



2022 ANNUAL REPORT



MISSION

To help people overcome barriers to sustainable employment by building confidence while providing resources and culinary job training.

VISION

To be the premier culinary & employment training organization in Colorado in order to increase equity and opportunity for those in under-resourced communities.

VALUES

INTEGRITY

We value integrity and will demonstrate this through both organizational and personal accountability, transparency in both external and internal communication, and in our pursuit of excellence.

INCLUSION

We value inclusion and will demonstrate this by respecting and appreciating our differences, elevating historically marginalized voices, providing equitable access to opportunities, empowering people in our program, organization and community, and by fostering open-minded and non-judgmental interactions and collaborations.

GROWTH

We value growth and will demonstrate this through the evolution and progress of our organization, and the professional and personal development of our staff and students.

CELEBRATION

We value celebration and will demonstrate this by honoring and showcasing the unique perspectives and abilities of our students, staff and volunteers through recognition of successes, milestones, and achievements both big and small within our community.

WWW.WORKOPTIONS.ORG



"Growing up in a poor family is an everyday struggle... but after the the Work Options program, I have found such great financial freedom that I can say I haven't been broke ever since!"

Meleny

Work Options Graduate

"Partnering with Work Options is a natural fit for Swire Coca-Cola to help build stronger and economically vibrant communities and continue to contribute to Colorado's renowned restaurant and culinary industry."

Jenifer Freeman

Director of Public Relations and Govt. Affairs
Swire Coca-Cola

"This organization has a proven track record of successful outcomes that adds value to the communities it serves. We are so excited to have this effective community partner in Adams County making significant impacts for our residents and food industries."

Emma Pinter

Adams County Commissioner

A SNAPSHOT OF 2022

4,125 HOURS

OF HANDS-ON CULINARY SKILLS TRAINING AND PRACTICE,
GUIDED BY OUR TEAM OF HIGHLY EXPERIENCED
PROFESSIONAL CHEFS



5,552 HOURS

OF ONE-ON-ONE ASSISTANCE PROVIDING SERVICES AND
RESOURCES, INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYMENT SKILLS COACHING,
AND GUIDED JOB SEARCH



1,684 CLASSES

INCLUDING FOOD SAFETY, KITCHEN MATH, JOB
READINESS, FINANCIAL HEALTH, AND COGNITIVE
BEHAVIORAL THERAPY GROUP CLASSES



25

YEARS SERVING THE DENVER METRO AREA COMMUNITY

Since 1997, our training program has served people from under-resourced communities and previously incarcerated individuals. This hands-on training and support program provides culinary job skills training plus individualized, holistic support services to help students overcome their employment barriers and stabilize their lives, thus increasing the likelihood that program graduates will be positioned to find and retain sustainable employment.

4

TRAINING CENTERS

DENVER

Denver Human Services Castro Building
Includes a commercial kitchen, classroom space, career center and a social enterprise cafeteria.

WESTMINSTER

Adams County Human Services Center
Includes a commercial kitchen, classroom space, and a social enterprise cafeteria. Career center available in partnership with the Adams County Workforce Center.

MOBILE CULINARY CLASSROOM

Location Varies

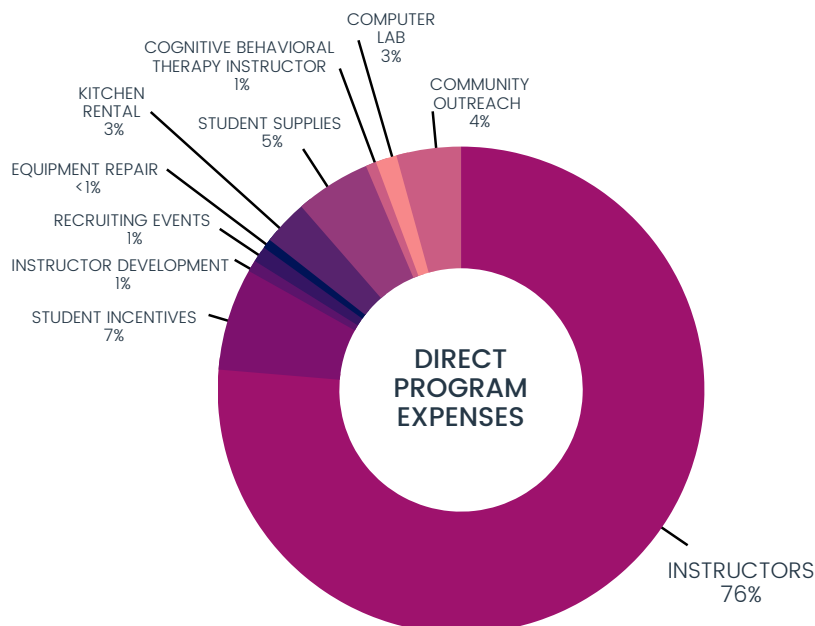
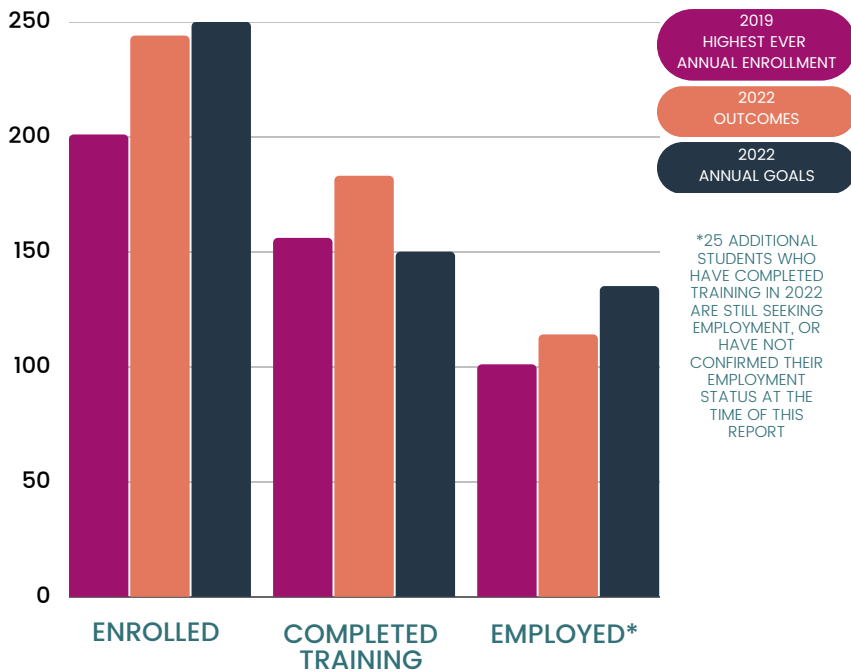
Includes a small commercial kitchen and classroom space. Throughout 2021 and 2022, the Mobile Culinary Classroom was located in Aurora, where we worked in partnership with the Second Chance Center to provide services and training to individuals navigating their recent release from incarceration.

PARK HILL COMMISSARY

Mosaic Community Campus

This advanced training site includes a commercial kitchen, and shared classroom and event spaces. The campus formerly housed Johnson & Wales University, one of the premier culinary schools in the country, and the culinary buildings are now a collection of commissary kitchens that are creating a true culinary hub for the Denver community. Our food truck, The Helping Hen, is based here and this facility will also be the home of our newest program – the Line Cook Apprenticeship.

2022 OUTCOMES



\$17.92

AVERAGE GRADUATE WAGE UPON EMPLOYMENT

90%

PERCENTAGE OF ENROLLED STUDENT WHO ACHIEVED AT LEAST ONE INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATION

79%

EMPLOYMENT RETENTION OF GRADUATES AFTER 6 MONTHS



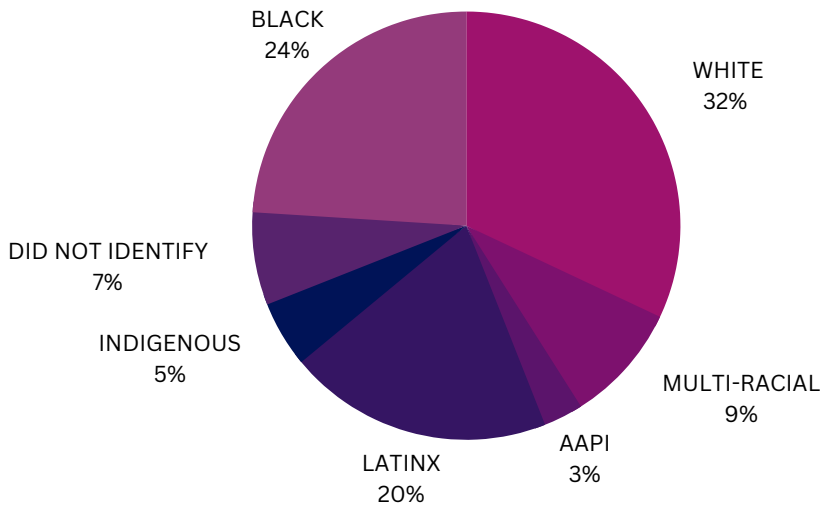
THE HELPING HEN FOOD TRUCK

In 2020, Work Options added a food truck to offer advanced training opportunities for our students. The Covid-19 pandemic caused us to have to close our social enterprise cafes temporarily, and required Work Options leadership team to revise our program delivery and business models. We immediately got to work partnering with government agencies and community organizations to provide emergency meals to Coloradans facing hunger. The Helping Hen has primarily been used to prepare and distribute hot emergency meals to vulnerable populations. In spring 2023, we plan to expand how the food truck is used and also begin using it to prepare and sell food to the general public, giving our apprentices the opportunity to practice providing customer service and preparing food for customers in real time.

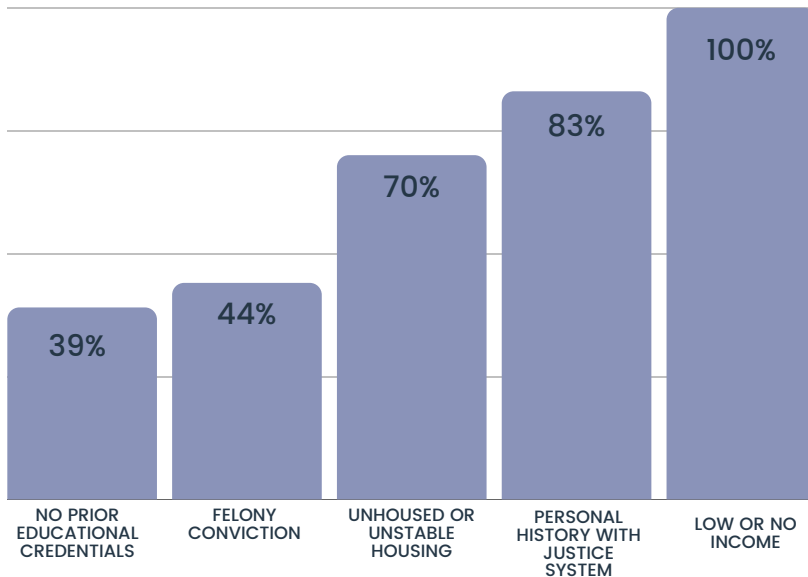
200,000+
EMERGENCY MEALS

SINCE MARCH OF 2020, WORK OPTIONS STUDENTS HAVE PRACTICED THEIR NEW CULINARY SKILLS BY PREPARING EMERGENCY MEALS FOR THEIR FELLOW COLORADANS. NOT ONLY WAS THIS A GREAT AVENUE FOR US TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE PROVIDING CULINARY TRAINING, BUT STUDENTS ALSO REPORT FEELING A GREAT SENSE OF PRIDE IN BEING ABLE TO GIVE BACK TO THEIR COMMUNITY.

HOW OUR STUDENTS IDENTIFY



BARRIERS OUR STUDENTS FACE



OF STUDENTS WITH A HISTORY OF JUSTICE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT

DID NOT RECIDIVATE

WITHIN THE FIRST 12 MONTHS OF EMPLOYMENT

According to a November 2021 report from the Attorney General of Colorado entitled Promoting Reentry Employment to Reduce Recidivism and Strengthen Our Communities, "Economic stability, which primarily requires obtaining stable, lawful employment with fair wages, is a significant factor in preventing recidivism."

NEW!

W.O.R.C. WORK OPTIONS FOR RETURNING CITIZENS

Our new W.O.R.C. program offers pre-release training for incarcerated individuals who are preparing for release into the Denver area. This program is designed to increase the likelihood that individuals will successfully transition back into the community and it creates a new pipeline of students entering our in-person core skills training.



AFTER LEAVING PRISON IN 2021, BISHMI COMPLETED THE WORK OPTIONS TRAINING PROGRAM AND A PAID INTERNSHIP.

"I have encouraged many of my friends at the halfway house to start the training and I often pass out Work Options' recruitment flyers while I am distributing the hot emergency meals. Work Options offers great opportunities. It is a place where you can grow and where great things are expected of you."

BISHMI IS NOW A FULL TIME WORK OPTIONS EMPLOYEE, SUPERVISING THE HELPING HEN FOOD TRUCK, AND HELPING TO TRAIN WORK OPTIONS STUDENTS AND APPRENTICES

NEW!

LINE COOK APPRENTICESHIP

This apprenticeship program targets a population largely overlooked by other local apprenticeship programs — individuals who are highly motivated but who face (or who have recently overcome) barriers to employment. Our apprenticeship training provides individuals who are lacking employable skills with equitable access to opportunities to advance up the culinary career ladder. Apprentices receive an hourly wage during the 9- to 12-month apprenticeship program. Work Options' apprenticeship program is offered in partnership with the National Restaurant Association and other culinary apprenticeship training sites.

NEW!

THE Culinary CLASSIC



Work Options is proud to present the first annual Culinary Classic on May 22nd, 2023. This exciting fundraiser will feature a competition between the best chefs in Denver creating delectable small plates. Watch chef demos and see Work Options training live in-person as you sample the best food, wine, beer and specialty cocktails that Denver has to offer before bidding on exclusive experiences in our live auction. The historic Mosaic Community Campus in Park Hill will host Denver's new premier culinary event. Visit our website for more info:

CulinaryClassic.org



A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends & Supporters,

Thank you for your continuing support during 2022, a year of recovery and growth for Work Options and our students. In spring, the pandemic finally receded and we were able to fully focus on providing our proven training programs and helping individuals willing to work hard to gain the skills needed to sustain employment. This year we served 244 students, tying our previous enrollment record from 2019. Our employment rate remained above 70% with an impressive 79% of graduates retaining employment for at least 6 months. Perhaps the greatest news is that the average starting wage for our students has jumped 33% from pre-pandemic rates. Our graduates are now earning an average rate of \$17.92 per hour and many of them also receiving benefits.

This was also a year of growth. In 2022, we piloted the WORC (Work Options for Returning Citizens) program. This program begins behind the walls of Denver Women's Correctional Facility providing pre-release training to help women build transition plans and provide support as they return to the Denver Metro area and enter our job skills training program. Last year, 39 women joined the WORC program and so far, 24 of these women have completed training and become employed. We are excited to continue this program and we are adding additional supports as the funding becomes available.

In fall 2022 we launched a new Line Cook Apprenticeship training program; 5 of our own staff are currently working to receive this advanced certification. We plan to expand this program by partnering with employers to assist them in training apprentices. We have also expanded our training facilities. We now have a fully functional training center in Park Hill located on the former Johnson and Wales Campus at Quebec and Montview. This means we now have 3 training locations plus the mobile classroom which will begin offering classes again when the weather is warmer.

And, we continue to nurture and support our tremendous staff. Their dedication to our students is why our program works. We will continue to provide training and individual enrichment opportunities to each staff member to ensure their personal growth. Finally, we know that we all rise together and it starts with you. So, thank you once again for a wonderful 2022 and the promise of an exciting 2023.

With Gratitude,
Julie Stone, Executive Director