

TV reporter, CV alum to host Chippewa Valley taste fest



Jennifer Ann Wilson will emcee the A Taste for Education taste fest and auction on April 12. Proceeds of the event benefit students and programs of Chippewa Valley Schools through annual teacher mini-grant awards. Photo courtesy of CHIPPEWA VALLEY SCHOOLS

By Nicole Tuttle, For The Macomb Daily

Posted: 03/28/18, 6:00 AM EDT |



The Chippewa Valley Educational Foundation will host A Taste for Education taste fest and auction on April 12. The event will include entrée tasting stations and desserts from local restaurants and markets, including Nino Salvaggio International Marketplace. Photo courtesy of CHIPPEWA VALLEY SCHOOLS

With a trip to Mackinac Island's famed Grand Hotel among the top prizes, the Chippewa Valley Educational Foundation is aiming to raise about \$40,000 through this year's A Taste for Education event.

The Chippewa Valley Educational Foundation will host the eighth annual taste fest and auction on April 12 at 6 p.m. at Zuccaro Banquets and Catering in Chesterfield Township.

The theme of this year's event is summer vacation and attendees can additionally purchase tickets for the grand prize vacation trip to the Grand Hotel, according to district spokesperson Diane Blain, who pointed out many of the prizes available through the evening's auctions will relate to summer-oriented events.

Entertainment will be provided by DJs Paul Zarkowski and Dave Bova. WXYZ reporter Jennifer Ann Wilson, a 1996 graduate of Chippewa Valley High School, will serve as the emcee for the second year in a row.

“Ticket sales are going fairly well. We are always welcoming more and more, and new individuals are coming and seeing us,” Chippewa Valley Educational Foundation President Tim Tomlinson said.

Proceeds from the event benefit the foundation’s annual teacher mini-grant awards. Blain said that typically, \$40,000 is raised, and it is hoped that this amount can be matched this year for next school year. The mini-grant program is also supported by a fall donation campaign.

Entrée tasting stations and desserts will be provided by local restaurants and markets. A cash bar will also be available. Some restaurants with graduates from Chippewa Valley Schools that are participating include Zuccaro Banquets and Catering, Grey Ghost Detroit and Vince and Joe’s Gourmet Markets. More than 25 restaurants and markets are participating in the event, some of which include A Movable Feast, Nino Salvaggio’s International Marketplace, Famous Dave’s and Chef Ramone Catering.

“People can visit the tasting stations and fill up their plates. There’s seating and they can enjoy the food. We also have different auctions. There’s an area for silent auctions, a live auction which take place during the evening, and we have a fishbowl raffle that we do,” Blain said.

As of March 26, 19 businesses agreed to sponsor the event, and business sponsors are still being sought, according to Blain. Those interested in becoming business sponsors can contact 586-723-2240.

This year, the foundation awarded \$28,915 in teacher mini-grants, according to Blain. Tomlinson said that teachers fill out a multi-page application for the mini-grants, detailing information such as the number of students affected, goals and costs of the project. Innovative projects often catch the eye of the selection committee, according to Tomlinson.

“Teachers apply in the fall and generally in December our selection committee gets together and selects the winners and then what happens in January or February, our foundation board members surprise the teachers during staff meetings. So the teachers are surprised with the grant awards,” Blain said.

The foundation also approved over \$33,000 in level-wide grants for things including Ozobot Coding Kits for elementary students and Van de Graaff generators to investigate charged particles at the high school level.

Cost to attend the event is \$45. Tickets can be purchased by contacting 586-723-2240, through offices of Chippewa Valley Schools district buildings, at the district’s administration building in Clinton Township, or online at [eventbrite.com/e/chippewa-valley-educational-foundation-8th-annual-taste-fest-and-auction-tickets-44448328146](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/chippewa-valley-educational-foundation-8th-annual-taste-fest-and-auction-tickets-44448328146). Blain said it is anticipated about 500 tickets will be sold.