

The Washington County Consortium

NEWSLETTER

Brought to you by Sarah Woog, Executive Director of the Washington County Consortium (WCC)

March 1, 2019

The *March* continues...

As March, the longest month of the academic year, begins, please consider taking opportunities to connect with other professionals, learn some helpful practices, and invest in yourself.

Check out the following professional development opportunities and use the included links to view additional details and to register:

ATOMIM Dine and Discuss with Marielle Edgecomb

March 13, 4:00-7:00 Reynolds Center at UMM

Please register at <http://atomim.wildapricot.org/events>

Growth Mindset with Sue Bergmann

March 27, 9:00-3:00 Reynolds Center at UMM

Please register at: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/calendar>

The Fundamentals of Trauma Sensitive School Implementation with Cassie Yackley

April 2, 7:30-3:00, D.W. Merritt School in Addison

Please register at: <https://goo.gl/forms/WeNcJ1bjJqUsvzO2>



Meet Emily Fitzsimmons, Culinary Arts Instructor at Coastal Washington County Institute of Technology.

Emily and I had the opportunity over February break to sit down at Helen's Restaurant in Machias to talk about her work, life, and all things in between. Thank you, Emily, for sharing a meal with me, and for all you do for Washington County students and communities. (Emily is on the left, with a group of her students at a Culinary Arts competition in Portland over February break.)

Everyone should know Emily Fitzsimmons. Most of you probably already do. I realized this when we met for lunch at Helen's and she personally greeted almost everyone we came across. And the restaurant was full.

Emily is currently the Culinary Instructor at the Coastal Washington County Institute of Technology, based out of Machias Memorial High School. She grew up in Jonesboro, graduated from Washington Academy, and has cooked in restaurants from Cutler to Jonesboro, beginning when she was 14 years old. She's catered events all over the County, too, from weddings and baby showers, to professional development sessions throughout the year, and for Harvest of Ideas. Emily was also the food service director at Washington Academy, where she discovered her love for teaching her love, Culinary Arts.

Emily has a degree in Culinary Arts from Eastern Maine Community College and has commuted to Orono the past four years to become a certified culinary instructor. She recently completed her Praxis and her final class, joining the cadre of Washington County educators who have balanced work, family (Emily is married with five kids), long commutes, and longer hours of studying, to gain the knowledge and skills critical to providing opportunities for kids.

Emily talks about her program and students with infectious pride and enthusiasm: "To have a kid want to do what you're passionate about is so refreshing ... and for them to make a batch of cookies, eat, be proud their accomplishment, it's awesome." Emily also appreciates how Culinary Arts gives students opportunities to succeed. "It gives them a way to express themselves, to compete on a non-athletic level," Emily noted.

Emily recently brought a group of students to a culinary competition in Portland, which I had the opportunity to check out. I admired the students' organizational and time management skills, their precision, and their diligence. It occurred to me these are the habits of mind I had hoped to instill in my math students when I was in the classroom. I think it's important to acknowledge and celebrate how Emily's teaching, and vocational programming in general, can support students' development and teach lessons that can feel so elusive in more traditional settings.

Emily and her work are wonderful examples of the impact vocational programming can have on students and their communities. Her love for her craft is infectious, and you can see her students have caught the bug. She's also a lot of fun to be around. Just ask anyone at Helen's.