

Joliet Junior College Apprentice Has Recipe for Success

JJC Partners with Tangled Roots Brewing Company



Illinois, Joliet, Mar 10, 2021 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - **Joliet Junior College** student Jordan Gutierrez signed on to JJC's Registered Apprenticeship program as the college's first apprentice in Fall 2019. For the past year, Jordan has been taking culinary arts classes at JJC while working as a cook at [The Lone Buffalo by Tangled Roots Brewing Company](#) in Ottawa. As an apprentice, Jordan has found a recipe for success with the apprenticeship program's earn and learn model.

Jordan is pursuing an associate of applied science degree in culinary arts management and is about halfway through his academic courses. He explains how he's been able to apply what he's learning in the classroom. Jordan shares how the cost and portion class with JJC Executive Chef Kyle Richardson gave him insight about how to determine the cost of menu items. With that knowledge, Jordan was able to develop a menu and pricing when the restaurant he works for sold tacos during a local festival. He also learned the proper techniques to prepare various meats during fabrication class, which has been very beneficial in his role at the restaurant.

In addition to receiving hands-on, real-world training, apprentices also have an opportunity to complete

their program with little to no debt. Whether it's employer-funded or grant-funded, apprentices benefit from not having to endure the financial burden in order to take classes. Jordan said, "The apprenticeship program has given me breathing room so I don't have to worry about how I'm going to pay for it. I'm getting a great opportunity to be able to work and go to school at the same time."

When Jordan completes his apprenticeship program, he'll earn a degree from JJC and a nationally recognized industry credential from the United States Department of Labor. According to Scott Struchen, founder and chief commercial officer of Tangled Roots Brewing Company these credentials are just the beginning. His future plans for Jordan include becoming an executive chef and managing the kitchen at one of the company's restaurant locations.

Struchen explains how apprenticeship programs provide opportunities for employees to grow within a company. He said, "Apprenticeship programs are an excellent way for companies to create a culture for employees to grow within an organization. Not only will employees realize the company is investing in them, but they'll also believe in the company's vision and share their passion to get others excited." He added, "This helps to provide longevity of employees when you create opportunities for them to move up and advance their career."

The restaurant and hospitality industry has definitely faced its share of challenges and setbacks during the past year due to the pandemic. Restaurants had to shift to carry-out only and operate with limited capacities. **Tangled Roots Brewing Company** found the silver lining during these difficult times. In addition to continuing their operations, the restaurant group also opened two new restaurants – [Lock & Mule](#) (Lockport) and **Hangar Two** (Glenview). This is a major accomplishment considering many restaurants either went out of business or had to drastically reduce their staff.

Lock & Mule, located at 1025 S State St., Lockport, derives its name from Lockport's wonderful history and association with the Illinois & Michigan Canal, where mules would pull longboats up and down the waterways and through the locks. In addition to a full array of menu items, Lock & Mule features up to 15 craft beers on tap, including seasonal and limited edition.

According to Amy Murphy, dean, applied arts, workforce education, and training, "It's been exciting to watch Jordan's progress throughout our apprenticeship program. This entire experience is opening so many doors that will provide him with the knowledge and skills for a successful career."

JJC is the sponsor of a registered apprenticeship program through the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) with industry-approved occupations representing industry sectors in advanced manufacturing, culinary arts/hospitality, horticulture/landscaping, transportation/logistics, and healthcare.

JJC has a three-year apprenticeship grant through the American Association of Community Colleges/Expanding Community College Apprenticeships initiative. This cooperative agreement between the US DOL and AACC's ECCA initiative provides JJC with an opportunity to assist the local workforce by growing the number of registered apprenticeships.

For more information about Joliet Junior College's Registered Apprenticeship program, visit www.trainingupdate.org/apprenticeship or email apprenticeships@jjc.edu.

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Media Contact

Joliet Junior College Corporate & Community Services

mlachcik@jjc.edu

815-280-6743

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