North Tech Graduate Whips Up Career

Who would have thought that a love of food and cooking passed from a grandmother to her 6-year-old grandson would blossom into a lifelong passion for cooking and a career in culinary arts?

Andrew Schmitt, a 2005 graduate of Lafayette and North Technical high schools, says he remembers sitting on his grandmother’s lap and watching Julia Child on PBS as a young child. The two would then spend hours in the kitchen trying to recreate various recipes.

“I look back at those years, I blink and they’re gone,” Schmitt said. “But I can remember it clearly. I just always loved cooking with her and watching those shows.”

But Schmitt’s love of cooking doesn’t stop with good-tasting food that is pleasing to the eye. He has started down a path to make a career out of focusing on the health, nutrition and science behind the art form he loves.

Schmitt earned his associate’s degree in culinary arts at Sullivan University, one of the premiere culinary arts schools in the country. Schmitt attended the Johnson & Wales campus in Denver, Co., and graduated this May.

He says his days at North Tech gave him a good foundation and started him on the right path to pursue his dream. As a new school year is starting, Schmitt took a few minutes to sit down with Special Edition staff to reflect on his time at North Tech and outline his plans for the future.

What did you like about the culinary arts program at North Tech?

“Without North Tech I wouldn’t be where I am today. It opened the door for me and is leading me down the path to my master’s degree. Most schools expect at least six to 12 months of kitchen experience to apply.”

How did you decide to combine culinary arts with nutrition?

“When I attended North Tech I was like every other student. I wanted to open my own restaurant. But real-world experience working in restaurants made me realize that’s not what I wanted to do the rest of my life. What we eat has such an impact on our quality of life. I can remember it clearly. I just always loved cooking with her and watching those shows.”

I look back at those years, I blink and they’re gone,” Schmitt said. “But I can remember it clearly. I just always loved cooking with her and watching those shows.”

But Schmitt’s love of cooking doesn’t stop with good-tasting food that is pleasing to the eye. He has started down a path to make a career out of focusing on the health, nutrition and science behind the art form he loves.

Schmitt earned his associate’s degree in culinary arts at Sullivan University, one of the premiere culinary arts schools in the country. Schmitt attended the Johnson & Wales campus in Denver, Co., and graduated this May.

He says his days at North Tech gave him a good foundation and started him on the right path to pursue his dream. As a new school year is starting, Schmitt took a few minutes to sit down with Special Edition staff to reflect on his time at North Tech and outline his plans for the future.

What did you like about the culinary arts program at North Tech?

“Without North Tech I wouldn’t be where I am today. It opened the door for me and is leading me down the path to my master’s degree. Most schools expect at least six to 12 months of kitchen experience to apply.”

How did you decide to combine culinary arts with nutrition?

“When I attended North Tech I was like every other student. I wanted to open my own restaurant. But real-world experience working in restaurants made me realize that’s not what I wanted to do the rest of my life. What we eat has such an impact on our quality of life. I look back at those years, I blink and they’re gone,” Schmitt said. “But I can remember it clearly. I just always loved cooking with her and watching those shows.”

Andrew Schmitt, who’s pursuing graduate studies in culinary arts and nutrition, credits North Tech for giving him the foundation necessary for his success.
SSD Names Deddens Teacher of the Year

Each year SSD honors 10 teachers with the Key to the Classroom Award. The award honors teachers for their achievements in the classroom and dedication to the success of SSD students. From the 10 winners, Ann Deddens was selected to represent SSD as its 2009 Teacher of the Year.

Deddens, who teaches at Spoede Elementary in the Ladue School District, is quick to admit that teaching is simply something innate to her — it’s something she was “born to do.” She comes from a family of educators and thrives among the challenges that she is faced with every day.

Superintendent John Cary presented Deddens with the honor at the district’s Special Salutes banquet in June. Cary said Deddens’ commitment to the children she teaches is evident in everything she does.

“Ann’s attitude is one of advocating for children of all ability levels and breaking down mental models,” Cary said. “She possesses a passion for teaching that is fueled by her belief that any child can learn and that learning is a lifelong process.”

Deddens said she finds her reward in seeing a child’s perspective every day and in the relationships she’s been able to form with parents in helping them realize their children’s potential.

A true testimony to that relationship is that Deddens was actually nominated for the Key to the Classroom award by a parent. Rebecca Goldman’s letter of nomination noted that Deddens “has a natural grace that is not often seen.”

Next year, Deddens will represent SSD in the statewide Teacher of the Year competition sponsored by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

SSD Superintendent John Cary congratulates Deddens at the district’s Special Salutes banquet.

South Tech Earns ‘Tough Tools for Cool Schools’

South Technical High School’s building trades program has a few new additions in its toolbox.

South Tech recently was chosen as one of 500 schools nationwide to receive a set of complimentary tools from Lowe’s courtesy of its Tough Tools for Cool Schools program. The tool kit, valued at $600, includes claw hammers, utility knives, tape measures, hand saws, adjustable wrench sets, pry bars, screwdrivers and a rolling tool chest.

Lowe’s partnered with SkillsUSA for the program. SkillsUSA programs include local, state and national competitions for students in career and technical programs in which students demonstrate occupational and leadership skills.

South Tech Offers Community Help Desk

Resident can reach the Community Help Desk at 314.989.7704 or via e-mail at communityhelp@ssdmo.org.