

WINTER 2017

THE DORNSIFE CENTER CONNECTOR



**WHAT'S
COOKING?**

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Greetings and Happy New Year Friends and Neighbors,

The new year often signals a time of introspection and reflection - encouraging us to look at our accomplishments and challenges of the previous year and resolving to make changes for the new year. As I reflect on 2016, and anticipate and claim wellness for 2017, the first thing that comes to mind is health and what I can do to foster and maintain good health: eat healthy and nutritious foods.

In this issue, we feature our partners and neighbors who work alongside us to build community and awareness through food. Food sustains us, food comforts us, food nourishes us, and food brings us together. From our monthly dinners that offer fellowship over food, workshops with our Community Chef to feed the body, side-by-side classes that nourish the mind, to our intergenerational recipes for success - food is the great connector.

We look forward to sharing all this with you in the coming year, and we hope you'll join us to create new connections and friendships at our community dinners, which take place on the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.

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PARTNER PROFILE

<i>Name:</i>	Chef Brian Lofink
<i>Job:</i>	Community Chef
<i>Hometown:</i>	Audobon, Pennsylvania
<i>Current Residence:</i>	King of Prussia, Pennsylvania
<i>Favorite food:</i>	Dim Sum
<i>Favorite movie:</i>	<i>The Empire Strikes Back</i>

What is your role at the Dornsife Center?

I am the community chef. I run the community dinners that are held on the first Tuesday of every month, and also the culinary education workshops.

Where can we find you?

You will find me on Tuesdays either teaching on the sixth floor of Drexel's Paul Peck Problem Solving and Research Building (formerly the Academic Building), or hosting our open kitchen hours in the Carriage House kitchen at the Dornsife Center.

What is your favorite thing about the Dornsife Center?

My favorite thing is the sense of community that is here. Every person who works here or attends classes wants to be a part of something bigger than themselves, and I find that inspiring.

What do you do when you're not at the Dornsife Center?

When I'm not at the Dornsife Center I am working at the Sidecar Bar and Grille in South Philadelphia, where I've been the Executive Chef for seven years, or I'm hanging out with my two little boys and my wife.

FROM WRITERS ROOM

Excerpted from "Oi-ling" by Lauren Lowe

It's the door handles I remember first from my inaugural trips into Chinatown. Long, slender, cylindrical brass handles. The shine rubbed off in various spots from years of use. I used to rush forward to them, eager to beat my parents to the door.

I would reach out, my fingers wrapping around the handle, feeling along the dips and ridges of the surface, and pull. This required a great deal of effort, as the handles sat well over my head. I'd plant my feet about a foot apart, place my free hand against the panels of the adjoining door, and give a single hard yank. The practice proved to be futile—try as I might, I could never get that door open on my own. More than once I missed getting hit in the face by a narrow margin, as the door would swing outwards in a sudden motion with the exodus of unknowing patrons. As many times as I ran up to that door, I had my father open it for me, his arm materializing over my head to do what I did not possess the strength for. The door would open in a smooth swinging motion under the command of his touch. It was always my father who let me into that space.

These were the doors to Imperial Inn, my family's restaurant of choice over the years, as they have known the owners since before I was a thought in anyone's mind. Imperial has always been a constant—it is a fact that I've been going there with my family longer than I can remember, but when I think about the restaurant of my childhood, its memory comes back in odd fragments of vivid detail. Though I know that we often went there for dinner, in my mind it was always noon, always time for yum cha. Perhaps because it was so dim in the main dining room, time seemed to come to a halt when we sat down to eat. The restaurant used to feel so full. There seemed to be an endless stream of people, both patrons and staff, that my father and my aunts had to greet. I would watch them all laugh as I remained seated, my legs swinging to compensate for how they couldn't yet touch the floor and my fingers rolling chopsticks back and forth across the table. People came over to our round table so often that it was as though it had its own gravitational field.

I would get bored of watching the adults interact within seconds. My head stayed on a swivel, watching the waitresses and their food carts snake between tables. A long stack of big blue tanks against the wall housed lobsters and fish. Up and to the right of the tanks hung a giant stuffed swordfish. Overhead the round tables were chandeliers, their crystals clustered in tight diamond patterns. The room was both divided by wooden arches carved with distinct, Eastern patterns. The same patterned wood accented the wall around the bar and register. In my mind, so much was happening that I cannot seem to keep the pieces together. There were carts everywhere, their high metals sides darkened by grease. I was at the mercy of my family's preferences as they would point and list off names—ha gow, lo bak go, shu mai, lo mai gai, pai gwut—in quick chatter that was at once familiar and unintelligible to

me then. The waitresses kept up at the same quick pace, placing dishes in front of us with nimble ease. This, this, this, and then they moved on to the next table.

Sometimes though, they would pause. They would say hello to me. They would lean in close enough so that I could see the texture of their make up and smile at me, the creases around their eyes deepening while they revealed their teeth in pacifying grins. It is from them that I remember first hearing my Chinese name. "Hello, little Oi-ling!" as

they passed by with their carts and patted my cheek. "Oi-ling must be a hungry girl today," as they snuck extra dumplings—my favorite—off carts and placed them in front of me. "Oh, Oi-ling, so pretty now," while they delivered a Shirley Temple soda I never ordered. "Hi there, Oi-ling, want to take an adventure?" as I was relinquished by my family into the arms of a bartender and carried back through the kitchen to be given various treats by endeared cooks.

It was there that I was christened as Chinese.

LAUREN LOWE is from somewhere just across the bridge in South Jersey, but finally migrated over to Chinatown, Philadelphia last summer. Currently a junior English major and a peer reader at the Drexel Writing Center, she is fueled almost exclusively by words, sports, and dumplings (in that order).



Lauren Lowe reads "Oi-Ling" at the 2016 Writers Room anthology reading.

LAURA JACKSON

PRESERVING TOMATOES AND CARING FOR NEIGHBORS

Laura Jackson has lived in West Philadelphia since 1951, and across the street from the Dornsife Center since 1972. With two sons, two grandsons, and three great-granddaughters, she now dedicates her time to caring for her neighborhood's senior citizens. Her advocacy for seniors is not entirely new, though. When she was 22 years old, Ms. Jackson moved to Philadelphia from South Carolina. "I came up here to better myself," she explains. After working for 25 years in a lingerie factory, she began working her way through school, at night and on weekends, and graduated from the Pennsylvania State Certified Nurse Aid Program at Presbyterian Medical Center in 1991. As a private duty nurse's aid, she cared for the sick and the elderly like they were her family. "I loved my work," she says. "Some people were just working for money. I really enjoyed it."



Laura Jackson

At the Dornsife Center, she continues to make sure that the neighborhood's older generation are happy and healthy. She is a founding member of the Dornsife Senior Group, Senior Fitness Class, and Senior Choir.

Ms. Jackson also spends time with Drexel Urban Growers, the student group that runs the Dornsife Center's vegetable garden. "I really enjoy working with the kids in the garden. I love that. I've been with them since the beginning." Although she admits that she doesn't do much of the actual gardening, she enjoys coming out and talking with everyone, sharing her cooking and food preservation tips she learned growing up in the South. "You'd be surprised a lot of people don't know how to cook. And I really enjoy doing it - being out there talking."

Ms. Jackson is more than just talk, however. She also makes sure people are well-fed. She regularly fixes up bags of the vegetables harvested from the garden, adding her own special touches such as a slice of watermelon or a few plums from her own tree, and distributes them to a handful of seniors in the neighborhood. During the holidays, she adds a bottle of home-made wine or egg nog and some pecans or cookies. "I like to give the little gifts to the seniors. I like to see the smile on their face - how they appreciate it. That makes me feel good."

Wondering what to do with those tomatoes at the end of the season? Ms. Jackson offers a simple preservation plan:

- Dip tomatoes in hot water (for about one minute).
- Peel them.
- Bag them and put them in the freezer.
- Thaw them and enjoy in your favorite soup or sauce recipe when you're ready.

CHEF LOFINK'S AUTUMN CHILI

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1lb ground turkey
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 large or 2 medium carrots, cut in small dices
- 1 red pepper, small dice
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- 3 tablespoons mild ground chili
- 1 tablespoon lightly toasted cumin seeds, ground
- 1 28-ounce can chopped tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 15.5oz can beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups diced winter squash (about 3/4 pound)
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup chopped cilantro
- 1/2 cup grated sharp cheddar

Heat the oil over medium heat in a heavy nonstick skillet and cook the ground turkey. Once the turkey is cooked add the onion, carrot and pepper. Cook, stirring often, until the vegetables are tender and beginning to color, about 8 minutes.

Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds, then add the ground chili and cumin. Cook, stirring for 2 to 3 minutes, until the mixture begins to stick to the pan. Add the tomatoes, oregano, beans and the winter squash and bring to a simmer for 30 to 45 minutes or until the winter squash is tender.

Adjust consistency with water to your liking and season with salt and pepper. Stir in chopped cilantro and serve, garnishing with grated cheddar.

Makes 6 - 8 servings.

HALEY PECKMAN FRESH GREENS ALL WINTER

Over the summer and autumn we are so lucky to have a bountiful harvest of greens at the garden and in the market! So much so that I sometimes start to take advantage of how delicious and nutritious fresh greens can be. I picked up this preservation trick over the summer and have been stocking away garden greens ever since! Now I can have a taste of the growing season throughout the most brutal months.

INGREDIENTS: water and your choice of greens (kale, collards, and spinach all work well)

TOOLS: a pot big enough to fit your greens

- Fill your pot about 2/3rds of the way with water – no need to salt it.
- Bring the pot of water to a boil while you prepare your greens
- Wash your greens and roughly chop them. If you are using collard greens or kale, you can cut around the stems and bring them to the compost pile at the Dornsife Center.
- Once the water is boiling, drop in your chopped greens and let them boil for 30 seconds to one minute.
- Use tongs or a slotted spoon to remove your greens from the pot and drop them into a bowl of ice water to blanch them.
- After two to three minutes in the ice bath, start to gather clumps of greens in your hands and form a ball (like how you would pack a snow ball), straining out any excess water.
- Freeze your greens in a plastic food storage container or a plastic bag and store in the freezer until you need them. I especially love this trick because when you need greens you can take out as many balls as you need.
- When needed, remove as many balls of greens as you need and defrost in either another pot of boiling water, or a bowl of water in the microwave works well, too.



Finished balls of greens, ready to freeze

Haley Peckman is an undergraduate student in Drexel's Lebow College of Business and a student leader with Drexel Urban Growers (DUG).

MUFFY'S OLD FASHIONED PEACH COBLER

My name is Chanda "Muffy" Rice. I grew up in Abbotsford Projects, and across the street was EPPI – Eastern Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute. People would escape all the time and wind up on our doorstep. I had to call so they knew where to pick them up. My grandmother would tell me to ask them, "do you want some water or something to eat?" She would say, "feed your enemy; you might make a new friend."

I have been around helping great cooks all my life, learning the difference between Southern Cooking and Soul Food as I grew. My grandmother, Alice; my god-mother, Annie-Ruth; my associate, Andrea; Nanna, Liz Jones...Oh, and my Aunt Hazel, too! They all taught me how to cook a full course meal fast – in an hour!



Chanda "Muffy" Rice

I have been attending classes on campus and here, at the Dornsife Center, since it opened four years ago. Attending my classes has allowed me to find myself! I can sew, dance, act, write, and cook. I'm a Renaissance Woman! Can't wait to see where God will put me next.

MUFFY'S OLD-FASHIONED PEACH COBLER

- 2 cans of peaches
- 1^{1/2} cups of sugar
- 1/4 tsp. of nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp. of ground cinnamon
- 2^{1/4} cup of Bisquick
- 2/3 cup of milk

Drain peaches from juice. Set juice aside. Slice peaches into slivers. Add peaches, nutmeg, and cinnamon to juice in an 8-quart pan and bring to a medium boil. Mix milk and Bisquick to make dumpling mixture. Drop mixture in by the spoonful. Keep dumplings separate. Cover with lid. Cook until dumplings are fluffy. Eat warm with ice cream. Enjoy!!!

JOHNGELINE FERGUSON

CHARRED CORN AND A HUNGER FOR LEARNING

After taking her first Drexel Side-By-Side classes, Johngeline Ferguson was hooked. First connected to Drexel programming via LIFT-Philadelphia, she followed the thread to the Dornsife Center. Her children now grown, she has an insatiable hunger for learning. "I just try to use my time wisely, productively, and constructively. When I'm using my time, I want to learn." So, she travels from the Cobbs Creek neighborhood to take advantage of the Dornsife Center's Side-By-Side classes and other programming. Some of the programs and classes she has experienced include Philadelphia Stories, Music Production, and War Stories, just to name a few. Realizing that she is not too old to learn, and confident in her ability to do so, she eats up all the knowledge the Dornsife Center can serve. "I keep coming back," she explains.

Everyone she has met has made a lasting impression, including the "well-seasoned" professors and the "super-duper smart" Drexel students. The way everyone from different backgrounds, cultures, and ages worked so well together - with "great rapport," teamwork, and networking, along with the mutual learning - is especially important to her. "We helped each other out. With my life experiences and with their academic and educational experiences, we learned from each other. So, it was a great combination."

Ms. Ferguson particularly got a lot out of the cooking classes she took, including Healthy Cooking and Seasonality and Food Preservation. "You didn't just go to class to learn how to cook," she explains. Participants examined the recipes in depth, journaled, prepared and served the food at the Dornsife Center's monthly community dinners, and went on field trips to chocolate factories and to Amish preservation demonstrations. "Not only did we have the classroom theory, they got us out of the classroom and showed us how other people prepare and cook their foods." Students also got to enjoy the fruits of their labor. Although the food was tasty - and it was always tasty, she assures - Ms. Ferguson mostly appreciated the personal connections she made and all the information that they were constantly being fed.

Ms. Ferguson stresses that she still uses what she learned in the cooking classes. "Everything that I learned, took home and I applied it to how I feed myself and my family, so our eating habits have most definitely changed." Learning about all the different spices, including rosemary - "the best spice ever" - she would now like to grow her own. She is now motivated to "eat healthier and gain a better relationship with my kitchen appliances by making my pots sing and my oven cry," she says with a chuckle.

Leafing through an inch-thick folder full of recipes she has collected from the courses, Ms. Ferguson reminisces. "I can sit here and talk for days and days and days about all the stuff that we cooked...we had so many recipes, but this was one of my favorites." She shares the following recipe prepared with fellow classmate, Drexel Culinary Arts graduate Cheryl Ott.



Johngeline Ferguson

CHARRED CORN

Heat 10" cast iron skillet on high until smoking. Add 1 tablespoon canola oil to skillet and heat briefly.

Toss in and spread in pan evenly 1 16-oz. bag frozen corn, thawed.

Let sit for at least 1 minute to allow it to severely char and pop.

Stir in:

- 2-1/2 tsp. minced fresh ginger (omit if making the Southwestern version)
- 1 medium jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced (about 2 tsp)

Let char for at least 1 more minute with very little stirring. The corn is done when 1/4 to 1/3 of the kernels are flecked with brown.

Remove pan from heat and stir in:

- 4 large cloves garlic, minced
- Salt and pepper to taste

If making the Southwestern version add:

- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/2 tsp. each cumin and chili powder or to taste
- 1 bunch scallions, diced

Makes 2-4 servings



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