JetBlue Gets Cooking With Hot Bread Kitchen -- A Social Enterprise Bakery That Empowers Women to Build Economic Security

Aug 31, 2015

Airline Selects Hot Bread Kitchen for First Business Mentoring Program, BlueBud, Focusing on Responsible Food Companies

NEW YORK, NY -- (Marketwired) -- 08/31/15 -- JetBlue Airways (NASDAQ: JBLU) today announced New York City-based Hot Bread Kitchen as the first winner of its "BlueBud" business mentoring program. Hot Bread Kitchen builds lasting economic security for foreign-born and low-income women by introducing them to professional opportunities in the culinary industry.

The bakery will receive mentorship, special access to JetBlue's business leaders and the airline's unique product development culture, as well as valuable industry insights. JetBlue is offering Hot Bread Kitchen a unique opportunity to learn what it takes to get their bakery and products into the aviation space.

The initial BlueBud (buddies + budding new companies) initiative is focused on responsible food offerings, and taps into JetBlue's reputation for offering distinct, whole food and responsible onboard food options. Guided by the airline's mission of inspiring humanity, BlueBud was designed as a way for JetBlue to connect with diverse suppliers starting with environmentally and socially responsible food companies and start-ups that have similar responsible practices.

This year's mentee selection will stimulate economic diversity as Hot Bread Kitchen works to create pathways to employment for women from diverse backgrounds. The partnership will ideally increase awareness for the bakery, ultimately impacting profits. Applicants for the first BlueBud program included small food companies that are creating unique and novel concepts.

"Both JetBlue and Hot Bread Kitchen are merging innovation and customer experience with social impact," said Sophia Mendelsohn, JetBlue's head of sustainability. "Our airline started in New York. Through our first BlueBud initiative, we will provide Hot Bread Kitchen with an inside look at our unique culture and food and beverage program. Our overall goal is to support a diverse range of companies and whole food products made right here in New York State. Not only will this partnership help Hot Bread Kitchen prosper, it will ultimately have a direct impact benefitting immigrant and low-income women as they prepare to enter the workforce."

Hot Bread Kitchen offers two programs: a job training that helps women with barriers to employment prepare for careers in the culinary industry and HBK Incubates: a food business support program. Hot Bread Kitchen provides hands-on baking training as well as classroom-based education to seed a new generation of bakers.

To fund its programs, Hot Bread Kitchen sells a line of multi-ethnic breads inspired by the diverse group of women they serve including Persian flatbreads, Moroccan M'smen, Mexican Nixtamal Tortillas, Bangladeshi Chapati and Armenian Lavash. Hot Bread Kitchen products are made without chemical preservatives, additives, flavors or colors. The bakery sources locally grown grain and produce to make truly New York-centric bread.

"Hot Bread Kitchen is honored and excited to be selected as the first BlueBud mentor company. As a growing social enterprise, we are enthusiastic about the advising and access to market opportunities offered by this partnership," said Jessamyn Rodriguez, founder and CEO of Hot Bread Kitchen. "Our breads and programs help women leverage skill and passion in cooking to create better lives for their families. In essence, we are about family, home, and the global food community, so it is fitting and exciting to partner with the airline that inspires humanity."

Throughout the fall, Hot Bread Kitchen will participate in a mentorship initiative with JetBlue that includes:

- A tour of JetBlue's Long Island City Support Center headquarters, its largest operation at JFK's Terminal 5 (T5) and an airline catering facility to better understand how food (literally) gets onboard JetBlue.
- A speaking and taste-testing event opportunity for JetBlue's crewmembers to learn more about Hot Bread Kitchen at the airline's Long Island City Support Center.
- A tasting event for JetBlue customers at the airline's award-winning JFK T5
- Intimate access to JetBlue teams including but not limited to strategic sourcing, purchasing, corporate social responsibility, sustainability, communications, marketing, brand and onboard product.

Hot Bread Kitchen is based in New York City's East Harlem neighborhood. The fabric of the community drives the spirit of this innovative bakery. According to the City of New York, nearly 40 percent of all residents in East Harlem live below the poverty line and 20 percent of all households are linguistically isolated (vs. 12 percent in New York City overall). Despite high rates of poverty and unemployment, East Harlem has a vibrant informal economy centered on food. Its streets are lined with vendors, mostly women, selling tortas, churros and tamales made in their homes as a way to supplement family income. Hot

Bread Kitchen's retail storefront, Almacen, operates inside La Marqueta, a historic public market.

According to Insight: Center for Community Economic Development, nearly one-third of family households headed by foreign born women live in poverty. Foreign born women face an array of formidable barriers to fair wage employment such as lack of English fluency, professional training or education, making them one of the least economically secure populations in the United States. Hot Bread Kitchen offers workforce development and small business incubation to help foreign-born and women from low-income areas overcome these challenges and build lasting household wealth.

Being a successful supplier to a large corporation is no easy task -- especially for small businesses. JetBlue's supplier diversity initiative provides diverse business partners with equal access to opportunities. BlueBud is an example of the airline's inclusive mindset -- impacting people, planet and profits. JetBlue cares about its BlueCities and the businesses that fuel their economic engines. The airline's hope is to create greater access to JetBlue opportunities one BlueBud at a time.

JetBlue's product development and sustainability teams work to ensure there are nutritious options available on all onboard food and beverage menus. Visit Jetblue.com/green/food/ for more details.

About JetBlue Airways

JetBlue is New York's Hometown Airline™, and a leading carrier in Boston, Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood, Los Angeles (Long Beach), Orlando, and San Juan. JetBlue carries more than 32 million customers a year to 90 cities in the U.S., Caribbean, and Latin America with an average of 875 daily flights.


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