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# HoTrEd DC Academy

## Hospitality Training & Education DC Academy

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### Concept Overview / Proposal

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# Current Environment

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- DOC supportive of expanded programs, exploring interim steps to build momentum toward longer-term goal
- New CTF Annex – Construction of new facility within five years
- Numerous existing smaller-scale programs inside DC jail and in community, renewed attention on reentry
- Concerns over current Jail conditions, minimal programs
- Room for a “signature” workforce development initiative in longer-term that recognizes the real needs in the local economy



# The Why

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## **Region's largest business sector: the hospitality and service industry.**

- Can provide good careers for many returning citizens.
- The industry is desperate for staff as businesses reopen.
- Similar initiatives in Cleveland, Boston, and Dallas and elsewhere have succeeded.

## **DC is well-positioned to support a similar effort. It already has:**

- A robust restaurant and bar industry with one of the leading food scenes in the nation
- Socially active and aware chefs and hospitality entrepreneurs who support community initiatives
- A perennially active convention and benefit calendar
- A mature sports & entertainment industry with numerous major franchises (MLB, NBA, NHL, MLS)
- More hotels per square block than most other cities in the U.S.
- Numerous educational institutions with relevant curricula
- An affluent populace and massive visitor base that keeps the industry afloat
- Existing programs in the DC jail that serve as an excellent foundation for a more in-depth effort

Now is the time to plan for the day when DC's hospitality industry is back and stronger than ever.  
The Academy can be part of a new era of success and can be built into the new Annex.



# The What: Mission/Vision/Foundations

**Mission** – Strengthen the community and reduce recidivism by placing returning citizens into stable, well-paying hospitality jobs, working with employers and Academy partners.

**Vision** – The Academy will become a leading education and training provider for the hospitality industry in the Mid-Atlantic region, powered by motivated and well-trained returning citizens. It will build on existing training at the DC DOC, and work toward a singular purpose: graduates prepared for, and placed in, successful hospitality careers.

## Foundations

- **Program** – The Academy will serve five core functions of: 1) Training and Education; 2) Career Placement; 3) Community Service; 4) Entrepreneurship; and 5) Advocacy
- **Presence** – The Academy will consist of a constellation of programs and activities anchored by physical presences both within the Jail and in the community.
- **Partnerships** – Key partners will be central to the success of this enterprise. Each provides a necessary element of mentoring, employment, training, or education.
  - DC DOC and the DC Government, City Council
  - The University of the District of Columbia and other local Universities
  - A corporate hotel partner such as Marriott, ideal due to its local headquarters
  - Union Kitchen or DC Central Kitchen, which has an existing relationship with the DOC
  - The Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington (RAMW), and/or National Restaurant Association
  - The DC Convention Center; local sports franchises incl. Redskins, Wizards, Mystics, Nationals, Capitals, & DC United



# The What: The Academy, Initial Efforts

## The Foundation: The Academy

At the center of this plan is the Academy itself, notionally offering five main substantive specializations/curricula. Academy partners will devote assistance efforts to supporting the area most relevant to their strength, indicated below:

- 1) Food and Beverage (Partners: RAMW and Union/DC Central Kitchen, FareStart)
- 2) Banqueting and Event Management (Partner: DC Convention Center)
- 3) Sports and Entertainment (Partners: Local sports franchises)
- 4) Hotel and Guest Services (Partner: Marriott or hotel partner)
- 5) Technology and Hospitality Management (Partner: UDC)

## Core Function 1: Training and Education

- Hospitality training **both in classroom and experiential learning** using existing facilities at the DC Jail/in community. The Correctional Treatment Facility (CTF) has kitchen space for practical instruction and cells that could be outfitted as hotel rooms for training.
- Partners will provide **structured training modules in subject areas above**. Some may have appropriate modules available “off the shelf.” Upon release, inmates who require additional training beyond that provided in the Jail will be **matched with community partners for hands-on paid apprenticeships** or participate in short training programs at Academy facilities in DC.
- The Academy will be powered by a **close partnership with the UDC**, offering returning citizens with GED certificates the ability to continue on to 2-year or 4-year degree programs in hospitality management.



# The What: Initial Efforts, cont'd.

## **Core Function 2: Career Placement**

- A career placement office will match returning citizens with good local jobs. Area employers will compete to hire well-trained Academy graduates. Time spent incarcerated will be understood as a period of career readiness training.
- The DC Government can assist by augmenting federal bonding/subsidy programs incentivizing businesses to hire returned citizens.
- Partner organizations will become foundational employers for the Academy's graduates and will proselytize with other employers in the community regarding hiring. Partners will commit to recruiting, hiring, and training returned citizens from lower income and minority communities, extending current recruiting efforts beyond existing avenues.

**Two technology-focused partnerships can energize the Academy's career placement mission:**

### **Just-In-Time Hospitality Staffing**

- The Academy will partner with innovators in the hospitality staffing business like Qwick to facilitate just-in-time staffing for local banquets, functions, and food service establishments. A cadre of on-call, vetted, and Academy-trained staff will be available on short notice to augment staffing during rush periods/events. A partnership with a ride-hailing service willing to subsidize this innovative project will facilitate this

### **Re-employment Search**

- The Academy will partner with the tech sector (ideally, Monster, Indeed, or ConConnect) to pilot in the DC region a job search function for returned citizens that builds on the well-defined skill areas of many inmates. Google has successfully pioneered this idea for military veterans, matching Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) codes with available jobs.



# The What: Longer-Term Efforts

## **Core Function 3: Community Service**

- Partnerships built in 2020 to provide home meal delivery can serve as a foundation for the Academy to continue to serve the community. Underutilized kitchen capacity at the Jail can provide inmates a chance to get out of their cells and give back to the city. **Academy trainees will use Jail/Annex facilities to prepare and package healthy meals for low-income families in the DC area.** Meal preparation will be a critical component of hands-on training for Academy students specializing in food and beverage, and delivery can be a source of employment and income for returned graduates. It also provides a means for inmates and returnees to demonstrate their commitment to healing the community they may have injured.

## **Core Function 4: Entrepreneurship**

- The Academy will serve as a **small business incubator for inmate-owned/operated enterprises in the hospitality space**, providing seed capital, expertise, mentorship, training, and support. Inmates are resourceful and creative thinkers, and the Academy will help develop and support well-considered business proposals. The Academy will provide coursework for inmates on developing effective business plans and turning ideas into action. It will also facilitate access to legal, accounting, and other support services for inmate-owned startups, as necessary. Finally, the Academy will **match hospitality entrepreneurs with mentors from the local DC business community**.

## **Core Function 5: Advocacy**

- The Academy's **community locale will serve as a center for public outreach and awareness-building** on hospitality careers and countering recidivism, hosting community events in line with the Academy's mission and advocating for more humane criminal justice and food justice policies. Over time, the goal will be to open, staff, and maintain a full-service restaurant and community food bank. Attached to this enterprise will be a commercial kitchen (in partnership with Union/DC Central Kitchen) to facilitate entrepreneurship, training events, and the home meal delivery service described above. Profits will be reinvested in community-based re-entry programs.

# The How

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## Operational Considerations

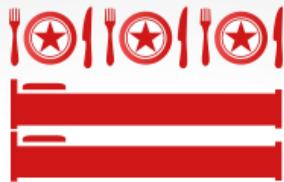
- Form partnerships with innovative existing programs in the hospitality/anti-recidivism space – Edwin’s in Cleveland, Cafe Momentum in Dallas, and the Rikers Coffee Academy in New York – to learn valuable lessons and adapt the best ideas to the DC community’s needs.
- Seat a Board of Trustees to steer the direction of the organization over the long term. The Board will be composed of prominent local business and community leaders, and representatives of Partner organizations. The Executive Director of the Academy will report to the Board regularly.
- Build on several existing initiatives already in place within the DC DOC. The Guest Services certificate program previously run with UDC, the Mayor’s Project Empowerment re-entry program, Lead Up/Lead Out – all offer useful existing activities to build on.
- Use CTF “D” building existing commercial kitchen facilities with excess capacity in the short term. When the new Annex facility is planned, the infrastructure needs of the Academy should be accounted for. The Academy will work with DOC to identify facilities requirements for long-term viability.
- Headquarter inside the DC Jail’s Correctional Treatment Facility (CTF) in the short term; relocate to the Annex when viable.
- Work hand in hand with DOC to ensure security needs are met. Three-six Academy staff will augment existing personnel.
- Raise/provide dedicated funds to meet any requisite security, facilities, and staffing costs the DOC deems necessary to Academy operations. The DOC Director or designee will also have an elevated role on the Board and in the Academy’s direction.
- Operate as nonprofit entity.



# Next Steps

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- Discussions with DOC Leadership
- Discussions with Potential Partners (with DOC & City Council Support)
  - DC Central Kitchen, UDC, NRAEF
- Initial steps to build momentum
  1. Hospitality Career Day at Jail/CTF (2 hours in am [CTF], 2 hours in pm [CDF])
  2. “8 Evenings” – mini courses on relevant topics (2 hours each)
  3. Explore existing short courses that can be offered in person/virtually
  4. Survey of existing programs lessons learned (Cleveland, Dallas, Boston)
- Incorporation into formal planning for Annex
- Funding



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# Questions?

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