



Richmond Elementary parent volunteer Heidi Chapman-Renaud (from left), Sharon Elementary teacher Keenan Haley and Currier Memorial School after-school director Lisa Johnson prepare white bean salad at the Summer Program of the 2012-2013 Nutrition Education Institute at the Coach Barn at Shelburne Farms in Shelburne on June 26. LYNN MONTY, FREE PRESS

## Nutrition education in spotlight at Shelburne Farms

LYNN MONTY

Free Press staff writer

When it comes to providing a properly balanced meal, Swanton School has it down. Food service manager Tina Bushey said she and her team have slowly, and successfully, integrated whole grains into their meals in the past school year.

"We had lots of taste testing, and provided it as an option a couple times a month," Bushey said. "Now we are 100 percent whole wheat and there are no complaints."

Bushey and her school team took part in the three-day, intensive, summer pro-

gram of the 2012-2013 Nutrition Education Institute at the Coach Barn at Shelburne Farms in Shelburne on June 26. Ten Vermont school teams participated to learn how to meet the new Federal Dietary Guidelines of America.

Mary Jo McLarney is a registered dietitian and nutritionist in the special nutrition programs branch of the United States Department of Agriculture's Northeast Regional Office. She said since the Healthy Hunger Free Kids act will go into effect in July, schools will be required to increase the servings of whole grains and reduce sodium by half over a 10-year period of time.

"We hope to see more whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and lean meats served," McLarney said. "The focus is on

disease prevention."

Swanton School teacher Kirsten Belrose said as these guidelines become part of school culture, over time they will help students make healthier choices, on their own, outside of school.

"We see it in school that when kids are healthy and physically active, they can focus better and are more successful in school," Belrose said. "These new guidelines are part of helping them become healthier as a whole person."

Teams from K-6 schools in Richmond, Hinesburg, Ferrisburgh, Vergennes, Salisbury, West Rutland, Sharon, Barre City, Swanton, and Danby attended. These teams will reconvene next summer to help develop a Guide to Vermont Food and Nutrition Best Practices.

The three-day intensive was organized with help from Shelburne Farms, Vermont Department of Education, Vermont Food Education Every Day (VT FEED), and the School Nutrition Association of Vermont.

This was part of the Nutrition Education Institute's year-long program designed to provide in-depth training in food and nutrition education, to combat rising rates of obesity and diet-related illness among children, and to support Vermont schools in achieving Healthier U.S. School Challenge Awards, which are part of First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move!" campaign.

VT FEED director Abbie Nelson said the impetus behind bringing classroom and PE teachers, school nurses, and community volunteers together to form schools teams was to build integrated awareness. "It's no longer just the food service workers who are responsible," she said. "School nutrition is now part of

### UPCOMING EVENT:

**WHAT:** 6th National Farm to Cafeteria Conference: Digging In!

**WHERE:** Burlington, Vermont, multiple venues

**WHEN:** Aug. 2-5

**INFO:**

[www.farmtocafeteriaconference.org/6](http://www.farmtocafeteriaconference.org/6)

the educational environment."

Chittenden East School District PE teacher Chris Shackett of Shelburne said the intensive was a great experience for him. "This gives me a look into what I normally don't see," he said. "Food service programs, and nutrition as a whole, and how it fits into the school curriculum."

Shackett has a passion for getting kids moving, having fun, and playing sports, he said. "I got into this line of work to show kids that exercise can be a ton of fun. I already talk about proper nutrition with the kids, but this has enlightened me to rework my curriculum."

Richmond Elementary para-educator Sherry Davis said she hopes her team will enter the fall semester with a mission to create an atmosphere at school that is excited about wellness in general. She is prepared to implement the action plan developed at the intensive, she said.

For more information, contact Anne Bijur at VT FEED at 923-6101 or [abijur@shelburnefarms.org](mailto:abijur@shelburnefarms.org).

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Carrots at the Summer Program of the 2012-2013 Nutrition Education Institute at the Coach Barn at Shelburne Farms in Shelburne on June 26. LYNN MONTY, FREE PRESS



Richmond Elementary para-educator Sherry Davis (from left), Ferrisburgh Central parent volunteer Betsy Vick and Barre City School nurse Nizzy Bascom team up to prepare a nutritious dish at the Summer Program of the 2012-2013 Nutrition Education Institute at the Coach Barn at Shelburne Farms. LYNN MONTY, FREE PRESS



Barre City School teacher Meaghan Kane prepares tofu salad at the Summer Program of the 2012-2013 Nutrition Education Institute at the Coach Barn at Shelburne Farms in Shelburne on June 26. LYNN MONTY, FREE PRESS



Heidi Willis of Salisbury Community School prepares pesto at the Summer Program of the 2012-2013 Nutrition Education Institute at the Coach Barn at Shelburne Farms in Shelburne on June 26. LYNN MONTY, FREE PRESS



Swanton School teacher Kirsten Belrose (from left), PE teacher Dustin King, office manager Lisa Casperson, and food service manager Tina Bushey take a break after preparing a well-balanced lunch at Shelburne Farms on June 26. LYNN MONTY, FREE PRESS