



FARESTART

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NEWS RELEASE

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Wayne Johnson Named FareStart's Executive Chef

Johnson brings culinary excellence and mentorship as FareStart grows its programs

SEATTLE (February 18, 2016) – FareStart is pleased to announce that Wayne Johnson has been named its new executive chef. Johnson will provide leadership and guidance to FareStart's restaurant, cafes and catering operations for culinary strategy, food philosophy, menu development and training.

"Wayne's passion for beautiful food, love of mentoring and dedication to giving back make him the perfect match for FareStart's mission of training homeless and disadvantaged individuals for jobs in the culinary field," said Matt Gurney, FareStart vice president of operations. "Prior to serving as our interim executive chef these past few months, Wayne has volunteered with us for numerous Guest Chef Night dinners over the past 15 years. We knew he could handle a curve ball or two with poise. Once on board, he has shown a passion for training and a dedication to our mission, as well as offering us extraordinary culinary talent."

Johnson joins FareStart at a time when the organization is experiencing tremendous need for its programs and services. A record number of students graduated from FareStart's job training programs in 2015. Its restaurant, cafes and catering social enterprise operations – where every dollar of profit is reinvested into programs to recruit, train and support students as they build new lives – has been growing as well.

"At FareStart, we are all responsible for the mission. Our five-year plan is for every one of our graduates to be line ready. We're elevating how we train students and it starts by 'training the trainers,'" said Johnson. "It's rewarding to see how many people come out of the program and become successful culinarians. I'm humbled by the opportunity to lead the charge and passionate about contributing to the success of each student."

Most recently, Johnson was the executive chef at Ray's Boathouse, Andaluca and the prestigious Renaissance Parc 55 Hotel in San Francisco, as well as Marriott Hotels and Resorts in California and Colorado. He's currently part owner at Shuga's Jazz Bistro.

He's earned many accolades in his 30+ years in the food industry—selected as a Rising Star by StarChefs.com, an Iron Chef Season 9 challenger, a guest chef on Holland America cruises, and a guest instructor at the French Culinary Institute in New York. He had the honor of cooking for the James Beard House in New York in 2002 and was named one of America's Top Black Chefs by Black Enterprise Magazine. He currently serves as the vice president of Culinary Wonders USA and is proud to have coordinated their first *Minority Chefs Summit* in the Bahamas.

About FareStart: FareStart is a successful social enterprise nonprofit that trains homeless and disadvantaged individuals for jobs in the culinary industry, empowering them to transform their lives. FareStart has been training students in kitchen skills, meal preparation, safe food handling and meal planning through active participation in its restaurant and cafes, catering services and contract meals program for 24 years.

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