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For Immediate Release

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SCUSD students to judge 'Veggie of the Year' contest between high-profile chefs

*Kids will taste-test recipes by culinary experts from Grange,
Paragary and more*

September 8, 2016 (Sacramento): Think of it as a local version of "Top Chef" with really, really tough judges.

SCUSD elementary school students will taste-test vegetable dishes crafted by five high-profile Sacramento chefs next week as part of Food Literacy Center's fourth annual Veggie of the Year competition.

Media are invited to Leataata Floyd Elementary School from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 13, to catch kids' reactions to vegetable entrees created by Kurt Spataro of Paragary Restaurant Group, Oliver Ridgeway of Grange, Suleka Lindley of Thai Basil, Jay Veregge of The Firehouse and Keith Breedlove to The Culinerdy Cruzer.

At the event, Food Literacy staff will also announce details about the program's expansion courtesy an AmeriCorps program award. In the next two months, Food Literacy Center will be recruiting and training 30 new AmeriCorps service members as Food Geniuses, the instructors who deliver their cooking-based curriculum. Currently, Food Literacy instructors work after school in six SCUSD schools and two public charters.

"This award marks a melon-sized milestone for Food Literacy Center," said Amber Stott, the group's founding executive director. "It brings us closer to our dream of edible education for all students. With help from AmeriCorps service members, we can meaningfully expand our programs."

Food Literacy's mission is to encourage children – often the most discerning farm-to-fork fans – to eat more vegetables. The Veggie the Year contest helps bring attention to the role fresh food plays in improving student nutrition, which helps kids stay healthy. The competition starts with the posting of 10 vegetable candidates online. The public is invited to vote for favorites and the list is winnowed to the top five. Each chef is then assigned a vegetable contender and asked to create a dish for student judges to evaluate.

The winner of the September 13 taste testing will be announced on September 16.

- **WHAT:** Veggie of the Year Competition
- **WHEN:** 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 13
- **WHERE:** Leataata Floyd Elementary School, 401 McClatchy Way, Sacramento
- **WHO:** Amber Stott, founding executive director of Food Literacy Center, chefs, students and others

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