



**FARESTART**  
*Great Food. Better Lives.*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **FareStart and Amazon Cook-up New Foodservice Job Training Program**

*Amazon donating more than 25,000 square feet of retail space in heart of Seattle campus to support living wage career opportunities for people living in poverty*

SEATTLE (February 16, 2017) – FareStart announced today that it is partnering with Amazon to launch an innovative job training program to help people in entry level foodservice jobs gain additional skills needed to earn a higher income. Amazon is donating space and equipment to help the organization launch a new foodservice apprenticeship program to help people living in poverty obtain higher income jobs. The in-kind donation will also bring five new eateries to Seattle, which will serve as a training ground for the new program.

For nearly 25 years, FareStart has been a recognized national leader in transforming the lives of people who are homeless or living in poverty through its culinary job training and employment placement programs. More recently, the organization has been focused on finding new ways to help foodservice workers move further from the line of homelessness and closer to higher paying career opportunities within the restaurant and foodservice industry.

“Amazon has been a longtime FareStart supporter, and the opportunity to partner with them on this project could not have come at a better time for our community,” said FareStart CEO Megan Karch. “Poverty and income inequality are growing in Seattle. Meanwhile, the foodservice industry is experiencing a shortage of chefs and other staff in higher wage positions. Amazon’s generous support will help us train more people to fill those vacant positions.”

Amazon’s total contribution includes more than 25,000 square feet for five new eateries, a catering space as well as training classrooms, bringing more retail variety and opportunity to the community. The eateries will be open to the public.

“FareStart has provided opportunity and job training to more than 8,000 people who are homeless or living in poverty, and we’re excited that this new space will help them double their training program over the next 10 years,” said Jeff Bezos, Amazon founder and CEO. “We’re lucky to live in a city with such innovative organizations and we look forward to having FareStart as part of our urban campus.”

The eateries, which will be located on Amazon’s campus in the South Lake Union neighborhood at Boren, Thomas, Fairview and Harrison, will be operated by FareStart and open to the public. There will be a full service restaurant, three fast casual outlets, a coffee shop and catering venue. They are expected to open in late summer of 2017.

Additional details about the expansion:

- FareStart will launch a new paid apprenticeship program for low-income foodservice workers to help them gain additional skills and employment in higher income positions such as line cooks, line leads, sous chefs, supervisors and managers. The curriculum will be developed in collaboration with local foodservice employers.

- FareStart's current basic culinary and barista training programs for adults and youth remain critical to their mission and are expected to grow.
- Over the coming months, FareStart will kick off a fundraising campaign to raise an estimated \$6 million in remaining operating expenses necessary to develop, launch and sustain the new apprenticeship program and build capacity for the expansion.

**About FareStart:** FareStart is nonprofit organization that transforms lives by empowering people who are homeless or living in poverty through life skills, job training and employment in the foodservice industry. Since 1992, FareStart has provided opportunities for nearly 8,000 adults and youth, while serving over 9 million meals to Seattle area schools, homeless shelters, and healthcare facilities. Nearly 91% of adults who graduate from FareStart, gain employment within 90 days of graduation. For more information, visit [farestart.org](http://farestart.org).

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