



---

---

A trendy mobile restaurant trailer will be pulling into Oak Park next week to serve up tasty gourmet tacos for a VIP crowd of local movers and shakers.

"The trailer will be a foodie working the window. This truck and the fancy restaurant it will pull up next to will be run entirely by elementary school students.

On Monday (April 8), a group of dedicated sixth graders will transform the cafeteria of Oak Ridge Elementary School into a gourmet taco truck. The event will be planned, prepared and executed by the students themselves with the help of midtown celebrity chef Patrick Mulvaney of Uptown Kitchen.

Riding the popularity of food trucks, the evening will begin with appetizer tacos served from the window of a teardrop trailer, a new twist created to give the students more opportunities to taste the joys and challenges of running a business.

The trailer will be pulled to the event by the Sacramento Food Bank's "Food for Thought" program, says Stella Ruiz, of Miracles and Milestones, the group that has organized the restaurant program for 48 students for the sixth year.

† Sacramento Food Bank's "Food for Thought" program

Ruiz purchased the trailer as a business for her son, Tommy Ruiz, 25, who has Down syndrome. Kids from the Five Star Restaurant program have participated in catering events with Tommy Ruiz, where they have learned valuable lessons about customer service. Later this month, the kids will man the trailer at the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration for the UC Davis MIND Institute, Ruiz said.

The trailer experience compliments the work the students do in the restaurant program. From the first day of the program to Monday, the students are treated like partners in a real business, says Ruiz. Students interview for their jobs on the sales, public relations, interior design and finance teams. They hold business meetings after school and on Saturdays. They make personal sales calls to sell tickets at the Capitol, City Hall and other locations around Sacramento.

Throughout the 10-week program, students learn the ins and outs of the restaurant business from Mulvaney, including how to plan, cook and serve gourmet meals. They also accompany him on a

Students are so excited to be involved that some show up at 7:30 a.m. for the 9 a.m. program on Monday.

Students are also involved in the food they serve through creation of a cooperative farm. Ruiz is now studying the farm business at the Center for Land-Based Learning in Winters.

Students are also involved in the food they serve through creation of a cooperative farm for Monday?

Students are also involved in the food they serve through creation of a cooperative farm. Ruiz is now studying the farm business at the Center for Land-Based Learning in Winters.

The best part of the experience is that the students themselves get to decide which field trips to take with the estimated \$3,000 to \$4,000 profit the restaurant will reap. They almost always choose a camping and hiking trip over Disneyland.

Students are also involved in the food they serve through creation of a cooperative farm for Monday?  
5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 8  
Oak Ridge Elementary School  
4501 Martin Luther King Blvd.  
Sacramento, CA 95820

# # #