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Hampton and Virginia Beach Teens Take Top Honors at Virginia's Premier High School Culinary Competition

Winning Teams Head to Charleston, South Carolina for National Competition, April 28-30

Richmond, Va. – March 13, 2017 – On Friday, March 10, Virginia ProStart teams from Phoebus High School (Hampton) and Tallwood High School (Virginia Beach) placed first at the 2017 Virginia ProStart Student Invitational in culinary arts and restaurant management, respectively. As the winners of the competition, held at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia, both schools received an invitation to participate in the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation's National ProStart Invitational, April 28-30, 2017, in Charleston, South Carolina.

During the event, more than 70 students representing 15 teams competed in either the culinary arts or restaurant management division. Culinary teams prepared a three-course meal in 60 minutes, without access to running water or electricity using only two butane burners, and management teams presented a business proposal for an original restaurant concept to a panel of industry judges.

"The students who participated in this year's competition are truly amazing," said Jim Wilson, Director of Education & Workforce Development for Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association. "They are taught and mentored by some of the best teachers in the business and truly may become their generation's master chefs and restaurant entrepreneurs. I couldn't be more proud to be a part of this program that is working to engage our industry's next stars."

The 2017 Virginia ProStart competition team winners were:

First Place Culinary: Phoebus High School - Hampton
First Place Management: Tallwood High School - Virginia Beach

Second Place Culinary: Virginia Beach Technical & Career Education Center
Second Place Management: Louisa County High School - Mineral

Third Place Culinary: C.S. Monroe Technology Center (Team II) - Leesburg
Third Place Management: Manchester High School - Midlothian

ProStart is a two-year career and technical education program focused on teaching culinary skills and restaurant management fundamentals. Administered by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation, ProStart is available in all 50 states, Guam and Department of Defense Education. Nearly 3,900 Virginia students, from 55 schools, are enrolled in the industry-driven program that offers a hands-on and group-learning based curriculum as a

platform where students also learn employability skills such as teamwork, workplace communication, professionalism, and time management.

For more information on the ProStart program, visit NRAEF.org/ProStart or VRLTA.org/ProStart; or find us on Twitter (@VAProStart) or Facebook (facebook.com/VAProStart/).

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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