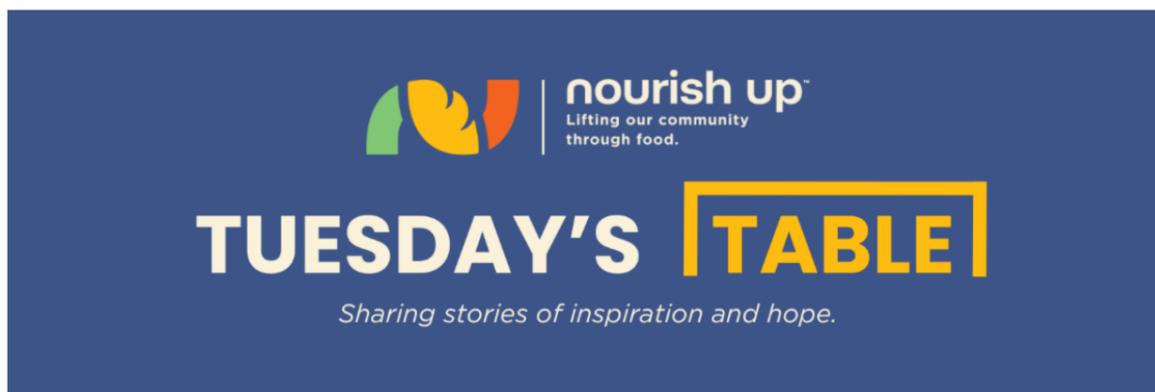


Tuesday's Table | Meet Kimberly and Pantry to Plate



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Nourish Up recently held its inaugural [Pantry to Plate](#) cooking class in the [Hunger Hub Teaching Kitchen](#). The launch of this program, designed by Community Outreach Director Chasidie Glover and funded in part by the [Farm to Table Fund](#), is a dream come true for Nourish Up.

And a game changer for Kimberly.

“I’m gonna be honest, with you” she said. “I don’t eat healthy.”

Kimberly was among the first class of attendees and learned about the opportunity from her [Freedom Communities Moms Moving Forward](#) alumni group. She and her MMF coach attended Pantry to Plate led by **Chef Krzysztof from Atrium Sodexo**, one of our major health care partners. Chef donated his time to present, educate, enlighten, coach, and inspire a class of ten eager participants.

Chef taught the class how to make a vinaigrette salad dressing, berry bites, and a whole roasted chicken. **“The chicken was my favorite! It was so easy, and the chef was so patient and positive,”** said Kimberly. “He led us step-by-step, which is good for me because I’m a hands-on person.” But Chef took it further and added extra insights like how to add spices or make substitutions. “And it was delicious! I made a jar of salad dressing and brought it to my mom. She said it was excellent.”



When Nourish Up imagined a Teaching Kitchen in our new facility, it was with the goal of engaging our community and neighbors in nutritious eating paired with healthy cooking. **“Access to food does nothing for our neighbors in need if they don’t have the tools to cook it,”** said an impassioned Glover who is also one of Nourish Up’s Registered Dietitians. If a grocery recipient is unfamiliar with a veggie and/or how to prepare it, it is going to go to waste. The Pantry to Plate program provides resources for fresh food, but also recipes and instructions and suggestions for meal prepping. And our friends from **Truist Bank** also donated kitchen utensils for each attendee.

“It’s so easy to just go to McDonald’s and get fast food for my kids and me,” admits Kimberly. “But this class taught me that it can be quick and easy to fix healthy foods. Chef taught us so much in only 45 minutes. If I can learn it, anyone can.”

“At Nourish Up, we believe that food is medicine,” says CEO Tina Postel. “Food insecurity is often accompanied by one or more underlying chronic health conditions like diabetes or high blood pressure. If we only give food, but no tools for how to prepare it, or only give unhealthy food options, we are only adding to the problem.”

“The doctors recommend for me to eat better, but sometimes I’m confused,” Kimberly admitted. “Chef taught us about which vegetables help what. Like, I have low iron, and he had beets and spinach and told me they will help that.”



Offering a nutrition education program — where our neighbors can come together in a safe and comfortable setting, get to know one another, and gain valuable knowledge — is a win-win. Added online resources like videos and downloadable recipes bridge the time between monthly Pantry to Plate classes.

Kimberly has two young children — a son, 3, and a daughter who is 5. Not only was she able to bring them with her to the Pantry to Plate childcare room, but she was also inspired to teach them how to eat, purchase, and cook better. As the class concluded, there was a drawing for a Harris Teeter gift card. “I won it, and I immediately went and bought fresh food.”

“Then I went to our Moms Moving Forward group chat and recommended it to all the other single moms like me. **We can’t be good moms if we’re not healthy.**”

**It is our mission to nourish our neighbors
with food and compassion.**

Nourish Up provides groceries, meals, and hope through a network of food pantries, grocery home delivery, and as the primary Meals on Wheels program for Mecklenburg County.

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