

## **MOVE OVER MARIO – OPEN DOOR STUDENTS ARE COOKING!**

Move over “Top Chef” the new Port Chester High School “Healthy Chefs” are in town! Students from Port Chester High School are whipping up some tasty dishes in an after school program, while learning about healthful cooking with the help of Open Door School Based Health nutritionist, Janice Shaw.

“Our goal is to reinforce concepts of healthful eating by engaging the kids in interactive cooking classes that will teach the skills of proper food preparation.” explains Shaw, a registered dietitian who designed the program based on the USDA’s My Pyramid food groups. Our experienced cooking instructor, Laurie Gershgorin of Culinary Creations LLC, shares both her nutrition knowledge and culinary expertise with the students.

The program, which began this month, runs through April 2010 and offers students everything they need to know to prepare healthy and delicious meals. The “Healthy Chefs” will learn how to shop for fresh produce and healthful ingredients while also mastering basic cooking skills including how to read and follow recipes. The students will emerge from the program with skills and know-how that will empower them to create their own meals at home. The families of the “Healthy Chefs” will get the added benefit of home cooked meals, as the students often bring home leftovers and ready to prepare dishes.

Sponsored by 21<sup>st</sup> Century Visions Program, the 50 students enrolled in the program are honing their skills and preparing their culinary masterpieces in kitchens that have been donated by Rye Brook D’Agostino’s Grocery Store. D’Agostino’s has also donated prizes for the top three “Healthy Chef’s”. This six week course culminates in a cooking contest judged by Port Chester School District administrators and Board of Education members, Open Door personnel, and community leaders.

While high school students participate in the “Healthy Chef” program, students in the elementary schools are being educated both in the classroom and in after school programs. They have the opportunity to participate in activities and demonstrations that teach them about the building blocks of eating healthy food and engaging in physical activity, based on the MyPyramid model and five food groups.

Students at Port Chester Middle School are learning about the importance of taking personal responsibility for their health and making good, educated decisions about healthy eating and physical activity through lunchtime groups and lunchroom demonstrations.

So move over Mario Batali and Bobby Flay – there are some new Top Chefs in town!

**About Open Door Family Medical Centers**

Open Door serves a vast multi-cultural community and has provided top quality medical, dental care and social services to the Westchester community, particularly the economically disadvantaged, for 38 years. The organization has four centers in Westchester located in Ossining, Port Chester, Mt. Kisco and Sleepy Hollow. In addition, Open Door operates School-Based Health Centers in Port Chester at The Edison Elementary School, Kennedy Magnet School, Port Chester Middle School and Port Chester High School. In 2009, approximately 41,000 patients were treated at Open Door, making nearly 200,000 patient visits. Over 12,500 children were treated during that same year. Funding for the federally qualified community health center comes from local, state and federal grants as well as private foundations and individuals.