

Truckee unified hires well-versed chef to cook for students

With a resume that ranges from culinary apprenticeship at Walt Disney World to designing menus for visiting Olympic athletes, Danny Stoddard is primed for his new position as Tahoe Truckee Unified School District's culinary operations manager.

Stoddard will be responsible for bringing the district's new food philosophy to life by developing recipes, menus and supervising food production. The goal is to provide high quality nutritious food that is fresh, seasonal and prepared from scratch as much as possible within the requirements of the USDA National School Lunch Program. Additionally, the meals will not include partially hydrogenated fats or high fructose corn syrup. Sugar, salt and additives will be kept to a minimum and there will be no fried foods.



Chef Danny Stoddard left the Magic Kingdom for the North Shore of Tahoe.

Photo/Provided

"I'm up for the challenge," said Stoddard, noting that he

looks forward to adopting the school district's new nutritional tenants into his own eating as well. "My goal is that the food will be so good that parents will want to meet their children for lunch at school."

So what types of cuisine can parents and students expect from Stoddard? Hint – this isn't typical mystery meat school lunch fare. One day students may dig into a hearty beef stew served in a whole wheat bread bowl with a spinach side salad garnished with dried cranberries. And the next day, the menu may include a roasted vegetable and marinated pork wrap with chipotle mayo and sliced peaches. All of the lunch entrees will include a vegetarian option.

Originally from Sparks, Stoddard not only served as an apprentice at Walt Disney World, he was later hired by the resort to manage large-scale special events catering, he later served as an executive chef at Ormond Memorial Hospital, Ormond Beach Florida, as well as the dietary manager at Kennert Retirement Center, Orlando. After his tenure in Florida, Stoddard worked as an executive chef at UC Berkeley where he fed athletes at the university's Training Table program and also catered the NCAA Basketball Regional Finals.

Collectively, he has 20 years of culinary experience, including 12 years in the management where he became well versed in all aspects of menu planning, ordering, quality control, food safety and training employees.

The revamped school nutritional plan is set officially to launch in early 2011.