If even one food handler fails to adequately learn or adhere to proper food safety practices, your business – as well as your loyal customers – will be at risk. It’s mission-critical to ensure that every member of your food service staff understands what they must do to handle and prepare food safely. One food safety incident can destroy a business, so food safety training is vital.

ServSafe classes are held state-wide through the University of Nebraska Extension Services.

**SERVSAFE Instructors Statewide**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ainsworth</td>
<td>Pat Jones</td>
<td>402.387.2213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatrice</td>
<td>Kayla Colgrove</td>
<td>402.223.1384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>Amy Peterson</td>
<td>402.747.2321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fremont</td>
<td>Cindy Brison</td>
<td>402.444.7804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Island</td>
<td>Cami Wells</td>
<td>308.385.5088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hastings</td>
<td>Cami Wells</td>
<td>308.385.5088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kearney</td>
<td>Carol Schwarz</td>
<td>308.236.1235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexington</td>
<td>Andrea Nisley</td>
<td>308.324.5501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCook</td>
<td>Nancy Frecks</td>
<td>308.334.5666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska City</td>
<td>Cindy Brison</td>
<td>402.444.7804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk</td>
<td>Ann Fenton</td>
<td>402.329.4821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Platte</td>
<td>Nancy Frecks</td>
<td>308.334.5666</td>
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<td>Ogallala</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omaha</td>
<td>Cindy Brison</td>
<td>402.444.7804</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seward</td>
<td>Amy Peterson</td>
<td>402.747.2321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sioux City</td>
<td>Carol Larvick</td>
<td>402.987.2140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottsbluff</td>
<td>Jamie Goffena</td>
<td>308.432.3373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentine</td>
<td>Pat Jones</td>
<td>402.387.2213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>Amy Peterson</td>
<td>402.747.2321</td>
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</tbody>
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**The Leader**
ServSafe has been delivering better protection for businesses large and small for nearly 40 years.

**Trusted**
Based on the same ServSafe manager program that has awarded more than 5 million ServSafe certifications nationwide. No other program comes close.

**Giving Back**
ServSafe profits are reinvested in industry educational, outreach and advocacy programs.
As 2016 comes to a close we review significant events and achievement.

The National Restaurant Association Hospitality Education Foundation has changed the criteria for allocation and use of grant funds. These changes require state associations to be more accountable and use the funds in a way that benefits all ProStart schools. While this change was underway we were fortunate to have Fayrene Hamouz join our staff as a volunteer ProStart Coordinator. Her experience as an educator and contacts in the hospitality industry are making a very positive contribution to improving the quality of support for the ProStart Program and opening the door for additional sponsors. Fayrene’s leadership in improving the quality of ProStart educator training, recruiting additional schools and revising the format for state and regional ProStart Competitions has generated strong support from educators and the hospitality industry. Our goals for this initiative are to provide opportunities for restaurateurs to connect with students in a classroom setting and make them aware of the many opportunities for successful careers in the culinary arts and restaurant management.

The Central Nebraska Chapter of the Nebraska Restaurant Association was officially established last year and our goal is for the chapter to be recognized as the premier advocate for the Central Nebraska Food and Beverage Industry. Membership is open to all food service organizations including restaurants, beverage establishments and private clubs. Chapter leadership will coordinate with the University of Nebraska extension educators, community colleges and other training and educational resources to provide opportunities for cost effective training for the industry in food, alcohol and workplace safety, business management and other related subjects.

Work force development is an issue critical to the future of the industry in the Central Nebraska Region so we will encourage educational institutions to support and coordinate with local high schools in providing interested students opportunities for culinary training and internships.

Brandy Nielson has worked diligently to get this chapter established and accomplishing the goals we have established. The success we have enjoyed so far is a direct result of her excellent planning and communications with members.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8
NRA ENDORSED PROVIDERS

**Fishbowl**
*E-Marketing Solutions*
Contact: Grace Valentine
703.836.3421 x 263
Fishbowl has proven that targeted email marketing will generate more sales and increase guest frequency. Through a partnership with the Nebraska Restaurant Association and the National Restaurant Association, Fishbowl provides savings to current members.

**Jackson Lewis LLP**
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402.391.1991
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**Heartland Payment Systems**
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Heartland Payment Systems offers a full line of payment acceptance and payroll processing options designed specifically for association members. Local representation. Flexible, one-stop solution.

**Nebraska.Statepaper.com**
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Nebraska.Statepaper.com is the premiere online dining guide of the Nebraska Restaurant Association. In addition to a free listing, members of the Nebraska Restaurant Association may receive additional discounts with enhanced listings and websites.

**Broadcast Music Incorporated (BMI)**
*Music Licensing*
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Nebraska Restaurant Association members can save up to 20% thru BMI. BMI collects license fees on behalf of songwriters, composers and music publishers and distributes them as royalties to those members whose works have been performed.

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National Restaurant Association Applauds FDA Clarification on Menu Labeling Rule

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced it will be publishing a final rule that formally extends the compliance date for menu labeling regulations to May 5, 2017. Below is a statement from Cicely Simpson, Executive Vice President of Government Affairs at the National Restaurant Association.

“The National Restaurant Association applauds the FDA for issuing this important clarification regarding menu labeling. We have long-advocated for a nationwide federal menu labeling standard that gives customers access to uniform nutritional information at restaurants, that provides certainty to restaurateurs and food service operators over the patchwork of state and local laws. Today’s announcement by the FDA gives the food service industry the time it needs to empower their customers to make the best choices for themselves.”

FDA to Align Menu Labeling Compliance Date with the Enforcement Date for Menu Labeling to May 5, 2017

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today announced that it will soon publish a final rule to formally extend to May 5, 2017, the compliance date for the agency’s 2014 menu labeling regulation, which requires disclosure of certain nutrition information for standard menu items in certain chain restaurants and similar retail food establishments. This extension will align the compliance date with the enforcement date.

Section 747 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, signed on December 18, 2015, prohibited the FDA from using appropriated funds to implement, administer or enforce the menu labeling requirements until one year after the FDA issues final guidance for industry on the menu labeling requirements. On May 5, 2016, the FDA published the final guidance and announced in the Federal Register that enforcement of the menu labeling rule would begin on May 5, 2017.

While the FDA made clear that it would not begin enforcing menu labeling requirements prior to May 5, 2017, the FDA did not at that time formally make a change to the compliance date through rulemaking. Thus, the compliance date was officially December 1, 2016, as communicated in our November 29, 2016 Constituent Update. To bring the official compliance date into alignment with the enforcement date, the FDA is now announcing that it will issue a final rule to formally extend the compliance date to May 5, 2017.

This Constituent Update supersedes any previous FDA statements regarding the compliance date for the menu labeling regulations.
Camelle Kinney, ProStart Educator, takes culinary education to a real-world level at Lincoln’s North Star High School.

“A lot of the curriculum objectives in the 2nd level culinary class are related to running a restaurant.” Camelle explains “So I had an idea. Let’s start a restaurant. We did and it’s a hit!”

The G-3 (Gator Gourmet Grill) offers five or six menu items, typically a variety of sandwiches and pizzas. Students set prices for the menu items by figuring costs plus a small profit. They take pictures of the items for the menu and send a Google order form out to North Star teachers who order by 10 am on Tuesdays. Students make a grocery list for what’s been ordered, and Camelle places the food order. Ingredients come in on Wednesday. Students receive them, check them, and on Thursday they prep the food. Friday, they make it. Teachers pick up the food at “the Grill” or it is delivered by the students. Some favorites have been a chipotle chicken sandwich and Caprese salad. Fresh brewed unsweetened tea is also a hit.

The Grill has given students chances to solve problems that are encountered in the hospitality industry. One time they chose sliced turkey, but Camille accidentally ordered ham. So they substituted the ham and it worked out. Another time, lettuce didn’t get ordered, but Camelle had spinach so they substituted it. Each time, they had to communicate the menu change to their customers. And once, when a teacher’s order was lost, the students had to figure how to make it up to the customer. They decided to refund her money and give her a gift certificate for a free sandwich the next week.

Camelle gained her restaurant knowledge through personal experience. Her first job was at ‘Eat and Tote’ (a Dairy Sweet place) in Geneva, Nebraska. Camelle smiles, “We served Sunday brunch buffet on Styrofoam plates!” She’s worked in fast food, fine dining, catering, and both the front and back of the house at Grisanti’s.

Even her first teaching job at Jefferson/Scranton Iowa High School (the Rams) kept her in the business. The school had just completed a $1,000,000 renovation – all for culinary and agriculture. They had their own restaurant with everything from hoods char grills, and deep fat fryers, to a whole room with tables, linen napkins and a drink station. That first fall, there were 20 students working in the Ram Bakery.

“We did rolls, breads, kolaches, pies, cookies, fresh baked items. They were available on Wednesday. Then the 2nd semester the Ram Restaurant had a one-item menu. The menu ran in the paper, and people would call and make reservations. My students would serve the same menu to about 25 guests on both Wednesday and Thursday.” Camelle said, “I was glad I was single then – because I basically lived at school”.
After Jefferson/Scranton, Camelle taught in Council Bluffs and Lincoln Northeast before moving to North Star, a school with 2200 students. They have 7 foods classes and about 175 students in the foods program each semester.

“Our food labs are busy from 8 to 3 without a break. At the end of the day the labs looks like they were well-used,” she laughs, “We try to convince students they don’t need a new towel for each pan they washed!” Camelle teaches three classes and serves as Department Chair.

“One of the big responsibilities as chair is the budget, with food the biggest expense. We have a garden and we do get donations. We got 300 pounds of Colorado peaches this fall, and 50 lbs. of pears that somebody grew. We adjust depending on what we get. Some years we make a lot of salsa when we get tomatoes. When we get apples that aren’t too pretty we make apple chutney!"

Not every student chooses to be on the culinary team, so Camelle’s idea was to keep them busy with simple competitions. They win gift cards for things like the sweets they make (and sell) or winning the competition at skills like dessert plating. The winner receives a $10 gift certificate to the restaurant of their choice.

“We like to take them to Venue Restaurant & Lounge because Chef John Benton takes time out to talk to the kids, and gives them a tour. Many of the students say the nicest restaurant they’ve been to is Ruby Tuesday’s, Applebee’s or Golden Corral,” Camelle explains “it’s cool to take them to Venue…to see their eyes when they see the linen napkins and fresh flowers on the table.”

Each semester Camelle “tweaks” what she does. “I don’t do the same things over and over. I’m a reflective teacher, and a reflective cook. If something didn’t work, we won’t do it the same way. I have evolved and changed and grown both as a teacher, a culinarian, and a cook.”

Camelle acquired her love for food and cooking early in life and received encouragement and guidance along the way.

“I learned the basics from my grandma June Yost and Mary Olsen, my 4-H leader. They were farm wives with a passion for good food and cooking. I learned simple foods but the skills and techniques are the same. And my mom. I have a picture of me not quite 4 years old holding a Snack and Mix cake I made by myself for my mom’s birthday.”

She goes on “I know I’m teaching restaurant things but I want families to eat dinner at the table - talk, communicate. I love cooking with my son and I want my kids to have that with their kids and parents.” Camelle stays busy outside of class. She has completed Levels 1 and 2 of the National Restaurant Association’s Educational Foundation Summer Institute and is hoping to do Level 3 soon.

“I really appreciate the support, the emails, and updates from the ProStart educator classes. My school pays for the first three levels – but not the fourth level which focuses on things like chocolates and pastries – the fun stuff!” Camelle hopes to apply for an NRA Educator Scholarship to be able to complete all 4 levels.

Never short on good ideas, Camelle started a Culinary Club at North Star that meets on Thursdays. The school has six kitchens and students work two to a kitchen. Membership is capped at 15 and there’s a waiting list. There’s no funding for the club so they use the leftovers from class.

In addition, she stays in contact with former students on Facebook – and started her own food blog. “On a whim, a friend of mine who lives in Japan was having an important person for dinner and they wanted to make beef. They paid $80 for a 3-lb. rump roast! I told her how to make it on Facebook and all these people started asking questions and making comments. So I made a roast and I had 360 views of me taking a lid off my Dutch oven. Yesterday, I videoed me making beef and noodles. That’s kind of fun to do.” “Now I’m working on an idea for next semester…”
Legislative issues

Federal Election

The election is over and we have a new president inaugurated in January. I’m sure our members have mixed reactions to the election results depending on political preferences but the key question now is “what next?” for the hospitality industry.

Based on positions taken during the campaign we can expect some relief from the more onerous provisions of the overtime regulations and Affordable Care Act (ACA) and government agencies will be less aggressive in enforcing a number of regulations.

Nationwide the restaurant industry employs a significant number of immigrant workers - about 10% of the workforce. President Trump’s policies could create worker shortages for employers who depend on migrant labor and temporary visa employees. The impact in Nebraska will vary depending on location and composition of the employee pool. The effect of these policies will also impact the food processing industry.

In general we can expect a friendly environment for business and less support for labor unions and issues in Washington, DC.

Affordable Care Act

The National Restaurant Association, with our support, has urged Congress to make changes in four key areas:

- Bring the ACA’s definition of full-time in line with typical workplace standards
- Simplify and streamline the employer reporting requirements
- Raise the threshold that determines which businesses are treated as “large” under the ACA
- Eliminate the ACA’s auto-enroll mandate that requires some companies to automatically enroll full-time employees in a company health plan

President Trump supported repeal and replacement of ACA during his campaign and is expected to support action by Congress to accomplish this and address these issues.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) regulations on overtime

The Department of Labor (DOL) issued a proposal that could dramatically alter the white collar exemptions for overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act that will greatly limit restaurant flexibility and unnecessarily increase costs for businesses across the country. A recent decision by a Federal Court for the Eastern District of Texas delayed enactment of this regulatory change and we are optimistic that the new administration will act to modify this...
National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) action. More details are provided on Pg. 10.

For several years, the lack of cooperation and dysfunctional political environment in Washington, DC prevented enactment of any positive legislation on health care, immigration reform and other issues of interest to our members. We are hopeful that a new administration will support legislation to alleviate the burdensome regulatory environment limiting investment and growth in the hospitality industry. It’s up to Congress to cooperate and make the necessary changes.

Nebraska Unicameral Issues 2017

The 2017 legislative session convened Wednesday, January 4 with seventeen new senators. This is the first and “long” session of the two year cycle and will last until early June. As we go to press, the introduction of new legislative bills is not complete but here are some issues that could arise.

Minimum Tip Wage

There was legislation to raise the minimum hourly tip wage in both the 2015 and 2016 sessions. The proposal in the 2016 session, LB1089, was introduced by Senator Hansen and would have increased the minimum tip wage to $3.60/hour starting August 1, 2016 and $4.50/hour on January 1, 2017. We testified and worked in opposition. LB1089 was not advanced by the Business and Labor Committee and the minimum tip wage remains at $2.13 per hour in Nebraska. This seems to come up nearly every session so it could very well be reintroduced.

Mandatory Server Training

The Nebraska Liquor Control Commission issues a letter each year stating concerns and suggestions of the Commission. This year’s letter states, “The Commission believes a statute requiring mandatory server training of employees should be enacted. Having all employees involved in the sale or serving of alcohol and completing a certified training course would enhance the overall safety and welfare of the general public.” As this update goes to press, a mandatory training bill has not been introduced but we must be vigilant on this issue.

Increase Sales Tax Collection Allowance

Nebraska restaurants collect and remit sales tax and receive practically nothing for this service. The cost to restaurants is significant - especially on credit card sales since the restaurant is forced to “eat” the credit card swipe fee on the sales tax portion of the charge. Bills have been introduced in past sessions - at our request - to increase the amount Nebraska’s restaurants receive for collecting and remitting sales tax. In the end, the amount it would cost the State of Nebraska was more than we could overcome with the state facing a significant budget shortfall. We will work to fine tune this and get it reconsidered as we believe it is very important to educate the body on this issue each session. This is especially true with term limits as the makeup of the legislature is constantly changing.

Legislation Effecting Nebraska Franchises

We are fortunate to have several Nebraska-based restaurants that engage in franchise agreements. Previously, under Nebraska law an arbitrator or court threw out the entire franchise agreement if the non-compete clause was determined by the arbitrator or court to be unreasonable. This was financially damaging to both the franchisor and franchisee. LB942, introduced by Senator Scheer, brought Nebraska franchise law into conformance with other states and allows the arbitrator or court to reform the clause to make it reasonable, thus keeping the franchise agreement intact. It was advanced by the banking committee, passed by the body and signed by the governor. We do not anticipate further action on this specific franchise issue but there is interest in legislation next session to clarify in Nebraska law that employees of the franchisee are not employees of the franchisor.
Texas court halts Department of Labor

On November 22, 2016, a Texas District Court Judge granted a nationwide preliminary injunction blocking a Final Rule which would have doubled the required salary needed to qualify for exempt status under the white collar exemptions.

President Barack Obama directed the DOL in March of 2014, more than two years ago, to update and modernize the regulations that govern who qualifies for the white collar exemptions. In response, the DOL issued a proposed rule on July 6, 2015, and a Final Rule on May 23, 2016, after receiving approximately 300,000 comments. The Final Rule makes four changes to the white collar exemptions:

• It increases the standard salary level for the white collar exemptions from $23,660 to $47,476
• It increases the required compensation for the exemption applicable to highly compensated employees, raising that level from $100,000 to $134,004
• It provides for automatic increases to the salary levels every three years, instead of requiring separate rulemaking, with rates to be established based on the average salary levels for full-time workers as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
• It allows employers to use commissions and other non-discretionary incentive pay to satisfy up to 10% of the salary level for the standard white collar exemptions.

For employers who have yet to communicate the change, the ruling may allow a sigh of relief, eliminating the obligation to increase wages for some employees in order to continue to meet the exemption requirements or scrapping plans to reclassify workers from salaried exempt to hourly non-exempt.

Since the DOL first announced its proposed rule, various bills have been introduced in Congress to block the rule entirely, delay its implementation, or stagger the increases over time. But President Obama would veto any of these bills, even if they were passed. But a Trump Administration might view such legislation differently, and President-elect Trump could sign such legislation if it is passed by the next Congress.

If an appeal from the district court’s decision is still pending when such legislation is passed, the appeal may become moot, particularly where the legislation invalidates the rule from the proposed effective date. The Trump Administration also might direct the DOL to abandon the appeal if it is still pending at the presidential inauguration.

The DOL under a Trump Administration also might rescind the Final Rule, but would need to follow the procedures set forth in the Administrative Procedure Act, a much longer and more difficult process.
TASTE OF NEBRASKA

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Four to 10 percent of food purchased by a foodservice operation is discarded before ever reaching a guest, according to LeanPath. By keeping tabs on and reducing waste, chefs and operators can cut food costs and increase profits. For more on food waste reduction, visit Conserve.Restaurant.org.
### TOP 20 FOOD TRENDS

1. **New cuts of meat**
2. Street food-inspired dishes
3. Healthful kids’ meals
4. House-made charcuterie
5. Sustainable seafood
6. Ethnic-inspired breakfast items
7. House-made condiments
8. Authentic ethnic cuisine
9. Heirloom fruits and vegetables
10. African flavors
11. Ethnic spices
12. House-made sausage
13. House-made pickles
14. Ancient grains
15. House-made/artisan ice cream
16. Whole grain items in kids’ meals
17. Protein-rich grains/seeds
18. Artisan cheeses
19. Savory desserts
20. Gourmet items in kids’ meals

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**fun fact**

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, street foods are ready-to-eat food and beverages prepared and sold by vendors on the street, in markets, from mobile carts and similar places. The organization estimates that street food is eaten each day by 2.5 billion people around the world.
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10 ways loyalty programs can improve your business

Are you getting the most out of your marketing efforts? Have you considered a loyalty program? Rewards based loyalty programs are an extremely low cost way to supplement your advertising budgets, or if you don’t have an advertising budget, this can be a very affordable way to get a great bang for your buck! Businesses with loyalty programs are 62% more profitable than those without and 28% of customers reported they are extremely likely to increase their visits to a business if they offer a loyalty reward card. Lastly, customer spending is 46% higher with companies that offer reward card programs. Here are ten reasons to take a serious look at loyalty:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Reason</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>RETAIN CUSTOMERS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A no brainer. If you can offer your current customers extra incentive to continue buying a product or service from you, you’ll have a hard time losing them to your competitors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ACQUIRE NEW CUSTOMERS</td>
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<td>As you probably know, the competitive marketplace can get pretty fierce. Customers have a lot of options out there and are always looking for a perk to sway them one way or another. Your loyalty program can be that perk to bring in new faces.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>CUSTOMER RELATIONS RESCUE</td>
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<td>Turn a bad customer experience around and say “We Apologize” with a gift card. While that may not always remedy the situation immediately, it almost always results in the customer returning and making future purchases.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>RECOVER LOST CUSTOMERS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It costs more to acquire new customers than to keep the ones you have happy. What better way to keep the customers who you haven’t heard from in a while happy than with a ‘We’ve Missed You’ campaign tied to your loyalty program?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CREATE ADVOCATES</td>
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<td>Word of mouth is the most effective form of advertising. Positive experiences encourage shoppers to share said experiences. Loyalty programs can give customers those warm and fuzzies every time they earn by shopping with you. Warm and fuzzies = sharable experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>TARGET YOUR BEST CUSTOMERS</td>
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<td>We all appreciate a little recognition. Same goes for your best customers. A loyalty program makes it possible to accurately identify who those customers are so you can return a little of the love they’ve been ending you so much of.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>KEEP RETURNS IN-HOUSE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Almost 9% of all merchandise purchased during the holidays is returned. Use this opportunity to exchange returned merchandise for store credit using a gift card. That way the customer can choose their own gift, while you still keep the profits. Plus, it puts your brand in their hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>RESPOND TO COMPETITIVE CHALLENGES</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Loyalty programs offer you the flexibility to quickly respond to competitive challenges, whether they are a competitor opening up across the street or an online merchant entering your space. Rewards promotions can reduce your defection rate and effectively handle any competitive threats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>SELECT PRODUCT LINES EFFECTIVELY</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Another bonus that the data generated by loyalty programs provide is foresight – the foresight to precisely predict customer buying habits. You can make sure your shelves are stocked with all of your customers’ favorite accessories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>REDUCE PROMOTIONAL AND ADVERTISING COSTS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advertising ROI is often times hard to track. You know what isn’t hard to track? The effectiveness of a loyalty program. Such programs add the ability to offer the right customer the right offer at the right time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Larissa Codr  
Division Manager  
Heartland Payment Systems  

For more information, contact Larissa Codr  
larissa.codr@e-hps.com  
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Free ticket to the NRA Show in Chicago!
As a dual restaurant member of the Nebraska Restaurant Association and the National Restaurant Association, you are entitled to one free admission to the largest industry tradeshow in the world! Experience all the activity and the excitement that draws 63,000+ foodservice professionals from around the world each year at the 2017 National Restaurant Association Show May 20-23rd at McCormack Place in Chicago. Contact Brandy with questions on how to register with your membership discount. bnielson@nebraska-dining.org

3rd Annual Star City BaconFest April 23rd
The Cornhusker Marriott, Lincoln 4:30-7:00 PM
Tickets are now available for this ProStart fundraiser and can be purchased online at www.starcitybaconfest.com. The money raised from this fun event goes to support the Nebraska ProStart program. We love showcasing the bacon-inspired creations that our NRA members come up with! Thank you to the Nebraska Pork Producers for making this event possible!

ServSafe Certification
Do you need to take an online ServSafe exam? Easy! I am a certified ServSafe Proctor. Contact me to set up a day and time to take the online exam and it’s as easy as that! Exams are done in as little as one hour at the Nebraska Restaurant Association’s office.

Looking to hire in 2017?
NRA members can post their job openings for FREE on www.nebraska-dining.org. Click on “Job Openings” and then “Create a Listing”.

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

Brandy Nielson
Membership & Marketing Director
HEF News

Congratulations to Michelle Daize, newly elected secretary of the Nebraska Restaurant Association Hospitality Education Foundation (NRAHEF). Michelle joins President, John Benton; President-Elect, John Coffey; and Past President, Chuck Parker.

Prostart Competitions
February is Nebraska ProStart Competition Month. Student teams from 18 schools are preparing for competitions in Culinary Arts and Management. The reward is an opportunity to compete at the National ProStart Invitational in Charleston, South Carolina in late April. Help us develop and encourage the Nebraska ProStart students and, perhaps, meet a new or future employee. Contact Brandy at bnielson@windstream.net or Fayrene at neprostart@windstream.net, if you or your staff can assist with judging. Competition dates and locations follow.

Eastern Regional: Saturday, February 4, Southeast Community College
Western Regional: Monday, February 20, Scottsbluff Senior High School
Institute for the Culinary Arts: Friday, February 24, Metropolitan Community College
State: Saturday, March 4, Southeast Community College

2017 Plan of Work
The National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation has approved the following initiatives for the Nebraska ProStart 2016-17 Plan of Work. With the active support of the NRAHEF Board, Nebraska ProStart will be concentrating on the following initiatives.

• Improving Educator Support
• Improving Educator Training
• Developing and Implementing Messaging Campaigns
• Increasing the Number of Confirmed ProStart Programs

An important component of ProStart is providing a professional advantage, scholarships for post-secondary education and industry recognition for the students. These advantages can be gained through student completion of Level I and Level II exams and the Certificate of Achievement. ProStart classroom equipment and resource incentives will be provided to schools that administer exams. Key projects in improving educator support include developing costing and food preparation lab modules (examples include vinaigrettes, sauces, protein cookery). Three Nebraska Teacher Forums, one each in Omaha, Kearney and Scottsbluff are being planned. Highlights of the forums include visiting restaurants, meeting the culinary teams, touring facilities and working with the Nebraska Pork Producers, Nebraska Beef Council and Dry Edible Bean Commission representatives.

Another goal of NRAHEF is to make Nebraska ProStart a “Nebraska restaurant and household name”. Nebraska ProStart alums will be featured in a career video and career brochure. Please assist us in identifying alums.

Currently, four schools are planning for certification in the 2017-18 school year. In preparation for the next academic year, teachers and students from these schools will be invited to attend Nebraska ProStart competitions to experience competitions and network with current teachers and students. Help us in welcoming them.
After a federal court judge temporarily stayed the Department of Labor’s overtime rule changes, employers seeking more guidance found some in our Dec. 1 webinar on the issue.

On Nov. 22, Judge Amos Mazzant granted an emergency request to delay the Dec. 1, 2016, effective date for the new overtime rule. In his ruling, Mazzant declared that the plaintiffs — in this case, 21 state attorneys general — challenging the lawfulness of the DOL’s final overtime rule “demonstrated a substantial likelihood of success” on their case’s merits. He hasn’t ruled on the case itself but indicated he believes the DOL overstepped its authority. The court’s action stopped the rule nationwide. On Dec. 1, the DOL filed an appeal on his decision.

The DOL said it strongly disagreed with the court’s decision to put a hold on the regulation. “The Department’s Overtime Final Rule is the result of a comprehensive, inclusive rule-making process, and we remain confident in the legality of all aspects of the rule,” it stated.

The National Restaurant Association webinar, moderated by Shannon Meade, the National Restaurant Association’s Director of Labor and Workforce Policy, and Angelo Amador, Senior Vice President and Regulatory Counsel, addressed what the decision means, whether the regulation is dead or not, and how restaurants should respond.

“The regulation is not dead yet,” Amador said. “The government filed quickly to appeal the preliminary injunction, and we’ll see where that leads. However, litigation does not always move
fast and we have a new President and Administration coming in on Jan. 20. That could change things significantly.”

Amador said the court of appeals could do several things – from upholding the stay to making the regulations effective as of Dec. 1, meaning they would be retroactive. But he said he didn’t think the latter would happen. He also said that if the court does not decide on the preliminary injunction appeal by Jan. 21, a new Secretary of Labor would then decide whether to pursue the appeal.

Mazzant must still rule on a motion for summary judgement in a second case filed by more than 50 trade associations. The associations also argue the DOL exceeded its delegation of authority. That case was combined with the one in which the temporary stay was issued. The plaintiffs are awaiting the judge’s decision.

Meade said that even though restaurateurs were no longer required to comply with the rule changes by Dec. 1, a number have already reclassified positions and are moving forward with their plans. Others are still struggling and putting theirs on hold. She offered three takeaways for restaurateurs:

1. Make sure you comply on the state level. All of this has been happening on the federal level, but it’s important to check state law for any overtime provisions. You must comply where you operate your businesses. Meade points out that federal law is a floor and employers must follow whichever regulations are most beneficial to employees.

2. Communicate with your employees about the latest information. Keeping them informed and updated on changes is critical.

3. Stay focused on the outcome. The judge’s decision to put a hold on the rule was not a final one. Watch and wait for more information going forward.

For the latest information on the overtime rule, visit Restaurant.org/Overtime.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Find updates online at www.nebraska-dining.org

February 4
Eastern Regional ProStart Competition
The Career Academy at Southeast Community College, Lincoln, NE

February 20
Western Regional ProStart Competition
Scottsbluff Senior High School

February 21
ProStart Food and Beer Pairing Fundraiser
Venue Restaurant & Lounge, Lincoln

February 24
Metropolitan Community College Culinary Competition
Omaha, NE

March 4
State ProStart Competition
Southeast Community College, Lincoln

April 9
Taste of Nebraska
Cornhusker Marriott, Lincoln

April 23
3rd Annual StarCity BaconFest
Cornhusker Marriott, Lincoln

April 28-30
National ProStart Invitational
Charleston, SC

Webinars:
FREE for Members and offer information on a variety of topics.
Visit http://www.restaurant.org/Events-Networking/Events/Webinars for more information on the webinars available.

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Taste Traditions of Omaha has been a food manufacturer in the Omaha area for the past 40 years. We specialize in foodservice and retail, Soups, Pasta’s and Mexican Specialties. We are proud to be Omaha based and want to continue to grow our presence in the Nebraska market. We would welcome any partnerships with the local members of the NRA to provide quality food options or be a solutions provider. Please consider us when sourcing products in one of the categories we participate. Also, would be happy to discuss other partnerships or projects.

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WonderWild is a brand identity + graphic design studio for restaurants and resorts. We believe a thoughtful brand strategy paired with beautiful design can be a powerful way to engage your audience and make an unforgettable impression.

From logos and identity systems to marketing collateral and promo pieces to websites, we’ll help you to tell your story in a cohesive way that gives your team something to rally around, resonates deeply with your tribe and gives you a visual framework that grows with you for years to come.
Hockenbergs is a single source for your design, supply and equipment needs. We stock a wide range of products including equipment, smallwares, disposables and janitorial products. We also offer design services, custom stainless, millwork, custom refrigeration as well as full opening packages.
Enjoy tasty bacon-inspired delights from many of Lincoln’s finest Chefs—and music from the Lightning Bugs.

Sunday, April 23rd/4:30pm–7pm
Cornhusker Hotel / 333 S. 13th St. / Lincoln

ADULTS: $25
Children 12 and under are FREE

Order your tickets online at StarCityBaconFest.com

Proceeds from this event will provide scholarships for culinary students in Nebraska.
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