to be afraid of challenging myself. At the end of the day, covered in dirt, I feel strong.”

Stephanie Berluti '07



Stephanie beaming over a potato plant she just dug out of the ground. These photos are from her time in Serenbe Farms in Georgia.



Giovanna Cucciniello '92

FOOD AND CULTURE EDUCATOR

When Giovanna Cucciniello sends students abroad, she makes sure that they learn how to shop for and prepare food, and that they absorb the food culture of the countries where they are studying — just as much, she says, “as they pay attention to classes and field trips.”

Born and brought up in the New Haven area, Giovanna has spent her career in education, including teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in New Haven public schools, teaching at Quinnipiac, and being part of Yale University’s Teachers Institute where she developed curriculum on representations of American culture. For five years, she was the education coordinator of Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services. “There,” she says, “I learned about food cultures from Afghani, Somali, Eritrean, Liberian, Iraqi, Colombian, and Cuban refugees.”

From 2007 to 2014, Giovanna lived in Rome, where she obtained a master’s degree in the history and culture of Italian gastronomic traditions, and worked as the assistant director of the Institute for the International Education of Students (IES) Abroad Rome Center. She developed workshops and classes for undergraduates on the cultural histories of Italian food and wine, and organized food-related activities and opportunities for interpretative analysis.

Currently the institutional relations manager for Temple University’s Education Abroad and Overseas Campuses Program, Giovanna travels widely, leaving her less time for formal teaching. But, she says, “My passion for

educating eaters has taken other forms.” She lectures about Italy and Italian food to community groups, as well as on issues such as the Mediterranean diet, food production and distribution, and Italy’s role in the global food economy. She has organized campus events dedicated to Roman food and foodways, and has connected to the local Slow Food Philly group, Temple’s community garden, and other area food producers working to make high-quality food products affordable, even for students.

Giovanna credits her interest in international education to her study of world languages at Sacred Heart. “My French classes with Madame Sabine Ruthman and Madame Elaine Lamboley ’60, and a week in Paris and Nice, enabled me to imagine a world outside my suburban backyard,” she says. Her love for and interest in food come from her family. “I was raised in a household where vegetables were grown in our backyard and canned for the winter, and where we prepared homemade breads, fresh pasta, and specialty dishes.” She enjoys food from many cultures. “I go for Indian, Japanese, Korean, Thai — and the pizza! — when I’m in New Haven,” she says. Still, her favorite food to cook and eat is southern Italian. “It’s my comfort food, and connects me with my heritage the most.”

Giovanna says that she also learned the importance of cultural understanding at Sacred Heart. “With today’s mobility and technology,” she says, “we are increasingly likely to come in contact with people of different backgrounds. Exploring the food of other cultures is a great way to start a discussion.”

RECIPE

BUCATINI ALL’AMATRICIANA

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 6 ozs. guanciale, cubed (or pancetta)
- 1/2 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 1 14 oz. can crushed tomatoes (San Marzano)
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more for seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 a pinch of crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/2 cup grated Pecorino Romano
- 1 pound De Cecco bucatini pasta

DIRECTIONS

For the sauce: In a heavy skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the guanciale and cook until golden brown — about 5 to 7 minutes. Be careful not to overcook it. You are aiming for tender rather than crispy. Remove the meat and set aside to drain on a paper towel. Add onions to the rendered fat and saute, stirring constantly, until translucent. Add the red pepper flakes and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the tomatoes and pancetta. Simmer on low heat about 5 to 10 minutes. Add the salt and pepper. Simmer uncovered, over medium-low heat until the sauce thickens, about 15 minutes.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the pasta and cook until tender but still firm to the bite, stirring occasionally, as per package instructions. Drain and add to the sauce in the skillet. Toss gently over high flame until pasta is coated and sprinkle with Pecorino cheese.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF Giovanna Cucciniello '92

My favorite Roman comfort food is an ode to simplicity — rich smoked pork, sweet tomatoes, heat from chili peppers, and the sharp, salty kick of Pecorino cheese. Amatriciana is a classic dish that originated outside the empire and was later adopted as their own. “Amatriciana” comes from Amatrice, where the dish is made in strict Amatrice fashion, without onions or olive oil.” GC

Molly Hanchuruck '12

CHEF AND REGISTERED DIETITIAN

Molly has always loved food. When her seventh grade peers were watching MTV, she was glued to the Food Network. During her sophomore year at Sacred Heart, Molly was intrigued when chemistry teacher, **Frances Saukas**, said early in the year that making waffles could be considered chemistry because of the chemical reactions during the cooking process. "During every class until spring, I asked if we could make waffles," she remembers. Fran finally gave in and scheduled a waffle-making day — and Molly experienced firsthand the connection between food and science.

Now, with degrees in both culinary arts and culinary nutrition, and with experience as a line cook, bartender, and catering chef, Molly is a registered dietitian in the cardiac intensive care unit of a hospital in Pensacola, Florida. Describing her work, she says, "When I see my cardiac patients, I ask how they have been eating and if they've lost any weight. Often, when people are sick they eat very little and lose weight quickly. Quick weight loss can be dangerous because the body needs energy to battle the illness. If someone isn't eating well, we'll discuss strategies to help them eat better. Additionally, I calculate how much tube feeding a person will need to meet caloric goals if they are unable to eat."

Molly also works with people who want to eat healthier or lose weight. She notes that her experience as a chef is useful to her as a dietitian, making her better able to help clients understand what eating healthy means. "Recently," she says, "my supervisor had me see a family who had questions about healthier cooking. They were very upfront and said, 'We eat out almost every meal because we don't know how to cook.' So I talked to them about how to prepare some simple meals and ways to be healthy while eating out. Eating healthy can be as simple as a few small changes in shopping for and preparing food."

Molly has a short list of guiding principles about food: "Everything in moderation." "Simple is usually better." "Eating is social." She says, "I don't like when I see people eating out together and instead of talking, they are staring at their phones. I love sitting down for a meal with friends or family and talking about the day. If you want to take a quick picture of the food, go ahead, but then go back to being grateful for the food and enjoy your time together."



RECIPE

FOR

HEALTHY VEGAN BROWNIES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 | box of your favorite brownie mix
- 1 | can of black beans
- 1/3 | of a cup water

DIRECTIONS

Drain and rinse the black beans and add them to a blender with the water. Blend until VERY smooth. Mix the blended black beans and the brownie mix together. Bake according to directions on the brownie mix box.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF

Molly Hanchuruck '12



Karen and her daughter, Emi, age four, cooking — one of their favorite pastimes.



Karen Lenahan '02

CHEF AND CATERER

Well into her seventh year as owner of her boutique catering business — Small Kitchen, Big Taste (SKBT) in North Haven — Karen Lenahan is feeling confident about the future.

Coming from a family that — when they weren't eating — was always talking about food, Karen has a lifelong history in the food world. At the age of seven, she was trying to cook the family meals. When she was at Sacred Heart, she had a job in catering at a local country club. At Georgetown University, where she majored in women's studies and psychology, she worked at a deli. While working as museum manager at the Eli Whitney Museum (EWM), she obtained her master's from UConn in finance and non-profit management, studied at International Culinary Center in New York, started a food blog, and, encouraged by her EWM colleagues, began to provide personal chef services and do some catering. Her clientele increased as word of her way with fresh, healthy, seasonal foods began to spread.

Little by little Karen built her catering business and her reputation, preparing those first meals in what she describes as a "teeny, tiny rented kitchen space." She credits her Sacred Heart education with giving her the self-assurance and work ethic to weather the stresses of developing a business ("I had a lot of nightmares that first year," she says), and the acumen to surround herself with the right people.

Now, Karen can take pride in the full-service catering company she has created as she pursues her goal of being one of the region's premier caterers. "There is nothing that gives me more joy," she says, "than creating beautiful food, inspired menus, personalized events, and lasting memories."



Over the past few years, SKBT's ten full- and part-time staff have prepared and served everything from a vegan wedding at Lighthouse Point for a hundred guests, to an intimate dinner for eight at the home of a Yale dean. SKBT can handle any kind of special dietary requests, and focuses on using sustainable materials and ingredients. The website (smallkitchen-bigtaste.com) is full of ideas for events ranging from baby showers to fundraisers, and features a number of Karen's signature recipes.

When she is not in the kitchen or spending time with her family, you can find Karen building relationships with other women business owners — "finding ways," she says, "to support, encourage, and inspire and be inspired by other women in and around New Haven County."

RECIPE

FOR

MAPLE SAMBAL SALMON

INGREDIENTS

| | |
|-----|---|
| 1 | 16-20 oz. salmon, cut into four filets |
| 1/4 | cup good quality maple syrup |
| 2 | tablespoons sambal oelek, or some similar chili paste |
| 1-2 | teaspoons soy sauce |
| | dash of salt and pepper |

DIRECTIONS

1. Season the fish with salt and pepper.
 2. In a saucepan, whisk together the maple syrup, sambal, soy sauce, and a bit of salt and pepper. Freshly grated ginger or crushed garlic would work well also!
 3. Heat on medium until it bubbles, and let it cook for about 5 minutes to reduce a bit and get really thick.
 4. Take off the heat and brush the salmon filets with the glaze.
 5. Pop the salmon into the oven at 350° for about 10 minutes, or until the fish is firm to the touch and cooked to your liking.
- Enjoy with radish or wasabi microgreens as a garnish!

FROM THE KITCHEN OF Karen Lenahan '02 [Small Kitchen Big Taste]

Elizabeth Falcigno '11

FOOD BLOGGER, RECIPE DEVELOPER, FOOD PHOTOGRAPHER



Elizabeth at work...cooking and blogging for her company, The Clean Eating Couple.

Six or seven years ago, in her early years in college, breakfast for Liz Falcigno was likely to be pastry with a side of super-sweet latte. While her big Italian family always ate well Liz says, she wasn't paying much attention to what she was eating when she first went away to school. "I was doing the typical college kid routine," she says, "but, after a while, I realized that I was just not feeling right." She started working out, avoided junk foods, traded sugary breakfast cereals for oatmeal, and within a few weeks, she began to notice a difference.

In 2013, when she moved home to transfer to Quinnipiac University, Liz started a blog to chronicle her shift to healthier food choices. As friends and family began asking for advice and food suggestions, she experimented with recipes in her family's kitchen, and continued building

the blog while in school full-time and interning at Subway's corporate headquarters.

After graduating with a degree in marketing in May of 2015, Liz took a paid position at Subway and then moved to a job with an ad agency. As her blog readership grew and food brands began to notice her work, she realized the business potential in food blogging and recipe development. "In 2016, I made a commitment to myself," she says, "that, within a year, I would make the blog and website my full-time job." In order to achieve her goal, Liz had to teach herself food photography, getting up at 4:30 in the morning to practice her photography skills while she was also working on recipes and creating twice-a-week blog posts.

Her hard work paid off. Liz left the corporate world in January and now devotes herself full time to her company: The Clean Eating Couple (thecleaneatingcouple.com). The other half of the couple is her boyfriend, Tyler Marino, who taste tests and assists with photo shoots. Liz posts three new recipes each week, and has an audience of fifty thousand monthly blog readers, plus another forty thousand who follow her on various social media outlets. The website generates income through ads and sponsored content. Liz also works with food brands and retailers such as Whole Foods, using their products in some of her recipes and working with them on food photography and recipe development. She also does cooking demonstrations for specialty grocery stores.

"I'm working all the time," Liz says, "but I love it, especially the actual cooking. I feel very lucky that my path was so clear to me early on — I knew that I could not sit at a desk every day. And I would not be where I am without Sacred Heart, where I learned how to face challenges and was taught that there is nothing you cannot do or be if you focus and work hard."

RECIPE

FOR **PALEO SALTED ALMOND BUTTER BROWNIES**

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup almond butter, melted
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons coconut oil, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips
- 1 tablespoon almond butter, for drizzling
- 1/2 tablespoon coarse sea salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°
2. In a bowl, mix together almond butter, eggs, honey, coconut oil, and vanilla extract.
3. Stir cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder, and chocolate chips to wet ingredients.
4. Pour batter into a greased 8x8 baking dish. Drizzle with additional almond butter + sea salt.
5. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes until edges start to brown. To test, insert a toothpick in the center — it should come out clean.

Note: Nutrition facts (9 servings) — Calories 347; Fat 23g; Carbs 32g; Protein 8g

FROM THE KITCHEN OF Elizabeth Falcigno '11

Looking for a decadent but healthy treat? Try these brownies! Gluten and grain free but packed with chocolate — these are going to be your new favorite dessert!



the
clean eating couple

Mary Kathleen Carofano '97

FOOD BANK CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER



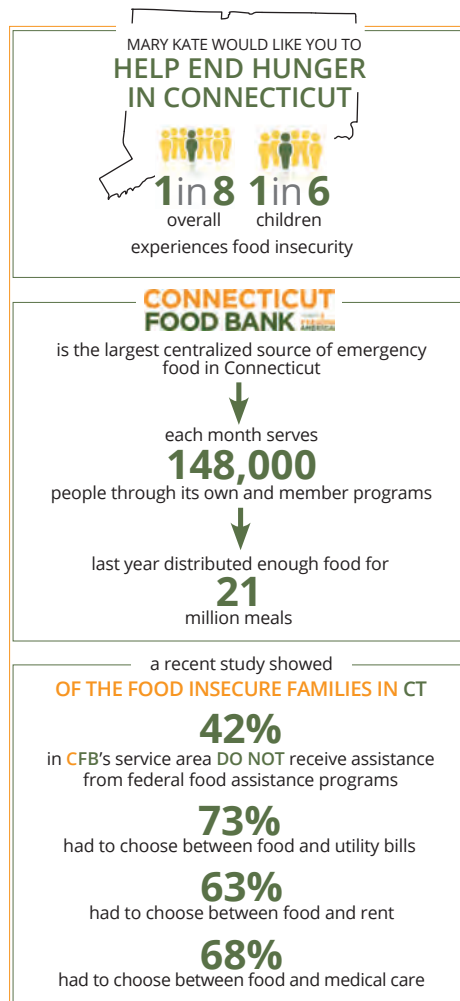
A Connecticut Food Bank Mobile Pantry in Danbury. CFB mobile pantries operate year-round, serving an average of 3,000 people each month, at more than 45 sites, bringing fresh produce, dairy products, breads, and nonperishables to communities where transportation or other factors may affect access to food assistance.

Mary Kate Carofano, chief development officer at the Connecticut Food Bank (CFB), wants everyone to understand that hunger is a problem in all corners of Connecticut. “Either we don’t want to believe it,” she says, “or we are too busy living our own lives to realize that one in every eight people in Connecticut struggles with hunger, and one in six children is unsure of if, when, and where they will get their next meal.”

While she was a student here, a Sacred Heart service project in the Bronx was a turning point for Mary Kate. “One of the Sisters I looked up to was going and suggested I sign up. It was by far the best decision I could have made,” she says. “I knew then that I wanted to become more involved with community outreach.”

After obtaining her degree in sociology at Albertus Magnus College, Mary Kate undertook roles in development and management in the non-profit sector, including positions with the American Cancer Society, the National Kidney Foundation, and the Arthritis Foundation. At Connecticut Food Bank, she is responsible for individual and major giving, corporate development, special events, volunteer oversight, school-based programming, and the organization’s communications and marketing initiatives.

Since much of Mary Kate’s work involves direct fundraising — CFB raised more than eight million



dollars last year — her friends and family often wonder how she asks people for money every day. “My answer is simple,” she says. “I don’t ask people for money. I ask that they become involved in our mission. How can anyone say no to providing essential food to those in need?” She notes that 42 percent of food-insecure families in CFB’s six-county service area do not receive federal food assistance such as SNAP (food stamps), free or reduced school meals, or WIC (the supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and children) because they earn more than the qualifying income limit. “But,” she points out, “these are our neighbors who are too often torn between paying the utility bill or the rent, and putting food on the table.”

Volunteers are central to CFB’s mission and, under Mary Kate’s leadership, the volunteer base has grown in the last year to over five thousand individuals — many of whom have connections to Sacred Heart.

Mary Kate’s connection to Sacred Heart remains deep. “The Apostles of the Sacred Heart are members of my extended family,” she says. “They taught and modeled compassion. They taught me to give without want, and to love without judgment. Their door is always open. In helping to feed the hungry, I carry the lessons of Sacred Heart in my work every day.”

If you want to help in any way (volunteering, donating), contact Mary Kate Carofano directly at mcarofano@ctfoodbank.org or 203.469.5000, x303.

Food Offers Service and Learning Opportunities



SERVICE TO OTHERS IS CENTRAL TO THE MISSION OF SACRED HEART. WE FEATURE SOME OF THE SERVICE AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES THAT FOCUS ON ALLEVIATING HUNGER IN OUR COMMUNITY AS WELL AS AROUND THE WORLD.

Grace Jinks '21 doing her part, one meal at a time as a Rise Against Hunger volunteer.

CLELIA'S CUCINA

Once a week, right after classes are done for the day, a dozen or so students gather in the school's cafeteria, which on that day becomes Clelia's Cucina (that's Italian for "kitchen"). With food donated by the students, their families, and school faculty and staff, the crew makes sandwiches and bags them along with snacks, fruit, drinks, bits of inspiration, and often, homemade baked goods. After being decorated, the bags are driven to a homeless shelter on Grand Avenue in New Haven. "Gathering around a table is central to our identity

as a Catholic school," says Sr. Elizabeth Doyle, ASCJ, co-director of Campus Ministry. "There is a Eucharistic component, and we know that in feeding others, we are nourishing ourselves. No matter where someone is in her faith journey, this kind of service is universal."



Students (left and above) pack lunches for a New Haven homeless shelter.

The crew makes sandwiches and bags them along with snacks, fruit, drinks, bits of inspiration, and often, homemade baked goods.

STUDENTS AND FAMILIES SERVE THE DOWNTOWN EVENING SOUP KITCHEN

On most Sundays, you will find several Sacred Heart students and family members preparing or serving dinner (and sometimes doing both) at the Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen (DESK) in New Haven. Begun this past October under the auspices of Campus Ministry, working at DESK offers a service opportunity that is both meaningful and fulfilling. "Talking to people whose lives are usually very different from theirs can be eye-opening for our students," says Blair Destito '06, co-director of Campus Ministry, "and it's good to have parents there to help guide their daughters through the experience." She notes also that serving at DESK has inspired some students to think about developing additional ways to serve. "One freshman noticed that there were pregnant women at the soup kitchen," Blair says, "and has begun to think and pray about how she can best help make a difference for that population." So far, about fifty students have been involved with DESK, and we look forward to offering the opportunity for this corporal work of mercy next year.

RISING AGAINST HUNGER

On Saturday, March 10, the Sacred Heart Academy cafeteria was transformed into a mini food-packing factory, as over a hundred members of our community — students, friends, families, Sisters, faculty and staff — packaged thousands of meals to distribute to those in need through the auspices of Rise Against Hunger. Groups partnering with Rise Against Hunger are asked by RAH to raise funds for the cost of the meals (the supplies for one meal, provided by RAH, cost 29 cents) and then to organize the packaging on a

\$3,000
raised

10,152
meals packaged

29¢
cost of
supplies for one meal

date of their choosing. A Lenten service project, the meal packaging took place on the 157th birthday of Mother Clelia Merloni, making the activity even more meaningful. With the nearly \$3,000 raised, the Academy was able to donate and package 10,152 meals. “Mother Clelia would very much enjoy knowing that this is how we spent her birthday,” says Sr. Elizabeth Doyle, ASCJ, co-director of Campus Ministry. “While we won’t be able to arrange to have it on her birthday every year, we do plan to make Rise Against Hunger an annual Lenten event.”



TASTING CULTURE



Students in French teacher **Anna Bouteneff's** classes

create restaurant menus and food-related dialogues that they perform in class. In some of her classes, students translate English recipes into French and video themselves as if they were doing a cooking show.

Spanish teacher **Kathryn Marlow de Núñez** says, "Teaching language is not just about grammar and vocabulary. To truly understand a language, one must understand the cultures in which the language is spoken. Food is central to culture. Different traditions are seen both in the food that makes the meal and in the rituals of the meal itself. My students explore aspects of language learning through food-related projects." One of her recent projects involved "La Ruta del Café." After examining the origin, history, route to the Americas, production, and use of coffee, each student selected a different natural product, followed its "ruta" (route), and explained how it could be used for ecotourism. The products chosen included foods such as avocado, chocolate, coconut, guava, mangoes, maple syrup, strawberries, and vanilla.

Although we do not have much information about the details of ancient Roman food practices, students of World Language Department chair and Latin teacher **Jessica Kapteyn, Ph.D.** learn about the social aspects of food in Roman life. She explains, "In Latin III, students read several works that discuss the *convivium*, or dinner party. Through their translation, students learn about dining culture in Rome and how the *convivium* — from the entertainment provided to the food served — was used as a way for Romans to both display and reinforce their social and economic status."



Left, *Catherine Herrick '19* learning how to make mooncakes, eaten during the Mid-Autumn Festival.

According to Mandarin teacher **Xiuying Tan** (pictured above), many Chinese people use the phrase "Have you eaten yet?" as a greeting. Food is central to Chinese culture, with each region having its own distinct dishes. Using a textbook chapter that contains dialogues about food and how to order it, Xiuying has half the students in her Chinese III honors class choose their preferred recipes (most are southern Chinese style), translate the recipes from Chinese to English, cook the food, and bring it in to share. The other half of the class rewrites a dialogue in Chinese and uses their classmates' dishes to act out the dialogue. The class gathers in the cafeteria for the eating and the acting, and each student says a few sentences in Chinese to describe and give feedback about the food.

"This project provides students the opportunity to learn what real Chinese food is, how to use chopsticks, and Chinese dinner table rules," Xiuying says. "Food and cooking methods can explain history and culture and how regions interact. China has diverse cultures and many kinds of food. For instance, in the north, dumplings are a must have for Chinese New Year, but not in southern China. Food is an integral part of celebrations in all regions of China. But no region of China serves fortune cookies!"

PREPARING FOR A LIFETIME OF HEALTHY LIVING

Learning how to make healthy food choices is part of the curriculum in **Kim Cramer Curbow's '81** health classes. She teaches students the importance of good nutrition and how to analyze their current eating patterns. They learn how to create achievable goals for lifelong good eating habits — such as balancing their calories throughout the day, incorporating essential nutrients into their diet, being good consumers when purchasing food, and understanding terminology (organic, MSG, low fat, low calorie). Kim says, "We discuss transitioning into being in charge of one's own food choices, for example, when moving to a college campus."

Kim uses a variety of approaches to educating students about healthy eating. Students examine the personal factors that go into forming eating habits — such as family and cultural influences, and emotional connections to certain foods — as well as external issues such as food costs and availability. Upper-level students create seven-day meal plans that take into account factors such as essential nutrients, calorie counts, and individual food preferences. And, with so many contradictory and confusing messages circulating, she notes that students spend time critiquing websites to learn how to find accurate information about food and nutrition.

Eating disorders and the myths surrounding them are also important topics. "It is essential that our students recognize the messages they are bombarded with about body image," Kim says. "Teaching high school girls has changed in many ways over the years because of societal issues and influences such as social media. What has not changed is the willingness of Sacred Heart Academy students to discuss the important issues that affect their daily lives."