

NEW DIRECTIONS

Connecting New Jersey - One Chapter at a Time

Winter- 2019

Dear NJ FCCLA Members, Advisers, and Alumni,

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

3...2...1...Happy New Year! 2019 is before us and you have the ability to determine the outcome! Take the lessons and skills you have learned up until now to "Invent your Adventure" in 2019. However, to be able to make these positive changes in our lives, we must set goals.

Each and every year around this time, many people form New Year's resolutions, although 80% of people fail at their resolution before the end of February. The goals are ignored and forgotten about until next January. However, we will not let ourselves push aside our goals this year; we will demonstrate our strength and leadership as we work to follow through with them. It will take resolve, time management, and responsibility, but as leaders, we have the skills to do it. In order to follow through with our goals, we must set a plan of action. Make a plan to accomplish mini goals, building up to your larger objective. This strategy will give us direction and help us stay on the right track. Challenge yourself this New Year to make a resolution, but most importantly, to follow through with it.

A wonderful way to keep track of your New Year's resolutions is to use the FCCLA National Program, Power of One. This program aims at helping members follow through with goals, starting with you. As FCCLA members, there are so many goals that we can make in order to make a difference in our families, schools, and community. You can set a goal with your chapter to participate in more community service efforts and initiatives. You can set a personal goal to attend the State Leadership Conference and compete in a competitive event. Focus on creating goals that will help your chapter build momentum and reach many milestones for the remainder of the school year. Look forward to the upcoming conferences, like the State Leadership Conference, and start making your plan now about your competitive event and how your chapter is going to take part in the community service efforts. This is the year to Invent Your Adventure through FCCLA, and it is up to you how you and your chapter will do that through the goals you set. How will you Invent Your Adventure in 2019?

Sincerely,
Samantha Matson
NJ FCCLA President

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FCCLA week is a special week from February 10-16, 2019 which promotes FCCLA purpose and Family and Consumer Sciences. This week celebrates all that FCCLA does by honoring members for their dedication and hard work in FCCLA! During this week, each day has a different theme that focuses on a different part of FCCLA.

Sunday:

“Be a Valued Family Member” Kick off the first day of FCCLA week with your family. Be committed to helping around the house. Family chores should be a shared responsibility. Show your appreciation by creating a family meal. Sit down together, communicate as a family, and share a meal.

Monday:

“Be Spirited” Showcase your FCCLA spirit! Several ways to make the most of this day are to encourage members to Go for the Red by recruiting members and spread the word about FCCLA. Promote FCCLA in your community and showcase your spirit! #FCCLAspirit

Tuesday:

“Be Confident” Carry out your FCCLA spirit by being confident. Be confident in your talent to succeed by showcasing your abilities. Share how FCCLA has prepared you to be a confident leader and make a difference in your community. #FCCLAIConfident

Wednesday:

“Be Prepared” Demonstrate your career preparation skills and show how FCCLA has prepared you to take on the world! Take part in Family Consumer Science Educator Day and recognize the achievement of educators and FCS programs. #FCCLAcareers

Thursday:

“Be a Friend” Take a moment on this day to appreciate your friends who have supported you on your FCCLA journey! Be a friend to others and encourage them to believe in themselves. #FCCLAFriends

Friday:

“Be you in Red” The last day of the school week ties in with this year’s national theme. Believe in the Power of Red as we unite to show our pride for FCCLA! Share on social media what being in red means to you and describe how it has given you the confidence to be you. #FCCLAUnites

Saturday:

“Be a voice for FCS and FCCLA” The last day for FCCLA week should end with advocacy. Speak out for FCS and FCCLA. Send in a press release or send messages to school guidance counselors or administrators about the value of your FCS classes and FCCLA. Encourage your friends to sign up for FCS classes for the coming school year.

Overall, FCCLA week is an amazing opportunity to be proud of our organization! Spread the word about the endless opportunities FCS and FCCLA have to offer and celebrate all that it is!



Community Service for FLC

By: Karishma Shenoy, Vice President of Community Service



There are many ways for NJ FCCLA members to serve their schools and communities. Serving the community means helping those in need and caring for a cause bigger than yourself. At the 2018 Fall Leadership Connection, there were three different community service efforts in which members were involved.

First, chapters in attendance donated non-perishable food items for the Middlesex County Food Bank. NJ FCCLA chapters donated a total of 4,900 pounds of food! Thank you to everyone who donated to help make this food drive a success!

NJ FCCLA also collected nearly twenty pounds of soda can pull-tabs for the Ronald McDonald House of New Brunswick, which helps children and their families. Thank you to the chapters who made monetary donations! At the Fall Leadership Connection, chapters were recognized on the Invent Your Adventure Community Service display.

Another Community Service project at the conference was the Cupcake Challenge. The Cupcake Challenge is a competitive event where participants create a unique cupcake featuring a special ingredient; this year the key ingredient was common herbs. The displays of cupcakes at the conference were spectacular and sold for one dollar per cupcake or 6 cupcakes for \$5. The proceeds from the cupcake sale were donated to two causes. A portion of the proceeds went to the FCCLA National IMPACT Fund for chapters affected by the hurricanes, and the rest went to Save the Children Organization for hurricane relief in the southern states. Each team competing in the event donated \$60 worth of cupcakes to help the community service effort; so, every baker received a certificate of recognition for their donation. What a sweet way to make a difference!

Thank you to all the chapters that participated in these efforts. Your dedication and contributions are significant and greatly appreciated! Each and every one of us can make a difference in the lives of children and families in need!



Ways to Increase Membership in your Chapter!

By: Chelsea Olender, Vice President of Membership



Without our members, FCCLA would not be the great organization that it is because membership is extremely important to our organization. You can recruit members in many different ways, like through community service or fundraising. Membership is important to keep our FCCLA family continuously growing! Here are some ideas to help you attract new members by promoting and publicizing FCCLA:

Create posters and bulletin boards all around your school with fun pictures of members actively doing something for your chapter, such as participating in a community service event or preparing for a state conference.

Writing a press release for your school or local newspaper highlighting one of your chapter's achievements is another great way to attract new members. Be sure to include a picture to show how hands-on and fun FCCLA is!

Host a "bring a friend" chapter meeting. If all members participate, this will bring in double the amount of people. Be sure to make this meeting fun and interactive by having many different icebreakers, snacks, and information about what FCCLA is all about.

Have daily announcements over the loudspeaker leading up to a meeting so you can promote attendance.

Design a chapter website and social media page so that everyone is updated with the latest information about what is happening in your chapter. Communication is very important to ensure a successful meeting that is interactive and informative.



The Fall Leadership Connection was held on Monday, November 19, 2018. There were a multitude of opportunities for members to get involved at this conference, whether it was through community service efforts, competitive events, or workshops! The community service efforts were very successful due to the participation from the chapters in attendance. In total, NJ FCCLA chapters donated nineteen gigantic containers of non-perishable food items for the Middlesex County Food Bank and twenty pounds of pull tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. In addition, the sale of cupcakes from the Cupcake Challenge competitive event helped NJ FCCLA raise \$2,025 for the FCCLA National IMPACT Fund and the Save the Children Organization for the sole purpose of helping hurricane victims and chapters in southern states. Members were eager and excited to buy these delicious cupcakes that had herbs as the secret ingredient! There were 15 Competitive Events offered at the conference, and members took advantage! For example, members found great success designing clothes, creating child care projects, planning strategies for financing college, and raising awareness about the negative effects of tobacco and vaping. Forty-One chapters participated in the competitive events. Members had a great time challenging themselves to participate in competitive events!

At the conference, six post-secondary schools were on site to help members explore career pathways and learn about programs that could lead to success in the future. State Officers and NJ FCCLA alumni facilitated Leadership Pull-Out Sessions for chapter officers. Chapter Presidents attended Pursuit of Opportunity, where they participated in icebreakers and activities, discussed the Red Rose Chapter Award, and the qualities of a successful leader. The workshop for chapter officers, Quest for Servant Leadership, tackled ways to increase chapter membership, how to ignite an active chapter, and community service. Officers in both pull-out sessions were able to share suggestions, ask questions, and discuss chapter program of work strategies! Members attended round table presentations on National Programs and STAR Events, which were presented by State Officers and very experienced members. These short and intimate presentations gave members the opportunity to directly ask questions and provided insight into FCCLA programs and competitive events. Overall, the 2018 Fall Leadership Connection was a huge success!

The 2018 National Cluster Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky was an exciting opportunity! Three State Executive Council members and three chapter officers from John P. Stevens High School attended this conference to cheer on our National Vice President of Competitive Events from New Jersey, Kiran Kumaranayakam. While in Kentucky, we visited the Louisville Sluggers Baseball Bat Museum and went to the Churchill Downs racetrack, the home of the famous Kentucky Derby. This was an exciting experience because it familiarized all of us with new foods and new attractions. At the conference, we heard from two keynote speakers and attended several interesting workshops. Our state was very successful in the Challenge and Skills Events and took home 3 first place plaques! Andrea Maris was awarded first place in the Fashion Construction Challenge; Saurabh Todkar was awarded first place in the FCCLA Knowledge Challenge; and Srinivasan Ramakrishnan took first place in the Hospitality Challenge. Hardik Veguru was awarded second place in the Consumer Math Challenge. Karishma Shenoy was awarded third place in the Say Yes to FCS Event. Congratulations to these officers for their accomplishments! The conference location in Kentucky allowed us to meet many FCCLA members from Oklahoma and Tennessee and develop lasting friendships with them. We also learned about the National Program, Career Connection, and how it guides students to reach their desired career pathway in life. From the exciting workshops to the mind-blowing attractions, the 2018 National Cluster Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky was a blast!





Promoting the State Leadership Conference

By: Andrea Maris, VP of Communication



There is no better time than now to start preparing for our next State Leadership Conference, which will be on March 28th and 29th in Cherry Hill.

The state conference is always so exciting! Each general session is filled with motivating messages and information from speakers and the state officers. There are nearly 20 workshops with interesting speakers and demonstrations.

Be sure to look over the Competitive Events guidelines on the NJ FCCLA website (njfccla.com) to learn more and decide which competitive event is right for you!

Chapter officers should encourage members to participate in events to get the full FCCLA experience. Find members who are participating in events you've completed in the past and help mentor them; keep them on track so that their project turns out amazing.

There are many ways to receive recognition through competitive events and leadership awards. This is the first year we are rewarding excellence at the chapter level with the new Red Rose Chapter Award!


Also, take part in our community service efforts, such as raising money and donating pull tabs for the Ronald McDonald House, as well as donating non-perishable food items to the Food Bank of South Jersey. The central focus of FCCLA is the family, and that means supporting not only our own family, but other families as well! We can't wait to see all of you in March!

**See you
March 28 & 29th!**



How to Run for State Office

By: Chelsea Olender, VP of Membership



Being a State Officer is a very rewarding learning experience. The road to being a State Officer is challenging, but you will learn so much about yourself and FCCLA. Being a State Officer will build your leadership potential as well provide opportunities and experiences that you will never forget. You meet so many inspirational people and leaders all over the country through your State Officer journey. In order to become a State Officer, it's important to understand all the steps of the election process.

The first step to complete the application by February 1st. The application will ask for basic information, responses to open ended questions, and a chapter adviser recommendation. If your application is on time and complete, the next stage of your State Officer Journey is the State Officer Candidates' Meeting at John P. Stevens High School in Edison on February 23rd.

You must bring a parent and your FCCLA Chapter Adviser with you to this meeting. The day begins with an informative meeting about the election process, followed by the State Officer Candidate Test. You can study for this test by using information found on the state and national websites, including national programs, initiatives, and the history of FCCLA. Candidates must earn a minimum score of 80% on the test. The final phase of the day is an interview with NJ Friends of FCCLA. During the interview, the panel will ask relevant questions about your involvement in FCCLA and your desire to become a State Officer.

Upon successful completion of the State Officer Candidate Test and interview process, then you will progress to the election at the State Leadership Conference. Candidates will be given a prompt for the 90 second speech that will be delivered to the voting delegates in a closed session. At this session, candidates will be asked an FCCLA fact question and presented with a situation question.

What are you waiting for? Apply Today! The State Association is excited to see your application, which can be found under the "Leadership" tab on the NJ FCCLA website (www.njfccla.org).



Red Rose Chapter Recognition By: Samantha Matson, State President



The Red Rose is the symbol of our organization. It represents how the organization gives joy and symbolizes the desire for beauty in our everyday lives. FCCLA is like a garden, and your chapter is like a rose that flourishes in the garden. You and your chapter are what make our organization vibrant, which is why exceptional chapters should be celebrated.

The New Jersey FCCLA state association would be nothing without its hardworking, dedicated, and wonderful chapters. Your chapter deserves to be recognized for everything you are accomplishing, which is why the Red Rose Chapter program was created. We want to recognize well-rounded chapters for their overall participation in the initiatives that make up our state program of work. Your chapter can qualify by meeting a list of criteria that is outlined on the website. Red Rose chapters are chapters who take part in many opportunities that NJ FCCLA offers. They are active chapters that participate in state and national initiatives and share the mission and purposes of FCCLA in a positive light in both their school and community. If you want your chapter to receive this award, make sure to get your chapter involved at the upcoming conferences and other initiatives coming during the rest of the year. Make it a goal for the second half of this school year for your chapter to become even more active.

There is an application that your chapter must complete, which can be found on the New Jersey FCCLA website. The application is due on March 1st.

Your chapter is what makes our state association so amazing, and we want you to have another chance to be recognized for your hard work. Apply for this program to show your school and community your dedication to excellence!



State Leadership Conference; Competitive Events By: Andrea Maris, Vice President of Communication



Our annual State Leadership Conference is always a big success and something that so many people look forward to! The most anticipated part of the conference is the competitive events program that everyone prepares for months leading up to the conference. Our competitive events are broken down into two categories: State and Star Events. Members take part in State Events at our State Leadership Conference in March. For these events, competition ends at the State Level. STAR (Students Taking Action with Recognition) Events are competitive events where members are recognized for achievement in team or individual projects focusing on leadership skills and career preparation. Based on where you place in your STAR Event at the state conference, you may have an opportunity to take your project to the National Leadership Conference in Anaheim, California to represent NJ FCCLA! Whether you want to participate in STAR or State Events, our competitive events attract all different interests. Our events focus on fashion, culinary arts, child growth and development, FCCLA knowledge, business, and leadership. Check out the Spring Competitive Events tab on our website (njfccla.org) to find out more information on these exciting events! Talk to your Chapter Adviser to develop a plan of action so that your project will be creative and refined! We hope to see you on March 28-29 in Cherry Hill, New Jersey!



Power of One

By: Samantha Matson, State President



The National Program Power of One has the ability to help you accomplish your goals this New Year because it is all about goal setting for you, your family, school, and community. As young people, setting goals is one of the most important things for us to do in order to bring us success in the present and future. Completing this program will give you another resource to better prepare you for your future.

There are 5 units of this program, and each of them is centered around a different theme:

- A Better You – Focus on developing good personal traits
- Family Ties – Improve your relationship with family members
- Working on Working – Work on skills that make you college and career ready
- Take the Lead – Develop your leadership potential
- Speak Out for FCCLA – promote FCCLA and its numerous opportunities

In order to complete this National Program, you must create and follow through with a goal from each unit. You can set goals for any area of your life, not just FCCLA or school. To get the most out of this program, tackle each goal one at a time. By taking the time to break down the program into manageable pieces, not only will it be easier, but it will allow you to fully accomplish each of your goals. You will be able to designate a certain amount of time for each unit, and before you know it, all of your five goals will be fulfilled!

It is inspiring to create goals to fulfill them because of the sense of accomplishment it gives you. This program reminds you how much power your goals can have, and that they can and will be accomplished as long as you have the desire and focus to make them work.

Make it a New Year's resolution for 2019 to complete Power of One. Look over the units in more depth on the national FCCLA website and talk to your adviser to brainstorm ideas for what your goals could be. Use this program as an opportunity to grow and develop as a person, and unlock your Power of One.



Bylaw Amendment

By: Hardik Veguru, Vice President of Parliamentary Law



Bylaws define the rules and regulations for New Jersey Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America. They provide a set of standards and expectations and go hand-in-hand with Robert's Rules of Order, which is a manual that explains and outlines parliamentary procedure. With all of these governing rules, regulations, and standards, Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America has been established with a set of guidelines and rules so that every member and participant can be successful.

There are various bylaws and amendments that have been established over the years to maintain order and stability in this great organization. From amendments about finances to those about FCCLA alumni to those about board meetings, amendments shape the way our officers, members, and advisers work together to make meaningful contributions to the community and help members rise to their full potential.

The members of the New Jersey State Executive Council work together to make crucial decisions and take great leaps to improve the organization and make it the best it can be. In light of this, New Jersey FCCLA is moving toward new horizons and taking a new step that will improve our organization.

We, the State Officers, are proposing a change to the number of State Officers that hold seats on the State Executive Council, reducing the council from a total of eleven officers to a total of eight officers. Doing so will allow each State Officer to take on a larger role on the council as they challenge themselves to become better leaders and improve the organization. The eight positions include: President, First Vice President, Vice President of Community Service, Vice President of Parliamentary Law, Vice President of Membership, Vice President of Public Relations, Vice President of Communications, and Vice President of Leadership. Each officer will take on new roles that will allow them to serve the organization efficiently and learn more about leadership in NJ FCCLA.

The necessary steps to amend the bylaws have been set in motion by the State Officers. The decision will be left to an official vote from the voting delegates at the State Leadership Conference in March. Think about this proposal and discuss this in your chapters. More information will be sent to Chapter Advisers, and the proposal will be discussed and voted on during the Business Meeting at the 2019 State Leadership Conference!



Every year, you take a new leap into a bigger and brighter future. Every month, you accomplish something you've never done before. Every day, you learn something new. Seniors are in their final year of high school, enjoying every last moment they have with each other and experiencing new adventures. However, they face the task of applying to college. That may sound scary, but it is something that seniors must do as they prepare for the next chapter of their life. College applications are very stressful and bring about various emotions, stresses, and obstacles, but there are always ways to help deal with this stress.

Stay confident.

With all of your contributions that you have made to the school and the community along with your academic achievements, it is important to have confidence in yourself. Believe in yourself! Be confident and courageous with everything you do and you will get through such a stressful time during your senior year.

Always have someone to talk to.

College applications are a large process with all the essays and personal statements that are involved. It is important to stay in contact with your friends and anyone who can help to make sure that you are keeping up with all the deadlines and the tasks that need to be accomplished. Similarly, this process is a very stressful and emotional one, so don't make yourself go through this alone. Talk to your friends and family, your adviser, or your guidance counselor to keep yourself motivated and optimistic.

Manage your time well.

College applications are not easy. There are several essays to write, scores to submit, resumes to create, and deadlines to meet. With all of these jobs to do, as well as staying on top of your school workload and participation in extracurricular activities, make sure to use your time wisely. Learn to get as much done as possible without exhausting yourself. Make a schedule, work efficiently, and you will get the job done in no time!

Stay updated.

There are so many tasks that pop up every day, so it is crucial to stay up-to-date with deadlines for your applications. Once you submit your applications, decision notifications come out on specific days at specific times, so make sure to stay up-to-date, because I'm sure you would love to know if you got into the school of your dreams as soon as possible!

Stay healthy.

School is stressful enough, but with added college applications, time will be of the essence. There will always be work and assessments given and applications to get done. In light of that, it is important for you to find time to eat. Eat healthy by remembering your fruits and vegetables! Make sure to have your three full meals every day and have snacks in between. While making sure to eat, also try to get some exercise every day! Get your daily workout at the gym or just go for a small jog. A little everyday will the problems away!



College applications will always be stressful for seniors. There are so many assignments and so much work to do. However, make sure to work hard and get everything done. Stay organized and motivated; pump yourself up.

Senior year may be hard in the beginning, but in the end, you will be grateful for all the work that you have put in and be happy that you pushed through!



Whether members are traveling from the east coast or the Midwest, the Rocky Mountains or a bustling city... they will be sure to have an exciting experience in Anaheim, California for this year's National Leadership Conference! From June 29 - July 4, 2019, FCCLA is bringing together over 8,000 members from across the country. Here members will have the opportunity to hear from inspiring speakers, expand their leadership abilities, and explore their career pathways.

In addition to being the site of this year's National Leadership Conference, California has tons of activities outside of the conference. Attractions such as Disneyland, Disney's California Adventure, Universal Studios, Major League Baseball, Richard Nixon's Presidential Library, and Hollywood are just some of the exciting tourist opportunities for conference attendees.

At the National Leadership Conference, you will be able to meet fellow members from across the country and create lasting bonds with new friends. National FCCLA has a lot planned for this conference, including promoting and strengthening National Programs, STAR Events, and recognizing chapter members for their hard work and dedication. Don't miss out on this opportunity to empower yourself and receive the chance to "BELieve in YOURself!" If you are interested in attending this conference, talk to your adviser about how you can join the New Jersey delegation in representing our state with excellence. There is so much to look forward to at the 2019 National Leadership Conference. The National Officers can't wait to see you there!



Leadership Bootcamp

By: Chelsea Olender, Vice President of Membership



While there are several New Jersey FCCLA Conferences held annually, did you know that only one of them focuses solely on leadership development? Leadership Bootcamp is a great learning opportunity for our members! Two very active NJ FCCLA alumni and former State and National Officers facilitate this fun and amazing conference!

At Leadership Bootcamp, you have the opportunity to meet other leaders from across the state. While getting to share breakfast and lunch together, members share information about our own chapters and spread ideas to one another. It's very exciting to hear all of the different things that chapters do across the state! At the end of this exciting and productive day, the state officers share some thoughts to help motivate the "troops" of NJ FCCLA.

Included in the \$45 conference registration fee is a t-shirt, two meals, and leadership materials and books! The Leadership Bootcamp was held on January 12, 2019 at John P. Stevens High School in Edison. The State Executive Council enjoyed seeing so many members participate in this conference!



Recap of Capitol Leadership

By: Samantha Matson, State President



Washington D.C. is the heart of our nation's government, and the New Jersey State Executive Council had an amazing opportunity this fall to visit and to make a difference for FCCLA and FCS education. The Capitol Leadership Conference is held annually at this location, and this year we attended from the 8th-10th of October. Many states are represented at this conference, which gave our officer team the chance to meet and network with youth leaders from across the country. At the beginning of this conference, we developed our advocacy skills as we role played how to advocate for issues for which we are all passionate, such as FCCLA and Family and Consumer Sciences education.

Later in the week, we put these advocacy skills into practice when we met with the staffers of our New Jersey senators, Corey Booker and Robert Menendez, and our congressmen, Tom MacArthur and Frank Pallone. It was such a great opportunity to walk through the halls of the capital buildings, where so many important decisions are made for our country. It was an even better opportunity being able to speak about something that was important to us because we saw the impact that our voices have. People wanted to hear what we had to say. The staff members specialized in educational issues and had great questions for us about FCCLA and Career and Technical Education. We thanked our legislators for supporting Perkins Funding and let them know that this will have a positive impact on our state.

We need to keep advocating for important issues in order to make a difference not only for FCCLA members, but for all students. Hopefully, soon all students will have the chance to be enrolled in Family and Consumer Sciences classes and to be a part of FCCLA. But the only way that will happen is if we continue to advocate. You can advocate for FCCLA and FCS education, too. You don't need to speak with members of Congress; you can start out with someone more accessible, like your school administrator. You have the power to make a difference by speaking out for FCCLA and FCS. The advocacy efforts of our members will assist in maintaining the longevity of our organization and of FCS education.



Winter Activities

By: Karishma Shenoy, VP of Community Service



During the winter season, there are many ways to enjoy the weather with family and friends! You can participate in multiple indoor and outdoor activities during your break. From ice skating and building snowmen to constructing a gingerbread house and baking cookies, you can have a great time while hanging out with family!

Ways to enjoy the snow with family and friends!

A great way to pass winter weekends is by spending your time with your friends and family. Go outside and play in the snow, build a snowman or have a snowball fight! You can even go ice skating, skiing, and snow tubing! These are great outdoor winter activities that are great for you and your family!

Bake some delicious treats!

A fun indoor activity to indulge in is baking! Baking is great way to enjoy the company of family while making delicious treats! Some group things you can make are delicious breads, bake yummy cookies, and creamy hot chocolate!

Watch winter movies while drinking hot chocolate!

An annual tradition in my family during the winter is watching winter movies such as *Frozen*, *Groundhog Day*, *Happy Feet* and *Ice Age* while enjoying a warm cup of hot chocolate and the company of each other. This is a fun way for families to spend time together and enjoy a movie!

Get Creative with a winter Craft!

Pick up a knitting project or make Valentine wreath for your door. DIY projects such as making a pillow or bird feeder are fun and useful. This is a perfect way for people to come together and have fun!



Keeping Warm in Style

By: Andrea Maris, Vice President of Communication



Layering

In the winter, layering is not only fashionable, but also practical. You can piece together a monochromatic look while utilizing layering, or pair a fitted turtleneck shirt with a looser fitting faux leather jacket. When it comes to layering, a multitude of looks can be drawn from a couple of pieces. The possibilities are endless.



Textures

Varying the textures of a look can keep the interest and appeal of your outfit, even during the winter months. A fur jacket with corduroy pants, for example, could produce a really interesting effect. Additionally, varying the textures of your accessories (hats, scarfs, bags, etc.) would also create a really nice look. Combining a mixture of complimenting textures could add interest and a level of uniqueness to any outfit.



Accessories

During the cold months in New Jersey, a scarf or a hat is necessary. Make your winter necessities an opportunity to add a stylistic element to your outfit. Coordinating your accessories or making a statement with an accessory can transform a look.



Jackets

Statement jackets are another aspect of clothing that is sometimes neglected. Don't always opt for something basic when buying a jacket. Instead, choose something with personality. Browse a thrift store near you to find a stylish jacket at an unbeatable price!





Delicious Treats for the Winter

By: Saurabh Todkar, VP of Leadership Development



Winter is here, and we all are craving some hot and tasty delicacies. From warm and sizzling appetizers all the way to rich and chocolaty desserts, winter is the time of the year to enjoy and share delicious foods. Enjoying a warm hot cocoa with marshmallows next to a fire and spending time with your family is a great way to start your winter. Some of the tasty treats that we should have with our families could be spiced pumpkin walnut cookies or even chocolate-peanut butter spring rolls. There are thousands of winter recipes that can help you and your family stay cozy in the cold weather.

A delicious meal starter can set the stage for a wonderful and relaxing family dinner. Try the recipe below for roasted pumpkin and coconut soup. This soup is not only warm and soothing, but also has pumpkin spices to make you feel completely relaxed.

SPICY PUMPKIN & COCONUT SOUP

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ white onion, minced
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 15 oz. can pumpkin puree
- 4 oz. can coconut milk
- 3 cups chicken broth
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 bunch fresh cilantro or parsley



GARNISHES

- 3/4 cup plain yogurt
- 3 tablespoons Sriracha
- 3 tablespoons pumpkin seeds (pepitas)

INSTRUCTIONS

Finely dice the onion and garlic. Grate the ginger using a micro plane. Add the ginger, garlic, and onion to a pot with the olive oil and sauté over medium-low heat until soft and transparent, about 5 minutes.

Add the cumin and red pepper to the pot. Stir and cook for about 1-2 minutes to allow the spices to toast

Add the pumpkin purée, coconut milk and chicken broth to the pot and stir to combine. Turn the heat up to medium and allow the soup to heat through. Once heated, taste and add salt and pepper to taste.

Rinse the cilantro or parsley, pull the leaves from the stems, and then give them a rough chop. Stir in a handful of the chopped cilantro just before serving. If you want a smooth soup with no chunks of onion, use an immersion blender prior to adding the cilantro.

If desired, garnish each bowl with yogurt, a drizzle of sriracha, and a sprinkle of pepitas.

PUMPKIN WALNUT COOKIES

Pumpkin cookies with all your favorite pumpkin pie flavors are sure to receive rave reviews!

Yield: 60 COOKIES

Ingredients

COOKIE DOUGH

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 2/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice or ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chopped walnuts



FROSTING

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 3 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice or ground cinnamon
- Walnut pieces, if desired

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat oven to 350°F.

Combine 1 cup butter, brown sugar and sugar in bowl. Beat at medium speed, scraping bowl often, until creamy. Add pumpkin, egg and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Continue beating until well mixed. Add flour, 1 1/2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Beat at low speed, scraping bowl often, until well mixed. Stir in 1 cup walnuts.

Drop rounded teaspoonful's of dough, 2 inches apart, onto ungreased cookie sheets. Bake 8-10 minutes or until set. Cool completely. Combine all frosting ingredients except walnut pieces in medium bowl. Beat at low speed, scraping bowl often, until smooth. Frost cooled cookies. Garnish with walnuts, if desired.