

# Cooking Up Dreams

Lives Transformed. Come & See

## 100 Guests Experience a School Day at Academy Prep

The grounds of Academy Prep's century old former V.M. Ybor Grammar School lit up on Saturday, May 2 as over 130 Tampa's community members gathered for **Cooking Up Dreams**, an evening featuring a five course dinner. The event's culinary delights were donated by The Columbia, Chez Bryce, Bailey's and Mise En Place, Gallo Wine, and supported by 15 financial sponsors and 10 additional design vendors, including Marketing Associates USA.

**Cooking Up Dreams** was conceived by **The Friends of Academy Prep**, a group of local supporters who want to share the amazing contributions this school is making to the Tampa community.

In keeping with this extraordinary school, this was not your typical fundraiser. Guests learned about Academy Prep by attending a typical day of school. The evening, with two dinner seatings, began in the school's courtyard, with Cava supplied by The Columbia and delicious hors d'oeuvres from Mise en Place. An inspiring convocation led by Head of School, Lincoln Tamayo, set the tone for the festivities. The guests lined up and proceeded into the restored, brick schoolhouse with its gleaming wood floors for "classes" in either the science lab or art studio to enjoy the Columbia's Original "1905" Salad. Coming together again in the library for Paella "Marinara", refreshing pear sorbet compliments of Bailey's Catering and Restaurant, they listened to Derecia, an Academy Prep graduate now attending Academy of the Holy Names:

*"When my mom first told me that I would be in school for 11 hours a day, the look on my face was, you can't be serious. After awhile I started to appreciate my long days. I became a leader here at Academy Prep. I was the first student to make all A's on my report card and was valedictorian of my class. Attending Academy Prep made me a better person. I am more open minded, patient, and focused. It helped me to be confident in reaching my goals. I now see life in a different way. All the positive guidance and teaching here at Academy Prep showed me that I can be a doctor. I can be whatever I want to be."*



Guests Bob and Regina Birrenkott with Academy Prep Board member Nancy Crane.

"Last night was one of the best events I have attended. Please tell the Friends of Academy Prep that they created a smash hit and must do it again!"  
Guest, Cooking Up Dreams



Kalin and Chris, chess champions, contemplate the next move

Academy Prep students wowed guests with their talents in art, science, music, drama, chess, and conversation, providing glimpses into the activities of their extended school days. The guest classes also were treated to Filet Mignon “Chacho”, cooked to perfection and set aflame by Columbia’s Chef Gerry Bayona. The auditorium was transformed with lighted drapes and tables from IM Events and orchids donated by Bloom Garden Shop, which added sophistication and elegance to the atmosphere.

Shyla, a 7<sup>th</sup> grader, performed an outstanding monologue from Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* to enthusiastic guests. The final stop of the evening was back outside for strawberry-rhubarb crumble by Chez Bryce, along with Indigo Coffee, J. C. Newman Co. cigars, and dessert wines compliments of Malio’s Steakhouse. Music by Belinda Womack, an original supporter of and one-time teacher at Academy Prep, rounded out the evening. Joshua, a 5<sup>th</sup> grader who played soft piano during the main course, guided guests to the courtyard announcing: “Thank You for attending school this evening. Now, you can enjoy dessert and, you know, mingling in the courtyard.”



Becky Gard, Jill Shepard and Nancy Harris (board member) thanks Bryce Whittlesey, Owner and Chef of Chez Bryce, for the incredible strawberry/rubarb crisp.

“Being on campus, seeing the facility and interacting with students and faculty allowed everyone to see and feel what Academy Prep is all about. The commitment and obvious enthusiasm of the Friends’ Committee and the generosity of the donors should be emulated.”

*Guest, Cooking Up Dreams*



Gail Whiting, a founder of Academy Prep, tells Kim Bailey of Bailey’s Catering and Restaurant how delicious pear sorbet was!

## **MUCH APPRECIATION TO: The Friends of Academy Prep & Hosts of Cooking Up Dreams**

**Amy & Paul Diehl  
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