For over 20 + years, the Renaissance has provided hope and services to many individuals whose lives have been negatively affected by situations within their communities and fought to create "second chance opportunities" to assist them in becoming productive members of society and achieving academic and career success. Renaissance’s mission is to transform individual lives through intervention, awareness, housing, and education.

Specifically, Renaissance has provided case management services with Harvard House, Tibia’s House and Tessie Cleveland Corporation; as well as reentry services with Department of Probation in Torrance, California and Department of Children and Family Services as follows:

**RE-ENTRY SERVICES**

Renaissance South LA Re-Entry Food Service Certification and Job Placement Program with Corporates affiliates.

Dr. Henry Armstrong III, DBA, MBA, MPH (IP)

Renaissance South LA Re-Entry Food Service Certification and Job Placement Program Director

# Overview

The Renaissance South LA Re-Entry Food Service Certification and Job Placement Program will be providing individuals that are re-entering society from incarceration an opportunity to succeed in life. This program begins with the fundamentals and principles of the art of cooking as well as the science of baking, which will include management and production skills and techniques. Students can pursue a national sanitation certification or other appropriate industry certifications while receiving assistance in job placement. The educational course in this program will offer a laboratory-based curriculum, which means all students will have the opportunity to learn through hands-on assignments with real life work situations.

# Program Goals and Course Objectives

## Program Goals

The goal for the Renaissance South LA (RFSCJP) program allows individuals that were recently released from a correctional facility a chance to re-enter society with a chance to succeed and lower the statistical rate of going back to prison. This program allows these individuals to learn a trade that will provide a certification which is beneficial to landing a job and/or career in the food service and sanitation industry. According to an article called Planting Seeds for Success: An Evaluation of Agricultural Reentry Programming for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals; it states that “Formerly incarcerated people face several barriers to attaining a comfortable financial situation including securing employment, housing, and getting access to loans” (Travis and Visher 2011)[[1]](#footnote-1).

The Renaissance South LA Re-Entry Food Service Certification and Job Placement program will provide the following:

* Accelerated Career Path: Fast-track to the food industry in less than a year
* Hands-on Training: Learn directly from experienced chefs
* Affordable & Accessible: Scholarships and financial aid options available
* Job Placement Assistance: Strong industry connections and networking opportunities

## Course Objectives

* **Safety and Sanitation in Culinary Arts**
  + Understand the fundamentals of safety in culinary arts
  + Learn basic sanitation practices for a professional kitchen
  + Master proper receiving, storage, and distribution techniques
  + Identify food hazards and implement prevention strategies
  + Prepare for state or national food sanitation certification (OSHA)
* **Equipment and Procedure in Food Service**
  + Identify and operate both large and small commercial kitchen equipment
  + Demonstrate *mise end place* (“everything in place”) in food service operations
  + Learn terminology and skills related to recipes and formulas
  + Apply cooking techniques such as moist, dry, and combination methods
  + Practice food production techniques, including breakfast, salads, soups, meats, seafood, pasta, grains, and baked goods
  + Introducing and exploring cuisines and culinary traditions from around the world.
* **Food Service Operations** 
  + Understand different food service operations: quick service, fast casual, casual, fine dining, institutional, and beverage service
  + Compare and contrast roles of front of the house (FOH) and back of the house (BOH) employees
  + Explain quality customer service and demonstrate various table setting and dining service techniques
* **Work Ethics and Legal Responsibilities**
  + Comply with industry laws and regulations
  + Recognize and adhere to work ethics and legal responsibilities
  + Assess and identify safety hazards in the workplace
* **Communication and Professional Etiquette Development**
  + Use verbal and nonverbal communication to enhance operations and guest satisfaction
  + Write situational procedural instructions for restaurant culinary operations or equipment usage
  + How to participate verbally and non-verbally in industry-focused staff meetings
  + Create formal or informal presentations to improve professionalism in the culinary business
  + Explores how to design balanced and appealing menus.
  + Compose industry documents such as purchase orders and specifications
* **Professionalism and Employability Skills**
  + Demonstrate effective oral and written communication
  + Practice professional grooming, hygiene, punctuality, and time management
  + Exhibit self-respect, respect for others, teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving skills
  + Model a positive work ethic and demonstrate good character
* **Leadership, Citizenship, and Teamwork**
  + Apply team-building skills and foster a positive work environment
  + Participate in community leadership and teamwork activities to develop professional skills
* **Mathematics and Science in Food Service**
  + Establish methods that focus on accurate measurement, troubleshooting, and analyzing efficiency, yield, and portion sizes
  + Calculate and manage food costs
  + Experiment with molecular gastronomy and plating artistry
* **Technology in Food Service Operations**
  + Demonstrate proficiency in computer programs used for food management
  + Use technology tools to manage food service operations and point-of-sale systems
  + Compose industry documents such as purchase orders and specifications
  + Interpret data from spreadsheets, databases, and sales reports
* **Time Management and Decision Making**
  + Apply effective time management and decision-making practices
  + Prioritize tasks and analyze decision-making processes
* **Career Development and Exploration**
  + Research food service industry job roles, qualifications, and career opportunities
  + Update and maintain a personal career portfolio
  + Demonstrate effective interview techniques and establish career goals

# Program Specifications and Overview

## Program Specifications

Students will be exposed to the regulations, safety standards, and sanitation practices that are implemented within this industry. They will be using industry standards by utilizing hands-on tasks, tools, and real-life situations in order to understand, demonstrate and apply principles of food safety and sanitation in labs, activities and all applications pertaining to food preparation and storage. Students will understand national, state and local agencies responsible for both safety and sanitation.

Students will learn through the practices that are in place to manage resources to minimize losses and liabilities to businesses in the industry. Students will be able to determine the role of risk management in the hospitality and tourism industry including, as well as, discussions focusing on liability insurance, OSHA regulations, assessment of workplace conditions and potential safety hazards.

Students will gain practical knowledge in using and maintaining professional kitchen equipment, such as ranges, mixers, fryers, dish machines, and refrigerators, while understanding the OSHA regulations related to food-service operations and equipment use. They will also demonstrate competence in operating cooking equipment and adhering to safety standards in a professional kitchen.

Students will learn and apply cooking principles and techniques, including dry heat, moist heat, and combination methods. They will perform basic food preparations across various categories, such as breakfast dishes, soups, meats, and baked goods, utilizing proper kitchen equipment. Additionally, they will develop foundational cooking and baking skills as well as learn how to cook international cuisine.

Students will explore different food service styles, including quick service, casual dining, and fine dining, while practicing front-of-house techniques such as customer service, etiquette, and troubleshooting customer complaints. They will also understand the roles of front of house (FOH) and back of house (BOH) employees in the food and beverage service industry. Through hands-on learning, students will explore the operation of food and beverage businesses, focusing on industry standards, kitchen equipment, nutrition, and presentation. They will also understand the roles of various employees and how to align services to meet company expectations.

Students will develop key employability skills such as responsibility, time management, and organization, recognizing their impact on job retention and career success. They will also gain insights into the personality traits and work ethics necessary for success in the hospitality and tourism industry, including teamwork, communication, and adaptability.

Students will explore and describe technological trends in the hospitality and tourism industry, including point-of-sale (POS) and food management systems, and identify key websites that provide current information to help culinary professionals meet customer needs.

Students will focus on the leadership and social skills required for career advancement in the hospitality and tourism sector. They will differentiate between management and leadership roles and learn how these skills contribute to job retention and promotion opportunities.

Finally, students will receive their certification upon completing the program as well as exploring their career paths in the foodservice and hospitality industry with job placement assistance.

## Program Overview

* **Introduction to Culinary Arts**: Explores the fundamentals of kitchen safety, basic sanitation, proper storing techniques, identifying hazards, implementing prevention strategies, and preparing for OSHA regulations, operations, and equipment safety.
  + Safety and Sanitation: Food Safety and Sanitation: instructing proper food handling and hygiene practices.
  + Equipment and Procedure in Food Service: instructing knife skills and culinary techniques which will focus on mastering essential kitchen skills.
  + Food Service Operations: understanding different types of food services and roles in employment as well as explaining and demonstrating customer service, table setting, and dining services
  + Fundamentals of Cooking in a Professional Kitchen: exploring and demonstrating food preparation, cooking and baking techniques from around the world
* **Professionalism: Work Ethics and Leadership Development in the Culinary Industry:** develop essential employability skills, including responsibility, time management, and organization, and understand their role in job retention and career success. They will also learn about the key personality traits and work ethics required in the hospitality and tourism industry, such as teamwork, communication, and adaptability.
  + Professionalism and Employability Skills: demonstrate effective communication, practice positive professional employment skills such as grooming, time management, and positive work ethic
  + Leadership, Citizenship, and Teamwork: participate and apply team-building skills and foster community leadership and teamwork activities to develop professional skills
* **Culinary Technology: Integrating Mathematics, Science, and Technology in Food Service Operations:** develop methods for accurate measurement, troubleshoot issues, manage food costs, experiment with molecular gastronomy and plating, and demonstrate proficiency in food management software, while also composing industry documents and interpreting data to enhance food service operations.
  + Mathematics and Science in Food Service: calculating food cost and discovering molecular gastronomy and plating artistry
  + Technology in Food Service Operations: demonstrate computer programs, use food service and point of sale systems as well as learn how to interpret data from the computer programs and software used in many restaurants and other food service jobs
* **Culinary Management: Effective Time Management, Decision Making, and Career Advancement in Culinary Arts:** apply time management and decision-making practices, research food service career opportunities, maintain a career portfolio, and demonstrate interview techniques while setting short- and long-term career goals.
  + Time Management and Decision Making: learn how to prioritize and apply effective time management and decision-making tasks and skills
  + Career Development and Exploration: explore all types of jobs and careers in the culinary and hospitality industry while learning how to create resumes, set career goals, and establish effective planning for careers that will create longevity in their careers
* **Culinary Career Certification and Job Placement**
  + Certification: preparation and execution of certification process
  + Assistance in Job Placement: providing job placement opportunities for individuals completing the program

# Supplies Needed

* Facility with commercial size kitchen and appliances to service every individual enrolled in the course, classroom and meeting room spaces
  + Educational and Culinary supplies such as books, pencils and pens, notebooks and/or binders, cooking and baking utensils and equipment, items used for plating and storing food and equipment
  + Technology: computers with software used in the food industry and other devices to support real-life hands-on job training
  + Proper uniforms and clothing used for the food and sanitation industry

# Conclusion

In conclusion, the Renaissance South LA Re-Entry Food Service Certification and Job Placement Program offers a comprehensive and empowering opportunity for individuals re-enter society after incarceration. By providing hands-on culinary training, including the fundamentals of cooking, baking, and food safety, the program equips participants with the practical skills necessary for success in the food service industry. Students will gain industry-recognized certifications, such as national sanitation certification, and receive job placement assistance through strong industry connections. The program focuses on the development of essential employability skills, including time management, communication, and leadership, which are critical for long-term career success. With a focus on both technical expertise and professional growth, participants are given the tools to build a sustainable career, reduce recidivism rates, and successfully reintegrate into society. Ultimately, the Renaissance South LA Re-Entry Food Service Certification and Job Placement program provides a pathway to not only gain employment but also create personal empowerment and stability, while fostering a brighter future for individuals and their communities.

**CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

**Tessie Cleveland Community Services Corporation (2013-ONGOING)**

Through partnership with Tessie Cleveland, Renaissance severed challenged children with their -family and communities in the most normative and least restrictive environment. Our treatment approaches were based on a harm reduction model to ensure consistent quality care, accountability, and measurable outcomes for successful rehabilitation. In collaboration with Renaissance and Tessie Cleveland, we were able to implement wrap-around services as well as a participatory approach to recovery; but equally important is the teaching, mentoring, and coaching provided by counselors and directors equally passionate and dedicated to maximal output and effectiveness with each family within the community. Consequently, the Renaissance has serviced 12 youth to date.

**Renaissance South LA MOU with Tibia’s House**

Tibia’s Sober Living Home for people with co-occurring disorders. Helping individuals (men, women, or women/men with children) who suffer from emotional/psychiatric disorders and turn to alcohol and/or drugs to self-medicate. From approximately Jan of 2013 to August of 2018 Renaissance serviced over 100 clients from three separate facilities 5 days a week. These programs were classified as “intensive Outpatient Therapy.” The clients had a variety of backgrounds, some homeless, some have dual diagnosis and others recovery from years of Substance Abused disorders. Our staff of LCSW, MFT provided clinical therapy, social anxiety therapy as well as utilizing the “Housing First Model” as well as “Harm Reduction Model” to assist them in completing their stay at the sober livings and shelters and regain a life of normalcy and productivity. Consequently, Renaissance has serviced 100 clients to date.

**Renaissance South LA MOU with Harvard House**

Harvard House was founded, and its core mission was to treat and intercept young victims of sex trafficking and abuse. Renaissance has and continues to provide clinical services to individuals who ran away from home, young girls that had a history of self-mutilation; as well as those with co-occurring disorders. Renaissance serviced about ten young ladies per week and worked to begin the process of healing and empowerment. Consequently, Renaissance has serviced 10 clients to date.

**Family Reunification Services**

**Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) (2013-Ongoing)** 325 Crenshaw Blvd, Torrance, CA 90501

Renaissance South LA provided court referred clients DUI course completion, Anger Management 12-month program, Substance Abuse program and completion to regain custody of children, and Weekly UA Drug Screenings. Consequently, Renaissance has serviced 120 clients to date.

**Department of Probation (DPO) (2013-Ongoing) Torrance California**

Renaissance was a direct referral for clients sent by court on probation to complete services because of probation and parole.

Renaissance South LA founder and Executive Director is Dr. Henry Armstrong. As a lifelong executive of sever Fortune 100 companies I have many years of career services and placement. I have many years of working with young adults that were formerly incarcerated and creating a strategic map for them to

* Gainful` employment-Walmart-Ralphs-CVS-Vons
* Resume Writing
* Career search
* Societal norms and re-entry

Consequently, Renaissance has serviced 20 clients to date.

**OTHER SERVICES**

**RSLA MOU with Better Healthy Minds & West Gardena Community Clinic**

Provided therapeutic services to the indigent population on skid row monthly, Renaissance helped to provide schizophrenia screenings, STD and HIV awareness and prevention.

Overall, Renaissance employed several clinical specialists, and we had caseloads that exceed 60 to 100 clients per month. Each counselor and I were responsible for intakes, treatment plans and progress reports for courts, helping clients with chronic illness, mental health issues or life-altering conditions to gain access to rehabilitation programs and other community services. Renaissance’s services included but were not limited to meeting with clients and their families, connecting formally incarcerated clients with employment services and maintaining consistent communication with clients to assess their wellbeing and make changes to their treatment plan as needed.

Our team is a representation and reflection of the growing need for organizations that are capable of meeting clients’ needs both professional and personal as well as clinical in certain situations. We assist individuals that have been negatively affected by situations within their communities and fought to create "second chance opportunities" in their transition to becoming productive members of society and achieving academic and career success. As a child growing up in South LA overcoming many personal roadblocks early in life to a director of several fortune 100 companies as well as a founder of a Mental Health and Addiction/Homeless Services all while attending several top Universities and completing a BS, MBA, PhD. Renaissance is dedicated to making a difference and providing meaningful training development and life altering skills to individuals who seek to make a change in their lives.

Thank you for the opportunity and consideration.

*Dr. Henry Armstrong, D.B.A., MBA*

*Founder & Executive Director*

*Renaissance South LA Inc.*

1. Works Cited: Visher, Christy A. and Jeremy Travis. 2011a. "Life on the Outside: Returning Home After Incarceration." The Prison Journal 91 (3): 102S-119S. doi:10.1177/0032885511415228. https://doi.org/10.1177/0032885511415228. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)