



Depew Students Will Honor School Lunch 'Heroes'



School Lunch Hero Day is May 4, 2018

There are special folks on the staff at our schools whose job is to help improve students' concentration and classroom participation, increase test scores, and make sure our kids stay healthy and ready to learn. And, amazingly, these members of our educational team perform all of these impressive feats while wearing an apron!

On Friday, May 4, the 22 hard-working cafeteria cooks and servers at Depew's three schools will get a hero's welcome when they enter the lunch room. Students and staff at all buildings will show their appreciation to their lunch ladies with cards of thanks, banners, buttons and handmade gifts.

This will be the fourth year the district will shine a spotlight on the cafeteria staff for School Lunch Hero Day. One of the slogans is *"I am a Lunch Lady. What's your super power?"*

Friday, May 4 is School Lunch Hero Day, a nationwide celebration hosted by Jarrett J. Krosoczka, author and illustrator of the popular LUNCH LADY graphic novel series, the School Nutrition Association and Random House Children's Books. Inspired by his own childhood school lunch hero, Jean J. Cariglia, Jarrett J. Krosoczka created the popular LUNCH LADY series of graphic novels for kids, starring a crime-fighting school nutrition professional and her faithful sidekick, Betty.

"People often don't understand the complexities of school breakfasts and lunches. Lunch ladies aren't just grabbing whatever they have on hand and throwing it on the steam table. Quite the opposite; school lunch is arguably the most regulated, thought-about and highly planned meal in America," said Barbara Albi, Depew's Food Service Director.

"By far, the favorite meal for all the students in all the schools is breakfast for lunch. This is pancakes or French toast sticks with sausage, hash brown potato patties, vegetable, fruit, fruit juice and milk. In second place are tacos, pizza, chicken patties, nuggets, or fingers and popcorn chicken," she said.

On May 4, the food service staff will be wearing beautiful Purple shirts with Depew Food Service Department printed on the sleeves and the front stating "Calling all super cooks and heroes!" with a fun picture. Depew High School students will air a special Wildcat TV segment to remind students to thank their lunch ladies that day. High School students will create thank you messages for the cafeteria staff. At the Middle School, cards of thanks and special treats will be given to the staff. And at Cayuga Heights Elementary, students will create cards of thanks on gigantic banners in the cafeteria and other handmade gifts.

"The cafeteria staff of Depew Schools consistently strives to make lunchtime the favorite part of every student's day," said Dr. Jeffrey Rabey, superintendent. *"From their warm and compassionate welcoming environment that they provide in the cafeteria to the personal touch that they deliver with every student's meal, to how they encourage our kids to eat healthier; Depew's nutritional professionals are truly heroes to our school-community and deserve to be recognized."*

Between preparing healthy meals, adhering to strict nutrition standards, navigating student food allergies, and offering service with a smile, Depew's nutrition professionals have a lot on their plate.

"The importance and nutritional value of school meals are well documented. For many children, school lunch is the most important and nutrient-rich meal of their day," said Albi. *"It's really a very simple recipe: research shows that kids who eat well learn better. So the hard work that gets done in our school cafeterias every day isn't just about preparing and serving meals to our kids. It's also about helping to make good education possible."*