**LOCAL NONPROFIT - COMMUNITYCULINARY SCHOOL OF CHARLOTTE - AWARDED $20K TO**

**HELP ADULTS BREAK THE CYCLE OF DEPENDENCY THROUGH CULINARY ARTS TRAINING**

**AS PART OF "50 STATES FOR GOOD" COMMUNITY GIVING PROGRAM**

Community Culinary School of Charlotte represents North Carolina as one of 52 Winners to Share More than $1,000,000 from Tom's of Maine

CHARLOTTE, NC, December 3, 2015 - Community Culinary School of Charlotte (CCSC) has been selected as one of 52 winners from across the country in the seventh annual Tom's of Maine "50 States for Good" community giving program. CCSC will receive $20,000 for its Workforce Development training program, which is a creative solution to the interwoven problems of unemployment, hunger and homelessness in the community.

Community Culinary School of Charlotte (CCSC) trains adults for food service careers, addressing the root cause of hunger - unemployment. Their focus is teaching marketable skills that translate into stable income, so that students can feed their families and become positive role models. This has an exponential effect that breaks the cycle of dependency and contributes to a healthy, sustainable community.

Encore Catering and the Café are integral components of CCSC that serve twofold purposes: to give training experience to students and alumni and to generate funds to support the School. Encore is a full service catering division. The Café employs alumni and trains students in front-of-the-house and customer-service skills. Students graduate with 350 training hours, sit for the National Restaurant Association exam to receive their ServSafe Sanitation Certification, and are ready to embark on their culinary careers.

Executive Director Chef Ron Ahlert is honored and excited to win recognition from Tom's of Maine because "It helps CCSC continue impacting the community. For the past 18 years, we have seen students transform their lives through our holistic approach that breaks the cycle of dependency! We instill a solid work ethic, put money back into the tax pool, and provide trained personnel for Charlotte's culinary industry. CCSC truly creates sustainable change. Like the proverb about teaching a man to fish: Not only do we teach our students how to fish - we teach them how to clean that fish, cook that fish, and sell that fish!"

Passionate community members took to their social media pages to share #OneWaytoHelp their communities, amassing nearly 10,000 submissions. One entrant representing each state and Washington, D.C. was selected to designate a local nonprofit in their area to receive project funding from Tom's of Maine.

"This year's nonprofit recipients bring to life an inspiring picture of the care that Americans have for each other and their communities," said Susan Dewhirst, goodness programs manager at Tom's of Maine. "People often think giving back to their community is time intensive, and we wanted to show there are easy ways to make a

difference, like raising awareness for a cause you love and supporting brands that strive to make the world a better place for future generations."

Tom's of Maine has given 10% of profits back to the community since 1970 and encourages employees to use 5% (12 days) of paid time off to volunteer every year. For more information, visit [tomsofmaine.com](http://www.tomsofmaine.com).

**About Community Culinary School of Charlotte (CCSC)**

CCSC is a private nonprofit organization that provides training and job placement assistance in the food service industry for adults who face barriers to long-term successful employment. Each year, CCSC conducts three 14-week training sessions where students learn the culinary skills necessary to obtain employment in the restaurant and food service industry. In addition to culinary arts, the curriculum encompasses Job Readiness Skills and an RPS program - Relapse Prevention Service or Ready-Plan-Succeed. Goal-setting and creating action plans lead to greater success in work and in life. CCSC provides career tracks for adults who have been out of work due to barriers such as layoffs, lack of skills, incarceration, addiction, homelessness and veterans' issues. Students attend CCSC on a barter system supporting the mission of community partners who feed Charlotte's needy. To learn more visit us online at [http://www.CommunityCulinary.org](http://www.communityculinary.org/) or at [http://www.Facebook.com/CommunityCulinaryCLT](http://www.facebook.com/CommunityCulinaryCLT).

**About Tom's of Maine**

Tom's of Maine is a leading natural products company focused on oral and personal care carrying high quality toothpaste, mouthwash, dental floss, antiperspirant, deodorant, bar soap, lip balm and baby shampoo and lotion products. Our Stewardship Model guides every decision we make ensuring that our ingredients, processing, and packaging meet our rigorous standards for being natural, sustainable, and responsible. For over 45 years, Tom's of Maine has invested in hundreds of nonprofit efforts by giving 10% of its profits back to organizations that support people and the planet and by encouraging employees to use 5% (12 days) of paid time to volunteer. Tom's of Maine employees regularly contribute suggestions for improving the company's high sustainability standards. And their ideas, from wind power to ways to improve recycled and recyclable packaging options, are critical to the company's sensitive way of doing business. Most Tom's of Maine products are vegan, kosher and halal certified and gluten-free. All packaging is recyclable through a partnership with upcycling leader TerraCycle or participating municipalities. Tom's of Maine values partnering with its consumers, suppliers and community organizations to support lasting, positive change that is good for people and the planet. To learn more visit us online at <http://www.tomsofmaine.com/> or at <http://www.facebook.com/TomsofMaine>.

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"Serving More than an Appetite"

813 CCSC graduates as of August 2015!

[Culinary School website](http://www.communityculinary.org)

[Encore website](http://www.encorecatering.org)

[Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Community-Culinary-School-of-Charlotte/114546952576)