



CAREER Education

HCC announces healthy cooking series for new year

If you've made a New Year's resolution to eat healthier in 2024, Holyoke Community College might have just what you need.

The college is running a series of noncredit cooking classes this spring focused on diabetes but geared toward anyone interested in learning how to prepare healthier, more nutritious meals.

Classes in the "Nutrition for Diabetes" series run either on Tuesday or Wednesday nights beginning Feb. 7. All classes are held at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St., and taught by Marissa Chiapperino, a registered dietician and instructor in HCC's Culinary Arts program.

"Certain foods can lower your risk of heart disease and diabetes or help to manage it," Chiapperino said. "Making healthy adjustments to your daily meal plan does not have to be hard or boring. Oftentimes, adding in sources of healthy fats, whole grains, and high fiber fruits and vegetables can boost flavor and decrease the risk of chronic disease."

Each three-hour, stand-alone class will focus on a different theme. The first

hour will be an education session with Chiapperino, followed by a two-hour hands-on cooking activity after which participants can take home leftovers and recipes that align with the nutritional topic of the evening.

Wed., Feb. 7, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a carbohydrate?" (white bean egg shakshuka, breakfast casserole, overnight oats, vanilla bean pancakes, salmon toast)

Tues., March 5, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a protein?" (grilled skirt steak with chickpea salad, fideo, raspberry chicken, tahini-baked cod)

Wed., March 20, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a fat?" (smoothie bar, zucchini fritters, roasted chickpeas, cheesy egg souffles, Vietnamese spring rolls with peanut sauce)

Wed., April 17, 6-9 pm.: "How to read a food label" (grilled swordfish and pepper salad; chicken, lemon and olive bake; sweet potato berry muffins; easy breakfast salad; cheddar and herb savory overnight oats)

Tues., April 30, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a carbohydrate?" (desserts for diabetes:

chocolate date spread, oatmeal cookies, orange chamomile blondies, homemade popcorn four ways, caramelized spiced pears)

In addition, on Tues., April 2, from 6-9 p.m., Chiapperino will lead a similarly structured class on meal planning, "Building a balanced meal," featuring chilled avocado and cucumber mint soup, eggplant and lentil meatballs, chili-stuffed spaghetti squash, kale and fava bean salad, and grain-free granola.

"Making dietary changes can feel overwhelming," she said. "In this class, we will talk about how meal planning can make or break your ability to lead a more nourishing life with food. The concepts discussed will be suitable for those with many different health concerns and also those who just want to get more comfortable in the kitchen."

Chiapperino holds a bachelor of science degree in dietetics from the State University of New York at Oneonta and a masters of public health from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She specialized in medical nutrition therapy for critical care and oncology at West-



chester Medical Center in New York and was the first bariatric dietician at Holyoke Medical Center, where she helped build their nutrition program.

She is a past president of the Western Massachusetts Dietetic Association and currently serves as executive secretary.

Each session is \$84. For more information, or to register for classes, please go to hcc.edu/healthy-cooking