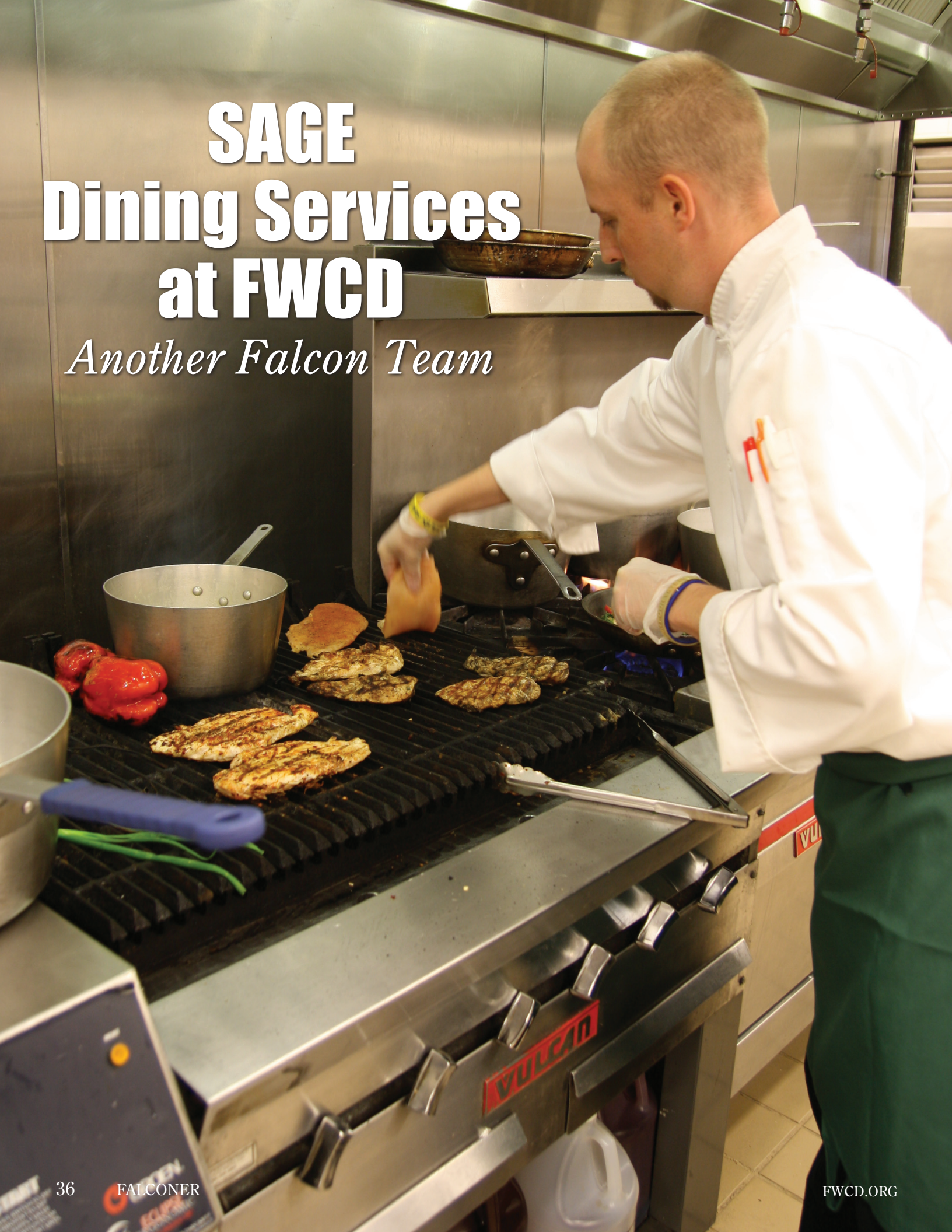


SAGE Dining Services at FWCD

Another Falcon Team



It's 6:30 a.m. when the SAGE Dining Team at Fort Worth Country Day arrives and begins their work day. During the next four hours, Food Service Director **Brandon Barnes** and a team of 10 food service professionals prepare a full array of culinary choices for 1,500 individuals enjoying lunch in the Fischer Dining Pavilion. Accommodating for second servings, SAGE is currently preparing 2,500 meals each day.

One may think this is not a big deal for the trained professionals of SAGE. Perhaps it is not, as the team makes it seem quite manageable. However, consider this: Based on average numbers garnered from corporate and information websites, several popular fast food chains serve less-to-comparable numbers of customers/meals each day but over a longer period of time and with significantly less preparation time and nutritional value. For instance:

- A leading coffeehouse location serves 486 customers per day with only quick, sugar-laden beverages and pre-packaged food items.
- The well-known taco store rings approximately 940 customers per day with primarily pre-packed and processed options that they assemble and heat for 30 seconds.
- The golden burger giant handles 1,870 individuals daily through its stores, providing a similar type service.

Beyond the mid-day meal, the SAGE team supplies a steady stream of breakfast and afternoon snack items via the Falcon Feeder from 7 to 10:30 a.m. and 3 to 6 p.m. For evening games in the gym areas, SAGE holds the Feeder open for community members supporting their Falcons.

Did someone say they need 114 box lunches? Ten friendly SAGE members handle that as part of the lunch preparations, and if catering a plated lunch in the Goff Dinign Room is needed as well, their one dedicated catering person is ensuring your set-up as well as helping the kitchen team. As if that weren't



Tiffini Crum

Faculty and staff enjoy catering by SAGE Dining Services for the 10-year ISAS Accreditation Visit in October.

enough, a typical full week of activities on campus can find the SAGE team providing everything from refreshments to box lunches to plated meals for 900 to 1,000 individuals.

Multitasking is the key, and each member of the team has two daily positions. The food service staff spends the morning assisting with meal preparations, plus setting up catered breakfasts/lunches and stocking food kiosks and beverage areas. Ruby Smith handles the Falcon Feeder and

then moves to the serving line. The baker, **Ramon Burris**, makes the wonderful desserts and any special bread items (such as rolls) in the morning and then changes hats at 10:30 a.m. to become the dishwasher for the lunch rush. He's solo behind the screen because everyone else is needed in the kitchen, on the service line or refilling food trays for the kiosks in the dining area.

Everything for lunch must be ready by 10:30 a.m. That's when Barnes, who has a culinary degree from Johnson and Wales University, conducts a tasting of every item served to ensure it meets SAGE and FWCD standards. If not, it's all hands on deck to make adjustments.

Meeting joint standards is quite important to Barnes. He believes the partnership between the FWCD community and SAGE should be seamless and has focused the team on accomplishing their objectives to ensure their success within the FWCD family.

"Communication and interaction are vital," Barnes said. "Working in tandem, they are the lifeline of a successful partnership and it is important to me and the dining team that FWCD and SAGE have a very strong relationship." ►



Lisa Koger

Students wait patiently in line for a taste of the stir fry from the Action Station.



Lisa Koger

Lower School students choose from a variety of foods each day in the Fischer Dining Pavilion.

Being in the dining area throughout lunch is a central element of Barnes' focus on communication, which includes interacting with and making himself available to the community. Moving through the room, Barnes is able to observe what items students are most responsive to having. He can visit with everyone to hear about their liked and disliked items. Input is logged to each week's menu page so they can be addressed at the next planning session.

"Reviewing comments and suggestions from last year was an important step in determining the primary areas where the team needed to increase their attention," Barnes said. "This allowed us to have a successful start to the year."

New Catering Chef **Alberto Lira** brings the long-term experience and efficiency necessary to help the team achieve a reliable product. Formerly with the North Hills Hospital Dietary Department, Chef Lira appreciates the fresh and flavorful items available to students through SAGE Dining Services.

"I am excited to be part of the Fort Worth Country Day community," Lira said. "I am looking forward to enhancing our product consistency and assisting in providing a good year for the students."

Representing the SAGE team, Barnes has attended home varsity games and recently spoke with parents and FWCD members at a November Informational Lunch session, SAGE: Setting A Good Example. Other interactive efforts of the SAGE culinary team include:

- Action Stations– Designed around exhibition-style cooking, these

activities promote interface between students and the team plus help students learn to make their own choices and value cooking techniques. A great example is the stir-fry station that has been a huge hit with students and adults alike.

- Educational Seasonings – A monthly event where students are encouraged to learn about and taste foods and flavors from around the world. Showcases this year include Eat Locally, Thanksgiving in the Wild West, Culinary Trades, Stews, South African Cuisine, Tea Time, Fair Trade Foods, and Dress It Up: House-Made Salad Dressings.
- Parties – As a gift to the FWCD community, SAGE is hosting special dessert parties in the Goff Room during lunch for select occasions such as Halloween and the upcoming Winter Break.

Pages can be written touting the benefits of SAGE Dining Services and what they are accomplishing on the FWCD campus. To be hard working, committed and consistent are the daily goals of the FWCD SAGE team. Their achievements represent teamwork at its finest – a Falcon team. 🦅



Lisa Koger

SAGE provides a number of services to the FWCD community including full service catering.