

Cooking class promotes healthy nutrition

On a recent hot Friday morning, the Bucks County Opportunity Council held its first Farm Fresh Favorites Cooking Class at its Bristol office at 741 Veterans Highway.

The class was facilitated by St. Mary Medical Center registered dietitians, who provide nutrition education at Fresh Connect, the weekly free farmers' market for low-income Bucks County residents.

Most of the cooking students were regulars at Fresh Connect, a collaborative program of the Bucks County Opportunity Council, Philabundance, Rolling Harvest Food Rescue and St. Mary Medical Center, with funding by United Way of Bucks County. It returns to the same three locations on the same day and time each week, providing reliable and needed food to the 50,000 Bucks

County residents facing hunger, 34% of whom are children.

The students were taught how to make a variety of dishes including macaroni salad with whole wheat pasta, carrots and broccoli. Each student was given the recipes and tools and instructed on how to make the dishes. In addition to the macaroni salad, students learned how to make a carrot-cake smoothie.

"It tasted a lot better than I thought it would," said one participant.

"I am trying all new types of greens, like mustard greens and kale, from Fresh Connect, that I have never tried before" said another participant, who attends Fresh Connect in Bristol frequently.

Increasing access to fresh food, and allowing people to try new foods which may otherwise be too expen-



A Farm Fresh Favorites Cooking Class participant cuts a vegetable.

sive to risk purchasing and wasting, is why Fresh Connect was started in 2017. Another cooking class is planned for the fall.

For information, visit bcoc.org/i-need-help-with/food-2/fresh-connect/.



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