

# Culinary Arts Program Tours Whole Foods



Photo by Gerry Morris

Darius Shelby, Ashlee Hankins, Madison Davis, Jonell Parker, Myia Yates, Instructor Kaye Dorroh, Neiche Hill, Macie McNatt, and Chaperone Ann Hill spent the day learning about healthy food choices at the Whole Foods Market in Jackson, Mississippi.

By Kaye Dorroh,  
21st Century Culinary Arts  
Instructor

During the summer, Culinary Arts students, Madison Davis, Ashlee Hankins, Neiche Hill, Macie McNatt, Jonell Parker, Darius Shelby and Myia Yates, attended a guided tour of Whole Foods Market in Jackson, Mississippi. They interacted with several department team members, tasted food samples, and attended a Lunch and Learn session. The session provided speakers who provided information about the various careers related to the food industry.

The tour guide was Mary Lindsey Simpkins, a registered and licensed dietitian and the Market's Healthy Eating Specialist. She informed the students about how the Market selects the highest quality foods for the store as she introduced the department leaders.

The students sampled a tropical Asian fruit called rambutan from the Produce Department and learned how the Market is careful to choose high quality, organically grown, colorful varieties of fruits and vegetables. The Market offers produce from many different locations, but buys from local markets as much as possible to support the local economy and to promote freshness.

The students toured the Bulk Food Department where customers may buy as much or as little as they need of products. In this department, the students were delighted to make their own peanut butter from fresh peanuts and to taste other

freshly ground nut butters.

Monte Moore, Cheese Department Buyer, entertained the students with his presentation and provided samples for the students to taste. He explained how several kinds of cheese are produced, categorized, selected, and packaged.

The Meat Team Member, Brad Patterson, stressed the importance of the Market selecting poultry and meats that are raised under the most humane conditions. Important qualities for poultry and meats are that the animals are grass fed and grass finished and antibiotic and hormone free.

Other departments on the tour included the Bakery, Seafood Departments, Prepared Food Departments. A Sushi Bar chef demonstrated how to make a sushi roll and then treated the students to a taste.

After choosing foods from the prepared food bars, including pizzas and burgers, the students gathered for a more in-depth informative session about potential careers. They learned that a variety of careers are connected to the food industry.

Mary Lindsey shared her passion for teaching her community how to choose and prepare nourishing foods that are delicious and easy and fun to make. She also shared how art, design, creativity, and many other areas work together to make the Market function.

Melinda Spille, Demo Specialist, and Pembrok Bonhan, Demo Team Member, described the different areas in which they have worked over the years. The



Photo by Gerry Morris

(l to r) Madison Davis, Jonell Parker, and Myia Yates were given the opportunity to examine a rambutan fruit before tasting.



Photo by Gerry Morris

(l to r) Macie McNatt, Madison Davis, Ashlee Hankins and Myia Yates learned about grains, seeds, and nuts and created their own nut butter.

speakers interacted with the students about the students' career plans, and shared their dreams and stories about how they chose their favorite jobs and how they learned as much as possible about each job before coming to Whole Foods. Each speaker emphasized to the students to pursue their dreams, to choose jobs they are passionate about, to learn everything they can about that particular area, and to help others along the way.

Culinary Instructor and Certified Health Education Specialist, Kaye Dorroh, stated, "We are grateful to Whole Foods for setting up the tour. We are appreciative for a gift card from Whole

Foods that we combined with our funds to purchase bison burgers, fresh salmon, and other specialty foods to try in our program. I am also grateful for Mrs. Gerry Morris and Ms. Ann Hill for accompanying us as chaperones and to Ms. Gerry for being our photographer." Mrs. Dorroh further stated, "In the Culinary Arts after-school program, creativity and healthy food preparation is emphasized. I like to watch students try a food that is new to them after they work hard to prepare and present it. It makes my heart sing to see them try something nutritious and like it."

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