Student nutrition programs have many names. That’s one of them right there. SNP’s for people who like short forms. Some schools or community groups have their own names like the North Hamilton Community Health Centre’s Children’s Breakfast Club. Others are associated with the program the food is served at such as the Wave After School Program at Cathy Weyer school.

This led to much confusion for potential donors to the overall partnership that coordinates these programs, the former Hamilton Partners in Nutrition (HPIN). Even as our staff visited programs across the city it had become clear that HPIN was generally an unknown entity, both inside the programs and to the outsiders wanting to help.

So the advisory group that oversees the delivery of these programs took a brave step and ventured into the branding world. After the selection process, Double Barrel Studios took the lead in coordinating three creative agencies that would result in a new name, brand, video and website.

Kitestring Creative Branding took on the naming part. They led a comprehensive conversation about who we were, what we were doing, and where we wanted to go as related to the facilitation of universal student nutrition programs in Hamilton. After three months they unveiled our new name and look and we were impressed!

Next came the video shot at Lococo’s, our long time food delivery partner. With Diana Francis, a Canadian comedian who performs on CBC radio and television, and Molly Turcotte (pictured above), a local budding actor who responded to Double Barrel’s audition call, the mom and daughter duo made a fabulous video with Tastebuds’ new tag line, “Sprouting Healthy Relationships with Food”. Finally, our website, www.tastebudshamilton.ca, was put together by BraveNewCode, a cutting edge web design company. The site supports our video and offers loads of information as well as place to donate online.

Since our rebranding, Tastebuds has received increased attention and donations that are used to support the feeding of over 25,000 students across this great city. The increase in donations easily paid for the rebranding which was done partially with in-kind time from Double Barrel and their partners. Our video plays on Cable 14 and online donations to our website continue to grow.

The most important part is that students now have a name they can relate to for the programs and we will continue to grow that recognition. This year we are rolling out plaques identifying Tastebuds’ partnering schools and programs as well as other swag for volunteer appreciation events. Tastebuds, Hamilton’s Student Nutrition Collaborative, is a branding success!
By Lexi Van Harten, Community Development Worker, North Hamilton Community Health Centre

The North Hamilton Community Health Centre (NHCHC) is proud to be part of Tastebuds, Hamilton’s Student Nutrition Collaborative. For the past 18 years, NHCHC has been working with the North End community to meet the nutritional needs of students who attend Bennetto Elementary School and St. Lawrence Catholic Elementary School by providing Breakfast Program every weekday morning before school. In recent years, they have also seen a boom in the home school community in the North End and have been welcoming these learners to the program as well.

The NHCHC program typically serves over 10,000 meals each year to local students, and one of the things that makes NHCHC most proud of their program is that it enables all children in the community to share a meal together each day, regardless of the school the child attends. The program also encourages the parents and younger siblings of the school children to come to the program as well. This means that whole families can enjoy a meal together before dispersing for the busy day ahead.

Each day, six wonderful volunteers begin arriving at 7:00 a.m. to set up the hall and prepare the food. Students begin arriving at 7:30 a.m. to help cook the breakfast, make coffee for the volunteers and begin serving other students and families as they arrive. In addition to serving both a hot and cold nutritional breakfast, the NHCHC program is also able to provide homework help, games and crafts, and provides North End families with free childcare before school so that parents can leave for work feeling confident that their children will have their nutritional, social, and educational needs met... and will arrive at school on time! Children who attend the program without a lunch can also pick one up as they head out the door!

This community based program is the result of a collaboration of many organizations in the neighbourhood, including: St. Lawrence Catholic Elementary School, Bennetto Elementary School, Hughson Street Baptist Church, St. Luke’s Anglican Church, Jamesville Community Development Team, and many community members who volunteer their time. Outside of the North End, the program has a wide variety of partnerships which help to fund and sustain the program. Besides the financial support from Tastebuds, the NHCHC program is a grateful recipient of a donation each year from George R. Allan School in Westdale. They are grateful for each dollar and donated item of food they receive and have 18 years of experience stretching every penny as far as humanly possible.

Finally, the thing the NHCHC Breakfast Program is most proud of are the relationships built at the program. Not only do volunteers provide an incredible level of support for students, but most notably, the students’ care and look out for each other.

If you have any questions about the NHCHC program, or would like to arrange to visit, please contact Lexi Van Harten by phone at (905) 523-6611, Ext. 3007 or by email at vanharten@nhchc.ca
By Grace Evans, Community Development Worker – 3Acres

Do you know what kohlrabi is? Better yet, have you ever tasted it? Kohlrabi is a spherical vegetable from the Brassica family. Its name translates to “cabbage turnip” from German, although it is also known as knolkhel or nookel in Indian cuisine where it is commonly used. It is a green or purple bulb, with long woody stems, green leaves and white flesh. When eaten raw it tastes like a sweeter, juicier turnip or broccoli stem, and it can also roasted, or made into soups. It is rich source of vitamin C – it contains even more than oranges!

Students in Hamilton have been eating kohlrabi and learning its name as a part of 3Acres, Tastebud’s Local Harvest Program. The pilot ran for 12 weeks this fall and provided seven student nutrition programs with access to fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables from five local farms. The food was delivered weekly by bike by The Hammer Active Alternative Transportation Co-op riders (THAAT), modeling sustainability and active lifestyles. Programs could order kohlrabi, carrots and cut greens from ManoRun Farm, located just 17 km away from downtown Hamilton.

The name ‘3Acres’ emphasizes the three-way relationship being developed between local farms, student eaters, and Tastebuds. We are lucky to live in such a lush, agricultural center in Hamilton. Fostering a connection between student eaters and local producers provides important opportunities for food education, where children can better understand how their food choices impact their bodies, health and the community. All these experiences provide the framework that motivates children toward healthier eating habits that last a lifetime. For more information about 3Acres, Tastebuds’ Local Harvest Program please contact Grace Evans by phone at (905) 522-1148, Ext. 315 or by email at gevans@tastebudshamilton.ca

**Partnership is the Key to Success!**

These days we hear a lot about the 3Ps – Public-Private Partnership. All levels of government talk about the need for the private sector to step up and assist in meeting its goals. The same holds true for Tastebuds, Hamilton’s Student Nutrition Collaborative. Our partners are numerous and they all provide different levels of support and not always through financial means.

This month we want to highlight Lococo’s, a local grocer with two locations in Hamilton and one in Niagara Falls. Barry Lanteigne, Lococo’s general manager, took the first step in the development of Tastebuds’ Centralized Food Purchasing Program over five years ago when he offered to deliver food right to the doors of the schools! We started off with only a few programs willing to try out something new and now we have almost a quarter of our programs receiving some or all of their food through this system.

Barry was open enough to also allow for other local food producers to have their food delivered through Lococo’s so programs also have access to eggs from Burnbrae Farms, English muffins and bagels from Oakrun Bakery, and cheese wiggles from Salerno Dairy (another partnership story for another issue!). While there is no delivery charge, there is a minimum order of $100. Programs get an added bonus each fall when they receive a credit for 3% of their previous year’s orders! Partnership is a wonderful thing!

**A Few of Our Amazing Partners:** Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton | Ministry of Children and Youth Services | Haldimand-Norfolk REACH | Egg Farmers of Ontario | Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board | Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board | Hamilton Public Health Services | Breakfast Club of Canada | Breakfast for Learning | Cloverleaf Family Foundation | Tiger-cats Football | Lococo’s | Hamilton Community Foundation | St. Matthew’s House | ArcelorMittal | Environment Hamilton | First Ontario Credit Union | Union Gas | Community Action Program for Children | Salerno | Oakrun Farm Bakery | Burnbrae Farms | Hamilton FoodShare | Mohawk College | McMaster University
A Rose By Any Other Name...
By Jean-Anne Bauman, Community Development Worker, Tastebuds

VOLUNTEER: Rose Chiasson
PROGRAM: Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Elementary School
HOMETOWN: Hamilton, Ontario
FUN FACTS: - Ticats season ticket holder for 18 years
- Younger students have a hard time pronouncing her name.
  Many versions have included Mrs. Chestnut and Mrs. Chainsaw

I arrive at Holy Name of Jesus School early to help set up for the breakfast program. I enter the community room to find Rose Chiasson, the school’s breakfast program coordinator. Rose and the well-organized team are very quick with little left to set up. In less than thirty minutes, about 90 students enjoy apples, oranges, grapes, cereal, milk and yogurt before heading off to class at the school, affectionately abbreviated to HNOJ.

Rose has been volunteering at HNOJ for 27 years. She started by helping in junior kindergarten classes when her children attended HNOJ. When a breakfast club started 12 years ago, Rose helped out by volunteering. When the original coordinator moved on she stepped in to be the point person, something she’s been doing now for the last 10 years. Rose continues to help in other capacities at the school, including school council and lunch room monitor.

Rose is known for her dedication. Rose does errands on foot, hauling back groceries in her own grocery cart. She logs about six kilometres of walking a day between breakfast club, breakfast shopping, and lunch duty. She did this even when at their school’s temporary location, an additional 1.5 kilometres away. Commitment shows in the dedication of her husband Greg as well, the IT support for Rose when she does email and reports at home. Rose is loved at HNOJ for her ‘can-do’ attitude and positive spirit. In the hearts and minds of people at HNOJ, Rose is a true blessing. Rose does more than organize breakfast, she feeds the soul.

The Importance of Family Meals
By Janice Stewart RD, Public Health Dietitian, Healthy Living Division, City of Hamilton, Public Health Services

Children who are involved in preparing family meals are more likely to try new foods, have better eating habits, and have more confidence in the kitchen. What better way to help your kids develop basic food skills, than to invite them to help you cook once or twice a week. Lentils are a part of the Meat and Alternatives food group in Canada’s Food Guide. One Food Guide serving of lentils is ¾ cup (175 mL) cooked. Replacing meat in the spaghetti sauce with puréed lentils adds fibre to the dish and saves money. For more ideas on family friendly recipes, and tips to get your children more involved in the kitchen, visit http://www.familykitchen.ca. Here’s a simple recipe for Lentil Spaghetti Sauce that the family could work on together courtesy of the Dietitians of Canada.

INGREDIENTS:
1 large onion, chopped fine • 1 large celery stalk, chopped • 2 garlic cloves, chopped • 1 tbsp. vegetable oil • 1 cup dried red lentils, washed • 2 cups vegetable broth or water • 1 can (156 ml) tomato paste • ¼ cup water • 2 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley • ½ tsp. dried oregano • ½ tsp salt • Pinch of cayenne pepper (optional) • Grated parmesan cheese to garnish • Cooked whole wheat spaghetti or fettuccini

INSTRUCTIONS:
1. In large saucepan with a lid, heat pan to medium-high heat. Add oil and heat about 30 seconds.
2. Add onion, celery and garlic to hot oil and cook for about 5 minutes or until tender and fragrant.
3. Add lentils and broth. Cover and cook on low (simmer) about 30 minutes or until lentils are tender.
4. Add tomato paste, water, and seasonings. Cook covered for another 15 minutes or until lentils are soft and mushy.
5. Serve over cooked spaghetti; sprinkle with cheese. Makes 4-6 servings.