

**140 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM MISSOURI COMPETE FOR SPOT IN  
NATIONAL PROSTART INVITATIONAL AND MORE THAN \$500,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS**  
*Missouri to Hold Culinary and Management Competition in Springfield on February 21, 2014*

**Springfield, Mo. – February 14, 2014** Missouri will host its annual state [ProStart](#) Invitational in Springfield, Missouri, on February 21, 2014. The state competition will be held at the Ramada Plaza Hotel and Oasis Convention Center. More than 140 top ProStart students from across the state will demonstrate their mastery of restaurant leadership skills — culinary and management — in a fast-paced competition to win their share of \$528,000 in scholarships. The first-place team in each category will be crowned the state champions and represent Missouri in May 2014 at the National ProStart Invitational, the country's premier high school competition focused on restaurant management and culinary arts.

"Each year, ProStart students from across Missouri have the unique opportunity to compete for top honors and a chance to represent not only their school, but also the entire state, at the National ProStart Invitational," said Bob Bonney, CEO of Missouri Restaurant Association. "The state ProStart competitions are the culmination of students' hard work and a chance to showcase what they've learned, while competing for scholarships to help support them in their continuing education."

The culinary competition highlights the creative abilities of each team as they prepare a three-course meal in 60 minutes, using only two butane burners with no access to running water or electricity. Teams are evaluated on taste, teamwork, safety and sanitation, among other skills. Management teams develop a business proposal for an original restaurant concept and present it to a panel of industry judges, who challenge them to address the issues restaurant managers face on a daily basis.

In the 2013-2014 academic year, the Missouri Restaurant Association in partnership with Family Consumer Sciences and Human Services at the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is working with 100 high schools across the state to introduce 5,500 students to career opportunities in the restaurant industry through the ProStart program. ProStart teaches the culinary and management skills required by the nation's restaurant, hospitality and foodservice employers. With total restaurant and foodservice employment projected to grow by 11 percent over the next 10 years, Missouri Restaurant Association is committed to ensuring the development of a highly-trained and professional talent pool through scholarships and educational programs.

For more information on ProStart, contact: Phil Dreshfield, Missouri ProStart Coordinator, at (417) 315-3723, or Leone Herring, Supervisor, Family Consumer Sciences and Human Services Education, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, at (573) 751-7965.

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