

SLIDE 1:

Filling the Void: Meeting Needs of Employers Through Individualized Training and Ongoing Support

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Sunflower Bakery. Caring is our main ingredient.

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Who Are We?

Sunflower Bakery, a non-profit social enterprise in Rockville, MD, provides two professional training experiences for young adults with learning differences in Pastry Arts and Hospitality.

Currently, a Culinary Arts program pilot is also in progress in order to offer a third opportunity for career training and development. Sunflower's inclusive, one-of-a-kind training, taught by professional chefs and hospitality professionals, combines technical hard skills in the kitchen or Bakeshop, along with the soft employee development skills required to secure and retain employment.

Teens with learning differences participate in Pre-ETS classes offering pre-employment exposure While baking in a professional production kitchen.

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What Do We Do?

Sunflower Bakery's employment training combines formal instruction with hands-on, on-the-job training in our Pastry Arts and Hospitality programs. Both programs are 26 weeks in length and include employee preparation and safe food handling through ServSafe training.

In the kitchen, students learn how to prepare a wide variety of pastries, while working alongside professional chefs. They are introduced to professional equipment, methods and expectations.

In the classroom and Bakeshop, students learn customer service, gain product knowledge, enhance communication skills, use POS systems and make espresso drinks.

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Why Do We Exist?

Sunflower Bakery started as a passion for ensuring that people of all abilities have access to meaningful employment. Recognizing a gap in the workforce support system, we aim to provide individuals with learning differences the opportunity to train in a supportive environment where they can thrive.

Sunflower Bakery offers specialized training and ongoing support tailored to the unique needs of each individual. Our goal is to empower our employees with the skills and confidence they need to succeed in the workplace, fostering a sense of belonging, pride, and fulfillment. Through our programs, we not only provide valuable job training but also cultivate a supportive community where individuals can achieve independence and reach their full potential, regardless of ability.

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Our Programs

Pastry Arts

- Hands-on learning of baking techniques, methods, measurements, ingredients, and equipment in a professional kitchen
- Making a variety of pastries
- Working closely with experienced chefs and bakery staff

Hospitality

- Hybrid learning approach in the classroom and Bakeshop
- Hands-on learning of customer service skills, Point of Sale system, upselling, barista operations and customer relationship management
- Experience working with chefs in the kitchen
- Instruction and supervision provided by seasoned hospitality instructors

Culinary Arts

- UNDER CONSTRUCTION

All students receive ServSafe Certification Training and earn Food Handler's certification.

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Phase 1

Our Pastry Arts and Hospitality training programs offer customized, comprehensive training blending formal instruction and practical experience.

Students in phase 1 learn through a tailored curriculum, learning essential pastry or hospitality skills highly valued in their respective industries, alongside ServSafe Certification Training.

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Phase 1

The Pastry Arts Program curriculum focuses on mastering pastry techniques and methods in a professional kitchen. This includes learning methods such as creaming, reverse creaming and muffin, while creating a diverse array of pastries and yeast breads.

In the Hospitality Program, students acquire highly transferable skills essential for the hospitality industry. These skills encompass customer service, Point of Sale system operation, barista operations and more, while incorporating workplace communication, precision, and problem-solving. Instruction blends classroom learning with hands-on exercises, emphasizing professionalism, food safety and self-advocacy.

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Phase 2

In Phase 2, students in both programs transition into three months of hands-on, on-the job training in the production kitchen or in the Bakeshop.

Monthly evaluations help track progress, with final reviews providing personalized employment recommendations within the food service or hospitality industry.

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Phase 2

Students in the Pastry Arts Program work toward becoming part of the production team under the supervision and tutelage of the chef-instructors to refine their skills, become proficient in larger recipe batches and become adept at following production guidelines and schedules.

In the Hospitality Program, students learn inventory management, coffee preparation, bakery display creation, and cashier duties. They spend time in the kitchen alongside instructors, taking inventory, managing customer relationships, and handling sales responsibilities.

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Employee Turnover in the Hospitality and Food Service Industry in the DMV

Leisure and Hospitality Industry Statistics

- Total separations: 12,523
- Hires: 13,091
- Job openings: 1,282
- Employee turnover: 95.7%

Accommodation and Food Service Industry Statistics

- Total separations: 10,634
- Hires: 11,017
- Job openings: 1,096
- Employee turnover: 96.5%

www.bls.gov

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Growth in the Hospitality and Food Service Industry in the DMV

Hospitality (2020-2030)

- Projected annual job openings: 820
- Projected growth: 50%

Food Service Industry (2020-2030)

- Projected annual job openings: 1,420
- Projected growth: 16%

www.onetonline.org

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Economic Impact in Maryland

The tourism/hospitality industry supported 123,617 Maryland jobs and generated \$2.3 billion in state and local tax revenue in 2022.

Employment Trends in the Metropolitan Area

- Leisure and hospitality gained 15,900 jobs over the year in the metropolitan area.
- Accommodation and food services added 16,900 jobs for the same period. Restaurant employment has surpassed pre-pandemic levels.

www.business.maryland.gov

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Understanding 80/20 Rule

Employers primarily seek:

- Attendance

- Attitude
- Ability to perform the job
- Skill
- Growth potential

3 of these skills compile 80% of what employers look for!

Graphic: Word Cloud

- Problem solving
- Persuasion
- Critical thinking
- Time management
- Attitude
- Attendance
- Ability to perform
- Speaking
- Growth potential
- Learning strategies
- Social perceptiveness
- Active listening
- Decision making
- Coordination

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Cost of Hiring vs Retaining Employees

- Average cost per hire: Nearly \$4,700
- Companies spent over \$92 billion in 2020-2021 on training.
- It can take up to 6 months or more for a company to break even on its investment in a new hire.

www.investopedia.com

www.businessnewsdaily.com

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Factors that Affect the Costs of Hiring a New Employee

- Background checks
- Job posting
- Compensation
- Training
- Candidate screening
- HR team
- Referrals

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Employment training programs should align with industry needs, focusing on both soft and hard skills, to bridge the gap between job seekers and employers in the hospitality and food service industries.

Regular feedback from employers, ongoing support for graduates, and cost-effective hiring practices are essential for meeting employer needs and sustaining workforce growth.

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Gathering Employer Needs

To understand their current and future hiring needs, preferred qualifications, and skills gaps they face, information about employers can be gathered through a combination of methods:

1. **Employer Surveys** – Can be distributed electronically or through direct outreach.
2. **Job Postings and Market Research** – Analyzing online and offline job postings.
3. **Industry Partnerships** – Establishing relationships with industry associations.
4. **Placement Data Analysis** – Analyzing placement data from past graduates.

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Food and Beverage Service Competency Model

Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Competency Model

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Translating Employer Needs into Curriculum

- Analyze the data collected from employer surveys, interviews, and market research to identify the most pressing needs and skill gaps within target industries.
- Prioritize needs based on employer importance and potential impact on employability.
- Customize training modules to address prioritized needs, incorporating real-world examples.

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Translating Employer Needs into Curriculum

- Integrate practical applications for hands-on experience in work environments.
- Ensure curriculum aligns with industry standards and certifications.
- Establish a feedback loop with employers to adjust training based on their input.
- Monitor impact of the training program on participants' employability and job placement outcomes (employment rates, job retention, and employer satisfaction).

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Applying Information to Instruction for Hard and Soft Skill Development

- Determine key hard and soft skills based on employer needs.
- Create clear learning goals for both skill sets.
- Design practical exercises for hard skills and role-playing for soft skills.
- Offer constructive feedback and coaching for skill improvement.
- Connect learning to real-world applications and scenarios.
- Promote collaboration and teamwork among peers to enhance soft skills.
- Provide flexible learning options to accommodate diverse needs.
- Use varied assessments/evaluations to measure skill mastery progress.
- Encourage ongoing skill development beyond the program.

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Meeting the Needs for Entry Level Employment

- **Career Readiness Preparation** – Conduct workshops on resume writing, interview skills, professional etiquette, and job search strategies to prepare individuals for the application and interview process.
- **Job Placement Assistance** – Provide assistance with job search, application submission, and interview scheduling to help candidates secure entry-level positions aligned with their skills and interests.

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What Do Employers Have To Say About Our Grads?

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Industry Review of Curriculum

Our Pastry Arts program curriculum was reviewed by Kate Zuckerman.

- Kate Zuckerman--pastry chef, savory chef, cooking instructor, recipe tester, cookbook author.
 - Kate finished her pastry internship in Paris in 1996.
 - Kate was the pastry chef at Chanterelle in NYC from 1999-2009.
 - Kate published a Book “The Sweet Life” in 2006.
- Her comments about Sunflower Curriculum:
 - “It’s a sound beginning for anyone who is looking to start a career in the pastry world.”
 - “Outlines the basic skills needed to go into entry-level employment.”

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Finding the Right Match

- Graduates are able to do 80% of the job independently.
- Graduates have the opportunity to grow.
- The job fits the graduates’ preferences for culture, distance from home, and setting.

Versus Creating Carved Job Opportunities

- No growth opportunities.
- The job doesn’t necessarily fit the preferences for culture, distance from home, and setting.
- Does not always meet the entire needs of the business.

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Job Services

- Sunflower IEP
 - Career goal setting
 - Staircase approach
- Developing long-lasting relationships with managers and organizations
- 4 week intensive onsite support
 - After 4 weeks, monthly check-ins with students and managers
 - After 90 days, bi-monthly checking for an additional year

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Circling Back

- Bi-annual surveys with employee partners
- Develop employer partner relationships
- We have standing committees of employers who help guide us
- We reach out to employers who have employed our students to inform content for training
- Work with employers to try and help them craft more positions that our students can do
- Have employers come to the bakery and see students in action

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Thank You!