

Welcome from the Executive Director

Welcome to *What's Cookin'* – HTA's newsletter about the programs, people, and events at the heart of what we do. Through robust partnerships with employers, educators, and community organizations, we help people move from poverty to economic independence by opening pathways to life-changing careers in the hospitality and food service industry.

As we prepare to celebrate Independence Day, we're reminded of the richness of our nation's diversity—and of the belief that everyone deserves the freedom to dream and the opportunity to achieve. I'm grateful for the work we do each day to create pathways of opportunity for individuals from all backgrounds and to help make the American Dream a reality.

Thank you for being part of our community and supporting our mission to strengthen the hospitality industry—and the people who make it work.

ADINE FORMAN

Executive Director

Hospitality Training Academy

County of Los Angeles and HTA Celebrate National Apprenticeship Day



In honor of National Apprenticeship Day, the HTA, Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), and LA County Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell hosted a special event honoring HTA's Line Cook Registered Apprenticeship graduates, who have completed approximately 2,000 hours of on-the-job training and are now fully certified Line Cook Apprentices. We celebrated the transformational power of Registered Apprenticeships to provide economic opportunities for underserved communities and build our hospitality workforce. Family and friends of the graduates joined the festive gathering, as well as valued employer partners from USC, CREWS of California at LAX, HMS Host, The Sheraton Grand Hotel, and Concord Collective. [VIEW MORE PHOTOS](#)

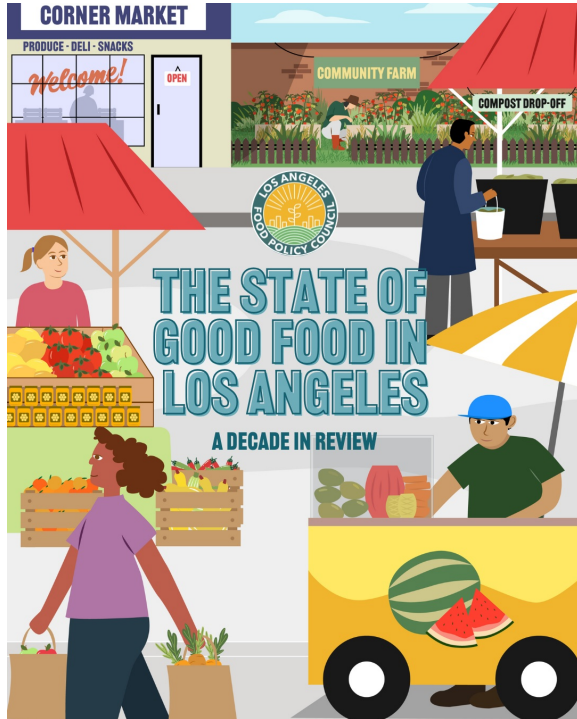
Meet Culinary Captain: Chef Mitchell Frieder



Chef Mitchell Frieder, Director of Food and Beverage Training, has been at the cutting edge of culinary education for over twenty years, and is one of only two recognized subject matter experts in Culinary by the U.S. Department of Labor. Before joining the HTA, he was a Chef Instructor at the International Culinary School at the Art Institute, Le Cordon Bleu, and Le Gourmet Culinary. Since 2015, Chef Mitchell has designed our nationally recognized curricula, trained thousands of students and incumbent workers, mentored our team of instructors, and built strong partnerships with employers.

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HTA Featured in LA Food Policy Council/State of Good Food Report

The Los Angeles Food Policy Council released *The State of Good Food in Los Angeles: A Decade in Review*—a report providing data-driven insights into the health, accessibility, affordability, and sustainability of our food ecosystem across Los Angeles. The HTA contributed to this high-impact report, sharing our perspectives on a Fair Food System that values everyone involved—from farm workers and grocery store employees to the cooks and hospitality workers who prepare and serve our food. Read our commentary: *Building Stability by Building Careers: How the Hospitality Training Academy Contributes to Economic Mobility in LA*. [VIEW PDF](#)



Pasta Delizioso to Vegan Delights: Apprentices Upskill Their Craft

We are invested in the long-term success of our alumni. Graduates of our Line Cook Registered Apprenticeship Program gather at the HTA Kitchen in Koreatown every month to expand their skills. In our Pasta Making Class, apprentices hand-crafted pasta dough and mastered the techniques to produce fettuccini, cavatelli, tortellini, and an array of delectable sauces. And in our Vegan Cuisine Class, they learned to prepare vegan sausage, green goddess dressing, turmeric, tahini, and more!

[VIEW MORE PHOTOS](#)

HTA Hosts Breaking Barriers Grantee Roundtable



HTA is proud to be a recipient of the Breaking Barriers to Employment grant from the Foundation for California Community Colleges and the California Workforce Development Board. We recently had the honor of hosting a roundtable at HTA headquarters with fellow grantees, sharing ideas and learning from one another. This initiative supports innovative strategies to address racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities in the labor market. Through our POWER partnership, we uplift individuals facing systemic barriers to employment, including formerly incarcerated individuals, survivors of domestic and community violence, immigrants, English language learners, adults over 50 seeking retraining, and women entering nontraditional fields.

StoryCorps/Library of Congress Archives Highlight HTA COVID Meal Program



During the pandemic, HTA partnered with UNITE HERE Local 11, leading hospitality employers, and local government to produce and deliver 4.8 million meals to more than 10,000 seniors and unhoused individuals across LA County, while also providing over 1,100 jobs for UNITE HERE Local 11 members and delivery drivers. This initiative is now featured in StoryCorps' COVID-19 *American History Project*, with two interviews entered into the StoryCorps and Library of Congress archives. Listen to conversations with Javier Cano, Area General Manager, The Ritz-Carlton Los Angeles and J.W. Marriott Los Angeles LA LIVE [Listen here](#) and Mitchell Frieder, HTA Director of Food and Beverage Training [Listen here](#)

Presenting Employer-Led Workforce Strategies at WORKCON



In May, HTA participated in *WORKCON 2025—Strength in Change: Resilience for the Future*, the California Workforce Association's annual conference for workforce practitioners. We presented a workshop on Employer-Led Workforce Strategies: Strengthening Partnerships for Equitable Growth, highlighting HTA's approach to building effective employer partnerships. WORKCON showcased innovative programs and collaborations led by Workforce Development Boards, community-based organizations, educational institutions, WIOA partners, and others committed to advancing equity and opportunity in underserved communities.

HTA Awarded State of California Grant to Connect Opportunity Youth with Apprenticeships



HTA is proud to be a recipient of a new California Opportunity Youth Apprenticeship (COYA) grant from the California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) and its Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS). This \$570,000 award will strengthen HTA's best-in-class Registered Apprenticeship Programs for Line Cooks and Barista/Latte Artists—providing opportunity youth, often disconnected from school or work, with a clear pathway to upward mobility and higher wages. At the same time, the program helps close equity gaps across the state. This investment supports Governor Newsom's Master Plan for Career Education by expanding youth apprenticeships, enhancing high school-to-career pathways, strengthening workforce training, and deepening regional partnerships in local communities.

Java Journeys Begin at the HTA Barista Lab



HTA's Barista/Latte Artist Apprenticeship Program—the first of its kind in the country—helps to brew careers, one cup at a time. We hosted our first community open houses, welcoming community-based organizations, faith-based, business leaders, and elected officials to hear from our instructors and students about the program and their experience. And our guests were treated to custom drinks at the HTA Mock Café, where our students practice taking orders, mastering pour-over techniques, and perfecting latte art. Know someone interested in learning to be a Barista or Latte Artist? [Apply here](#)
[VIEW MORE PHOTOS](#)

Student Success Spotlight: Chris Hicks, Line Cook Registered Apprentice



“Where I grew up, the options felt limited; and I made choices that led me to serve eight years in prison. When I got parole, I promised myself I would find a new path. Thanks to the GEO Reentry Program, I found HTA—and everything changed. I found hope and people who believed in me, and I graduated from the HTA Program. The HTA helped place me as a Culinary Specialist at USC. I have freedom. I learned great technical culinary skills. I have a future. It wasn't easy. There were days I wanted to quit, but I kept going because I knew it would make my grandma proud. Today, I'm blessed by the second chance I was given and proud of the life I've built.”

CHRIS HICKS

HTA Line Cook Registered Apprentice and Culinary Specialist at USC

Employer Partner Spotlight: Marriott International



“It’s challenging to find skilled candidates to hire, which is why our unique partnership with the HTA has been so valuable. I take great pride in saying that more than half of my kitchen staff are HTA graduates. They are more than just cooks; they are true chefs. They understand that wearing the white uniform means being a leader in our industry. They’ve been trained to love what we do—it’s not just another job. Thank you to the HTA for consistently training amazing students who are excelling at the top of their game.”

CHEF PAOLO BUFFA

Executive Chef, Sheraton Grand Los Angeles

Community Partner Spotlight: Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity



“What compels me about the HTA is that it takes the concept of providing access to people who need an opportunity, ensures they have the right skills, credentials, and access to employers who offer good wages, and supports them through the entire continuum. Every time I meet a student who has gone through the HTA program, they speak so highly about the experience, the instructors, and their job readiness, and employers corroborate the skills and caliber of your graduates. Our Department and the County want to expand investment in registered apprenticeship programs as great career pathways, and so I appreciate not only HTA’s work, but its value as a model for what other high-road training partnerships could look like.”

KELLY LOBIANCO

Director, Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity

Visit our dynamic and streamlined new HTA **Website** and view our new photo galleries at **FLICKR**.

ABOUT THE HTA

The Hospitality Training Academy (HTA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, labor-management organization that provides free training and best-in-class registered apprenticeships to prepare people for high quality, in-demand jobs in the hospitality, food service, leisure and tourism sectors. We connect our partner employers in Southern California and the State of Arizona with well-trained workers, upskill the current workforce, and help people from vulnerable communities rise from poverty to self-sufficiency through life-changing careers with benefits and a worker voice.



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