

The Scoop!

Winter was a busy time at the Roberti Community House (RCH), but now we're excited to head outside and begin working in the garden.

A Warm Introduction to Two New Employees



Clay brings years of experience in the kitchen and a huge heart to our program's mission to *Nourish the Community!*

Chef Clay Erickson

Chef Clay's culinary background includes working in corporate kitchens, assisted living facilities, healthcare institutions, military galleys, and restaurants. He is a graduate of the College of Lake County with Certificates in Culinary Arts, Professional Cook, and Food Service Management.

Chef Clay has had the privilege to work side-by-side with a few well-respected chefs specializing in the art of Cajun Cuisine. Two of those mentors are Executive Chef Warren Jones and the late Executive Chef Dave Teichman. Additionally, he also collaborated with the famous Original Crabby Bill's

Seafood restaurants in Florida creating a signature dish, the very popular “Crabby Bill’s Seafood Gumbo.”

In 2005, Chef Clay was 1 of only 5 chefs in the U.S. invited to compete in the Hobart National Chili Competition held at the prestigious Culinary Institute of America. He won the competition with his award-winning “Clay’s Colossal Chili” recipe.

In the fall of 2008, with the help of friends and family members, Chef Clay wrote and self-published a soup cookbook called “25 Soups & One Chili.” In the spirit of giving back, the inspiration behind this cookbook was to help raise money for the Youth Ministry at his church in Waukegan.

Over his Career Chef Clay has served as a committee member of the Culinary Arts Program for the College of Lake County Board of Directors.

Chef Clay is married to his wife Linda and has two children Jeremy and Bryan. He served in the military and is a veteran of the United States Air Force. His hobbies include fishing, fishing, and more fishing.



Kelly brings a background in community empowerment and program development to RCH

Kelly Albrecht

Kelly graduated from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities with a degree in Biology and a minor in Public Health. She is currently attending the University of Illinois, Chicago for her Masters in Public Health with a concentration in Community Health Sciences.

Kelly interned at a hospital in Riobamba, Ecuador during her undergraduate years. She then moved to Ecuador after graduating college and spent a year there. She learned a lot about Ecuadorian culture and gained fluency in Spanish while living there. After Ecuador, she moved to South Korea where

she spent a year teaching English.

After moving back stateside, Kelly worked for a while as a Community Health Educator in DuPage County. While there, she created programming and established protocol frameworks for the programs. Kelly hopes to utilize her background and education in order to reinforce and support the wonderful programs at RCH, while continuing to work directly with the community.

Kelly's passions include working with a diversity of cultures and learning ways of providing the best cultural/linguistic service to diverse groups.

Roberti Culinary Pathway: Open House

On January 26, the Roberti Culinary Pathway held its first open house to show members of the community some new and exciting things. More than 100 guests from a variety of agencies in the community attended. Guests included Lake County Nature Network, Growing Healthy People, the Waukegan Park District, the Waukegan Fire Department, the Waukegan Police Department, Lake County Cares, Love Inc, the Waukegan Harbour, Waukegan Radio stations, Many Sharing Parishes, Waukegan Aldermen, Catholic Charities, Sunset Foods, Staben House, Just Serve, Beacon Place, North Chicago Community Partners and more.



Students were able to showcase their culinary skills and speak about their time in the first inaugural 9-week program. Guests were served food prepared by the students. Everyone had a wonderful time. Stay tuned for updates on our first graduating class in our next newsletter.



RCH Community Gives Back



Top row - Afterschool students making scarves and Midwest Veterans Closet accepting them

Middle row - Sewing class with knit hats, and Food, Fun, and Friendship with Valentine goodie bag making

Bottom row - RCH with Little Hands, Big Hearts and RCP student serving community

Looking back on this winter, it's wonderful to see all the ways in which participants in our programs at The Roberti Community House have given back.

Last year, our wonderful volunteers donated over **5,000 hours** helping to serve, teach, and empower our Roberti community and its programs.

As of March 2018, our Roberti Culinary Pathway students have given **1,226 meals** back to the community since opening in January. Meals go to House of Peace, Staben House, PADs, Holy Family Food pantry, RCH police and the fire departments. This wouldn't have been possible without the donations from our many partnerships, and some of the **103.5 pounds of bok choy** we received from [Thomas Jefferson Middle School's](#) greenhouse.

Our sewing class took on a project of knitting hats for people this winter, and knit approximately **70 hats** to donate.

Our afterschool kids made over **100 scarves** to give back to the [Midwest Veterans Closet](#), in order to make sure our veterans kept warm this winter. Our students and community members have also participated in [Little Hands, BIG Hearts](#) events at Winchester House and brought warmth and connection to senior citizens.

Our Food, Fun, and Friendship group made Valentine's day extra special, making goodie bags, sandwiches and valentines which were given out to the homeless population in our community.

Impressive the many ways our community members and students have given back to each other and our communities.

Save the Date: Roberti Community House Annual Clean-up



On Wednesday, May 2 we will gather for our annual clean-up day, when we pitch in to conduct a major "Spring Cleaning" of the gardens at the Roberti Community House, Roberti Culinary Pathway, and across the street at the Holy Family food pantry. It is an opportunity for the community to come together, give back, and prepare for the wave of Summer activities. Afterwards, lunch is served for all. We hope you can drop by from 9:30am - 12pm!



Join us

We welcome students seeking an internship in areas such as social work, nursing, public health, agriculture or other related fields.

The success of the RCH is due to the talented, committed, and truly awesome volunteers and interns that work with us. Volunteers facilitate all of our programs. Our programs are many, varied, and always expanding. For volunteer opportunities, contact our Volunteer Coordinator Pam Fisher at volunteerRCH@gmail.com to obtain more information and arrange for a time to visit the community house.

Wish List

Wish list from [Federal Supply USA](#), in Waukegan:

- Full-size aluminum pans (WIL-2130-70) × **50**
- Half-size aluminum pans (WIL-1212-45) × **100**
- Full-size alum. foil pan lids (WIL-2100-45) × **50**
- Half-size alum. foil pan lids (WIL-B-72) × **100**
- Medium nitrile gloves (FED-NITRILE-BLACK) × **1 Case**
- Large nitrile gloves (FED-NITRILE-BLACK) × **1 Case**
- Extra-large nitrile gloves (FED-NITRILE-BLACK) × **1 Case**
- Food rotation labels (L14750) × **12**
- Aluminum foil roll (WES-WP251) × **1**

See Federal Supply USA's [catalog](#) for the items above. Item numbers are in parentheses.

Our usual wish list:

- Vacuum cleaner
- Gift cards to grocery stores, JoAnne's Fabric, and Home Depot

We appreciate your continued interest and support! Please consider [donating](#).

Thank you!