



New York State
Office of
Children & Family
Services

News

Public Information Office

For Immediate Release: June 21, 2013

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CAPITAL REGION AWARD-WINNING CHEF SPICES UP LUNCH AT JUVENILE JUSTICE FACILITY

Co-owner and head chef at Yono's Restaurant in Albany teaches teens how to prepare healthy meal

Chef Yono Purnomo participates in First Lady Michelle Obama's initiative to make school meals nutritious, fun

CLAVERRACK, NY, June 21, 2013 – Office of Children and Family Services Commissioner Gladys Carrión today announced Chef Yono Purnomo, a Capital Region-based chef recognized as often for his charitable work as his skills in the kitchen, paid a special visit to the Columbia Girls Secure Center, showing the girls how to prepare an Indonesian meal and sharing his culture with them. Chef Yono, best known as the mastermind behind Yono's Restaurant in Albany, visited Columbia Secure as part of his participation in First Lady Michelle Obama's nationwide Chefs *Move* to Schools initiative, an integral part of her Let's Move! campaign to promote healthy eating in schools.

The 12 girls who are currently residents at Columbia posed for pictures with the cook during kitchen breaks as Chef Yono prepared bakmi goreng (Indonesian noodles), chicken with curry sauce, and kolak pisang (warm, spiced bananas). They helped him squeeze citrus fruits, an important part of the dessert dish, and watched as he chopped vegetables and blended all of the spices for their lunch. The staff members were as delighted by Chef Yono as the girls, who peppered him with questions about his background, his culture, and how to speak his native language.

"We are honored that Chef Yono, who is known nationwide for his skills, took the time out to visit the girls at Columbia for the afternoon," said OCFS Commissioner Gladys Carrión. "Chef Yono volunteers and is affiliated with more than 75 charity and community service organizations. It was a wonderful opportunity for our youth to not only learn how to prepare a healthy, world-class meal, but to also have a chance to embrace another culture's culinary traditions. I hope this is just the beginning of a lasting friendship between our girls and Chef Yono."

"It is my responsibility as a Chef to not only feed, but also to educate young people on aspects of good nutrition. Armed with nutrition basics and a few kitchen skills, children as young as 9 or 10 years old, with proper supervision, can have the satisfaction of preparing healthy meals for themselves and families," said Chef Yono Purnomo.

"The best part of the day was obviously eating!" said Alexandria, originally from Manhattan. "But speaking to him was fun too, and learning different ways to say different things."

To participate in Chefs *Move* to Schools, chefs and schools both register online, then find a potential match using an interactive location map. Once the two agree on a lasting collaboration, chefs bring along

all the ingredients to their match school to teach students how to prepare healthy meals to which they may not have access ordinarily. Hundreds of chefs across the country join Chef Yono in this quest to make eating school lunches both healthy and fun.

The Columbia Girls Secure Center can serve up to 16 girls at any one time. Residents are typically between 11 and 21 years old, and hail from all areas of New York State. In addition, Columbia is served by dozens of dedicated round-the-clock staff members. It is one of 14 state facilities served by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY).

OCFS serves New York by promoting the safety, permanency and well-being of children, families and communities. For more information, visit ocfs.ny.gov, “like” the New York State Office of Children and Family Services Facebook page, or follow @NYSOCFS on Twitter.

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