

## Slide 1

### Recipe for Success

Maryland Rehabilitation Services

John Katz, Program Director

Sara Milner, Director of Student Services

November 17, 2022

Image of their logo – Sunflower Bakery, Caring is our main ingredient.

## Slide 2

Sunflower Bakery is dedicated to providing skilled job training and employment opportunities in the baking and hospitality industries for adults 18+ with learning differences. Sunflower Bakery is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

## Slide 3

### The Presenting Team

- **JOHN KATZ, PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

John joined Sunflower in May 2020. He brings a wealth of knowledge, experience and networks from the food industry to Sunflower. After several years as a chef, most recently John served as Operations Manager for Sodexo at Adventist Shady Grove Medical Center. John is excited to further develop a robust employment training program to enable our graduates to secure job and career opportunities in the pastry arts and hospitality industries. [john@sunflowerbakery.org](mailto:john@sunflowerbakery.org).

- **SARA PORTMAN MILNER, LCSW-C, CO-FOUNDER & DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES**

As co-founder, Sara was instrumental in helping to establish Sunflower. She now focuses on students and families interested in our Pastry Arts and Hospitality employment training and teen programs. She has helped to develop our curricula and expand our reach to young adults and teens with learning differences in Metro DC. Sara has 45+ years of experience in the disability field and is so proud of Sunflower's journey. [sara@sunflowerbakery.org](mailto:sara@sunflowerbakery.org).

## Slide 4

### Sunflower Bakery History

- 2008  
Explored concept of an option for students with learning differences to receive skill-based training in baking. Piloted a program.
- 2010  
Opened Sunflower Bakery in Gaithersburg, MD and began training students with learning differences to prepare them for employment.
- 2013  
Started Summer Sessions for Teens still in high school to enjoy a baking experience.

- 2014  
Sunflower Bakery's Pastry Arts Training Program becomes Community Rehabilitation Partner with DORS.

## Slide 5

### Sunflower Bakery History continued...

- 2015  
Café Sunflower opened. Students trained in "front-of-house" work, including customer service, using point-of-sales technology, barista skills and soft skills necessary for employment and food safety.
- 2017  
Summer Teen Exposure Program for teens is accepted as an option through DORS Pre-Employment Transition Services.
- 2020  
Sunflower moved to current location with training and production kitchens, in-house bakeshop, classroom and more. Begins pilot for Hospitality Training Program.
- 2022  
Job Services and Job Coaching approved as part of the Community Rehabilitation Partnership with DORS.

## Slide 6

Image of a sunflower and the words Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadow. It's what sunflowers do. Helen Keller

## Slide 7

### Philosophy & Values

- We build on strengths, emphasizing what a student CAN do.
- We are inclusive in the way we teach, in the products we make and in the students/families that we serve.
- We work to enhance independence, self-esteem, and self-determination.
- We fill a need for productivity and employment in the community of individuals with learning differences, by offering skill development and inclusive, real-life training opportunities.
- CARING IS OUR MAIN INGREDIENT!

## Slide 8

### We Are a Real Bakery

Products Produced in a Typical Year:

- 7,363 loaves of Challah
- 694 Celebration Cakes
- 1,050 Dessert Platters
- 8,760 Lemon Bars
- 10,694 Brownies
- 1,097 lbs. Chocolate chip cookies

## Slide 9

### How Are We Different from Other Bakeries?

- We exist in order to train adults 18+ with learning differences to prepare them for employment in baking, customer service, hospitality and other food-related industries.
- We provide individualized instruction, addressing each student's unique learning needs.
- Students are trained on a 2:3 ratio of professional chef-instructors to students in our kitchens and with a 1:4 ratio with a professional hospitality instructor in our Hospitality program.
- We are a kosher, non-dairy, peanut-free bakery, providing for diverse dietary needs, including vegan, gluten-free and nut-free products.

## Slide 10

### Is Sunflower Right for you?

At Sunflower, students need to be prepared to:

- Work in a fast-paced kitchen or Bakeshop in close proximity to other students or chefs.
- Share space and work calmly and cooperatively with peers.
- Learn in a multi-sensory environment that requires hands-on work with doughs, ingredients, hot liquids and cleaning products.
- Stand for four hours at a time, bend, lift, and move heavy items such as 30–50-pound bags of flour, large heavy trays and tables.
- Routinely use objects found in kitchens or retail food establishments, such as chefs' knives and zesters, espresso machines and coffee makers in a safe manner.
- Read and follow recipes or checklists independently.
- Either work quietly in the kitchen or communicate effectively in the bakeshop or café.

## Slide 11

### Application Process

- Each potential student is required to fill out an application to our programs.
- All applications must include a recent IEP, 504 plan, or the most recent psychological.
- The application asks for basic information such as age, address, primary disability, and DORS Counselor.
- If our potential student is known by DORS, we will ask them to contact their counselor to update their plan.

## Slide 12

### Interview and Assessment

- The interview is held in person with the student's support person present.
- We ask basic questions about the student's experience and how they believe they learn the best.
- After we get this information, we work with the family to help decide which program is a better fit.
- Once we have completed the interview, we ask the family to contact DORS to ask for an assessment.
- Once we have received an authorization, we can schedule the appropriate assessment.

- After the assessment we provide DORS, and the family, a complete report with recommendations to proceed with the program, or steps that may be needed prior to starting a program.

## Slide 13

### The Assessments

#### Hospitality Assessment

2 days for 2.5 hours each day.

We look for the ability to:

- Identify money
- Stand for 2.5 hours
- Follow directions
- Communicate
- Remain focused
- Retain information day-to-day
- Complete the assigned homework
- Demonstrate motivation
- Improve each day

#### Pastry Arts Assessment

3 days for 3 hours each day.

We look for the ability to:

- Stand for 3 hours
- Scale or measure ingredients
- Follow directions
- Remain focused
- Retain information day-to-day
- Complete the assigned homework
- Demonstrate motivation
- Improve each day

## Slide 14

### Pastry Arts Employment Training: Phase 1

- The first 3 months of our program is spent in our training kitchen.
- Our students learn how to identify ingredients, equipment, and basic baking methods such as creaming, two-stage, foaming and more.
- We begin working on how to act and speak as a food service professional .
- During phase 1 our students practice and take the ServSafe food handler's test.
- Through this phase we are assessing the students' strengths and weakness as it relates to skills need to become employed.

## Slide 15

### Pastry Arts Employment Training: Phase 2

- The second 3 months of our program are focused on hands-on training.
- We move the students into our production kitchen to work side-by-side with our professional chefs.
- We continue to work with our students to apply what they have learned in Phase 1 and work on any areas of improvement. (E.g., in phase 1, a student makes 1 lb. of dough at a time. In phase 2, students make a minimum of 35 lbs. of dough at a time.)
- Students are expected to meet industry workplace standards.
- During this phase, our students also receive our customized Employee Development Training which includes working with students to further develop soft skills, such as self-advocacy and conflict resolution.

## Slide 16

### Hospitality Employment Training: Phase 1

- The first 18 weeks are spent in formal instruction. Our students learn in a classroom setting, as well as in the kitchen and Bakeshop.
- In the classroom, we work on communication skills (verbal and non-verbal), self-advocacy, professionalism and proper workplace relationships, among other soft skills.
- In the kitchen our students practice food safety and sanitation, while performing basic kitchen-related tasks. Our students also earn the ServSafe Food Handler certificate.
- In the Bakeshop, our students practice making coffee beverages, observe customer service and learn proper display set-up.

## Slide 17

### Hospitality Employment Training: Phase 2

- The second phase of our Hospitality program is Hands-On-Training.
- During this phase, we work with our students at our two retail locations, the Sunflower Bakeshop and at Café Sunflower.
- This experience gives our students opportunities to practice skills, such as making coffee drinks, handling money, answering phone calls, setting up displays, taking inventory and working directly with customers to answer questions and describe products.

## Slide 18

Picture of a worker in the pastry shop.

## Slide 19

### Job Services

- Sunflower provides Job Services to its graduating, or previously graduated students.
- During job development prep, not only do students create a resume, cover letter, and practice interviewing, but together we prepare and follow the Sunflower IEP, Individualized Employment Plan.
- The IEP is a job plan for students that recognizes hard skills and strengths. It is a tool used to pair each student with an ideal job match, taking into consideration the culture, environment, and ease-of-travel.

## Slide 20

### Job Services

- Once the IEP is developed, our job coaches start job development with our graduates using the Sunflower IEP as a contract.
- Our job coaches work with each graduate to find them up to 3 possible job offers based on their IEP
- Once placed, our graduates receive job coaching for the first 4-6 weeks based on their DORS fading schedule.
- Additionally, our job coaches continue to monitor our graduates, checking in monthly or bi-monthly with managers and graduates and continue to track graduates' status for up to 3 years after placement

## Slide 21

### Quotes from Employers

- “Connor came in as a bakery assistant and works in our kitchen doing a variety of tasks. He came to us knowing most of them. He was trained to ice cupcakes, use a pastry bag and knives. So Sunflower was really able to teach him the things to get him started. I would definitely recommend a student from Sunflower!”- Beth Poplin, Sous Chef Praline Bakery
- “I think you have to look at it as a win-win situation. I think you are helping somebody, and at the same time they're doing the work that you actually need to be done.”- Stephan Beauchesne, owner of Taste of Montreal

## Slide 22

### Quotes from Employers

- “Staffing in this industry, and the restaurant industry, is super tough. Being with Sunflower has been awesome to just have these trained employees come in. They know how to work a scale, a mixer, things like that. It's been really helpful to run a professional environment.”- Christine Schaefer, Owner and Pastry Chef District Doughnuts
- “So we employed Ethan from Sunflower and it's been an amazing opportunity to get to work with him and work with the program.” - Shelby Confer, Executive Chef Woodmont Country Club