



Contact

Jim Wilson
Director, Education & Workforce Development
Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association
jim@vrlta.org | 804.288.3065

Manchester High School Teacher Selected Virginia ProStart Teacher of the Year

Richmond, Va. – April 4, 2016 – The Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association Education Foundation (VRLTAEF) is proud to announce that Pam Sloan of Manchester High School in Chesterfield County will receive the 2016 Virginia ProStart Educator Excellence Award. Sloan is invited to join other top educators in Chicago, Ill., for the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation’s (NRAEF) ProStart Educator Excellence Awards, May 19-21, 2016.

The NRAEF’s ProStart Educator Excellence Award recognizes an exceptional ProStart educator from every state. The award is given to ProStart teachers who are leaders within their state program, and who have helped elevate the program and their students within their community.

“ProStart unites the industry and the classroom to create a unique and unparalleled experience for students. Our dedicated ProStart educators are working diligently to create the vital bridge for their students,” said Jim Wilson, director of education for the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association.

“Pam embodies everything that makes ProStart educators successful: She has the ability to inspire and lead the foodservice leaders of tomorrow. We are honored to have teachers like Pam in the ProStart family. Her passion for the industry, education and her students, and her strong work ethic and commitment to the ProStart program, made her a clear choice for the 2016 Virginia ProStart Educator Excellence Award.”

Sloan is in her 15th year of teaching, all of which include the ProStart program. She loves “flipping” the classroom and often puts her students in the role of educator.

“I take lesson topics that students often struggle with and make them responsible for applying information from them into a lesson plan for others,” Sloan said. As an example she adds, “Recipe conversion is a struggle so each December we have several of our special needs M.O.M.D students come in the kitchen over a week long period to make a few thousand cookies—converting from a recipe that would typical make a dozen—that we then package and send to troops overseas who are listed on AnySoldier.com.”

As an instructor of the next generation of chefs and restaurateurs, Sloan wants her students to understand the entire process of getting food to the table. She believes that truly understanding where food comes will help encourage her students to continue down the culinary path after leaving her classroom.

“Being a suburban/urban area often my students lack a connection between how the food is grown and processed and how it gets to the grocery. To combat this we began a student garden here at Manchester High School, but also spend time volunteering with the farmers at our local botanical gardens, as well as making trips to local orchards, olive oil dispensaries, local flour mills, dairy farms, and farmers markets,” Sloan wrote in her award submission. “These hands-on experiences which put the students in a leadership role achieve a high level of learning and more importantly an understanding of how to apply the things we learn in class to real life and real careers in hospitality.”

Awardees to the ProStart Educator Excellence Awards will be flown to Chicago and hosted by NRAEF from May 19-21, 2016. There they will attend interactive sessions, share best practices and be honored at the Educator Excellence Awards Dinner.

About the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association Education Foundation (VRLTAEF)

As the educational arm of the Virginia, Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association, the VRLTA exists to enhance the restaurant and hospitality industries’ through education and encouraging youth to pursue post-secondary education in the culinary and hospitality fields. This is primarily done through the coordination of the Virginia ProStart program and the administration of a scholarship program. For more information on the VRLTAEF, visit VRLTA.org/VRLTAEF.

About the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association (VRLTA)

The Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association is the only unified voice for the restaurant, lodging, travel and hospitality suppliers associations. VRLTA creates value for members by promoting the legislative interests of the industry, networking, educational opportunities, and protecting free enterprise. Inquiries about membership and VRLTA services should be directed to VRLTA at (804) 288-3065 or VRLTA.org.

About the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF)

As the philanthropic foundation of the National Restaurant Association, the NRAEF exists to enhance the restaurant industry’s service to the public through education, community engagement and promotion of career opportunities. The NRAEF works to attract, develop and retain a career-oriented professional workforce for the restaurant industry. In 2016, the restaurant and foodservice industry is projected to provide a record 14.4 million jobs, making it the nation’s second largest private sector employer. For more information on the NRAEF, visit NRAEF.org.

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