

FareStart gets financial boost in effort to go national

By Valerie Bauman, Staff Writer
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A barista student gets instruction at FareStart Cafe @ 2100 in Seattle. Starbucks supports the barista training program run by the culinary work force training nonprofit.

Seattle-based FareStart has taken big strides recently, winning new grants and awards to support national expansion plans for the nonprofit's restaurant and food service job-training model.

Founded in 1992, FareStart is a restaurant that offers training and job opportunities, often for those who are homeless or who have been incarcerated. The nonprofit offers support programs for its workers, including culinary training, life-skills classes, counseling and assistance with housing, food and clothing.

Catalyst Kitchens, a network of nonprofits working to expand FareStart's model nationally, won the Social Impact Exchange's annual Business Plan Competition in New York last week. The final value of the prize is yet to be determined, but it's expected to be more than a \$100,000 grant, plus pro bono business consulting services.

The win came on the heels of a \$500,000 Walmart Foundation grant to FareStart, of which \$400,000 will be used for Catalyst Kitchens.

In 2011, Catalyst Kitchens programs trained more than 1,400 people in 18 states. The programs target people with significant barriers to employment — for example, people who are homeless or on the verge, who have limited education and who have