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## Lee DeMatteo Named Virginia ProStart Teacher of the Year

*The Spotsylvania County Educator wins the 2023 Virginia ProStart Educator Excellence Award*

**Richmond, Va.** – The Virginia Restaurant Lodging and Travel Association Foundation (VRLTAF) is pleased to announce that Lee DeMatteo of Spotsylvania Career and Technical Center in Spotsylvania is the winner of the 2023 Virginia ProStart Educator Excellence Award.

"Chef DeMatteo has been an instrumental piece of the Virginia ProStart program for the past 16 years," said Jim Wilson, Vice President of Education & Workforce Development for the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging, and Travel Association. "Spend any time in Chef DeMatteo's classroom and you can see the connection he makes with his students every day."

The annual award recognizes a teacher in the Commonwealth who has demonstrated a strong commitment to their students and to [Virginia ProStart](#), a career and technical education program that unites the foodservice industry and the classroom to teach high school students culinary skills and restaurant management principles across the state.

"I'm honored to receive this award and to be involved in guiding the chefs of tomorrow through the ProStart program," says DeMatteo. "The wonder of teaching culinary is watching students put ingredients together to make their own creations a reality."

DeMatteo's dedication to his students and his passion for the culinary industry is contagious. As two students commented on DeMatteo's nomination, "He has always been selfless with his own time and has always put his students first. Our awareness of the culinary industry has only grown because of the outstanding knowledge Chef pours into his students."

DeMatteo is now eligible for a James H. Maynard Teacher of the Year Award, presented by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF) and Golden Corral, which will be announced during the 2023 Educators of Excellence event in Dallas, TX scheduled to be held July 12-14.

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The [Virginia Restaurant Lodging and Travel Association](#) is the unified voice of 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. For more information, visit [www.vrlta.org](http://www.vrlta.org) or call 800-552-2225.

As the educational arm of the VRLTA, the [Virginia Restaurant, Lodging, and Travel Association Foundation](#) 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.*

*The [National Restaruant Association Education Foundation](#) 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.*