**Catering Business Plan**

**Executive Summary**

Bright Future Youth and Family Services is a private nonprofit organization that serves more than 7,000 children, youth and families each year in Lane County, Oregon. We provide a continuum of services ranging from prevention to treatment for clients ranging in age from two to 24. Our agency also works closely with, and helps shape, the major systems that impact the young people and families in our community and state. You will find us involved in such diverse areas as mental health, juvenile justice, positive youth development, education, and work readiness.

The Chambers School and Career Center is one of ten tax-exempt nonprofit programs of Bright Future Youth and Family Services. Our mission is to assist at-risk youth in the Eugene/Springfield area in becoming productive citizens by providing a learning and work environment where they feel challenged, respected, and accountable as they strive to meet the demands of adulthood. We have a staff of approximately 250 employees and also utilize several volunteers each year who play a vital role in the organization. Bright Future prides itself on its diversity of funding sources that make for a fiscally strong organization. Agency revenues come from governmental contracts, charitable gifts, United Way funding, and fees for service.

Chambers School is proud to be the premier provider of at-risk youth alternative education and career assistance in Lane County, and seeks to make this experience even more valuable for its clients. This is done through a series of curricula funded by the Lane Workforce Partnership, Oregon Youth Conservation Corps, Oregon Department of Human Resources, and the local school districts. The most recent program we have developed is a culinary arts program in which students learn about food preparation and safe handling and then put this knowledge to use by preparing lunches for their peers at the Chambers School. After completing the 9-week curriculum, students are placed with a local food service business for a 60-hour practical training where they can continue to develop their skills. Currently, the culinary arts program is available to five students per 9-week school term, or approximately 25 students per year. Students enrolled in the program are selected because of their sincere interest in the culinary field and their excellent attendance.

After a successful first year of operating the culinary arts program, we are looking to expand the program further. By developing the program into a full day program of academics and culinary arts training, we can develop an entrepreneurial curriculum that will allow our students to gain an insight into the operation of a small business. Specifically, by launching a lunch box catering business (called the Catering For Kids), we could offer our students the opportunity to gain valuable work experience for which they can earn both school credit and a stipend, acquire entrepreneurial business skills and achieve a real sense of accomplishment. According to the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial training can help foster in students a sense of vision and personal responsibility for their future, creating a beneficial effect on self-esteem and outlook.

However, major challenges face Catering For Kids in the future. These include the need to:

Fund the program, including possible expansion of the existing commercial kitchen or lease of a larger kitchen off-campus.

Employ additional staff to teach the afternoon curriculum.

Purchase the additional food inventory required to launch the catering business.

The Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers of Bright Future continue to work toward providing a quality experience in the most effective and efficient manner possible with optimism for the future of this program.

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**1.1 Mission**

Catering For Kids is dedicated to providing at-risk youth with an opportunity to gain work experience and transferable skills by providing our customers with healthy, homemade foods and excellent service at reasonable prices. Employees of Catering For Kids will be students who are enrolled in the culinary arts program at the Chambers School and Career Center and are interested in gaining work experience in the restaurant and food services industry. The experiences the students have while participating in this program will assist them in making the transition from school to work and will allow them to develop entrepreneurial skills that will be transferable to any job in the future.

**1.2 Keys to Success**

Cultivate an identity (brand) for the Catering For Kids business in the Eugene/Springfield community.

Expand our customer base into new areas within Eugene/Springfield.

Hire a year-round business manager for the catering business, thereby providing student employment twelve months of the year.

Expand the donor/corporate partner base and corporate contributions that add to the financial resources of Chambers School's programs.

Provide students with entrepreneurial job skills that can open doors to future employment opportunities.

Acquire additional equipment to support future growth and offer greater flexibility, leading to expanded services offered by Catering For Kids that will further the goal of providing valuable work opportunities for homeless and at-risk youth.

**1.3 Objectives**

Enroll approximately 25 Chambers School students for stipend and school credit based positions in the next school year.

Serve a sufficient number of clients to break even financially, covering pay for student employees, staff and all inventory expenses.

Move from serving internal clients of Bright Future to external clients, especially other nonprofit organizations.

Develop an entrepreneurial curriculum for the culinary arts program and other students of Chambers School.