

FOOD SERVICE PROVIDES MINISTRY OF HOSPITALITY



In December 2015, PTS alumnus Brandon Locke '09 returned to the Seminary—as general manager of our food services, provided by Metz Culinary Management! In that role, Brandon embodies literally what we mean when we say that PTS prepares you for ministry in “Whatever You Do, Wherever You Serve.”

“Studying different theologies and faith traditions taught me the importance of hospitality, clear communication, and research,” Brandon comments. “These lessons have informed my ability to design menus with something for everyone in new and creative ways.” Brandon’s right about that—here’s a sampling of his regular e-mail communications with our campus community since taking over as head chef in our kitchen:

“Menu Item of the Week: Pierogie Lasagna. This vegetarian meal is pretty much exactly like it sounds. We take the concept of a pierogie and make it into a lasagna. You’ll have a healthy portion . . . okay, that might be a poor choice of words . . . You’ll have a heaping portion of our mashed potatoes and caramelized onions layered with pasta sheets and a bit of cream sauce.” Or this one: “We’ll be serving up your standard southern meal of BBQ chicken, Southern style macaroni and cheese, and succotash, but what really sets this meal apart is the warm peach cobbler available on the line. What’s better than a fresh and warm cobbler? Stop thinking—the answer is nothing!”

“I started with Metz as a way to help pay for seminary,” says Brandon. He worked full time as a full-time student here. “That taught me the importance of hard work and time/resource management.” Metz also helped pay for his second master’s degree in library science. Again, Brandon worked full time during that program while also completing an internship in Barbour Library. He continued working for Metz after graduating and soon was hired as assistant cook at Shady Side Academy, where he fed about 700 students daily. But after just a year and a half, Brandon was promoted to production manager. That position put him in charge of all three kitchens at Shady Side and gave him the responsibility of feeding 1200 students daily.

Brandon’s appointment at Shady Side was supposed to last for two years, but he learned new skills and gained the confidence of his general and district managers so quickly that in only eight months they promoted him to his current position as general manager at PTS. “To be honest,” Brandon says, “I never intended to work in the food service field for this long, but this is where life happened!” And our entire campus community is very glad that it did—that it confirmed Brandon in that essential biblical role of host most especially demonstrated in the provision of meals.



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