



TOCA Teens Cook Up Change

From the President



WENDY WHEELER, President,
Innovation Center for Community
and Youth Development

Three teen chefs from [Tohono O'odham Community Action \(TOCA\)](#), an [Innovation Center](#) partner in Sells, Arizona, have won this year's national [Cooking Up Change](#) competition. Yvette Ventura, Zade Arnold, and Ross Miguel, all members of the Tohono O'odham Nation, along with their adult mentor, Mary Paganelli, chef at the [Desert Rain Cafe](#), used traditional O'odham ingredients to create a healthy school lunch.

The TOCA team wowed the judges with their food. The team served quesadillas - made from handmade, whole wheat flour tortillas and stuffed with slow-cooked tepary beans, chicken, spinach, salsa, and mozzarella - spinach and pear salad with carrot vinaigrette, and a yogurt and peanut butter fruit dip for dessert.

The inspiration for the menu was, according to Ms. Paganelli, "the boring school lunches we all ate throughout high school. In school we were served bland quesadillas with no exciting flavors or textures. So we chefs decided to jazz up the quesadillas with a couple of funky twists."

One funky twist was the tepary bean, a bean native to the Southwestern United States and used in many traditional Tohono O'odham foods. Said one contest judge in an interview with [CookingTeens.com](#), "I'm biting into this quesadilla and there was something that exploded on my palate. A bean with a rich, deep taste. It was amazing."

As part of their work with TOCA, the chefs are promoting healthy and traditional eating within the Tohono O'odham community. "It's not only creating a healthy meal," one of the TOCA chefs told interviewers. "It's creating a healthy community. It's our traditional way to be healthy and we need to get back to that with our traditional foods." The chefs are also working to integrate traditional Tohono O'odham foods into lunches served at schools in their local school district, the Indian Oasis Baboquivari School District.

Learn more about the [Cooking Up Change](#) competition, sponsored by the Healthy Schools Campaign and the National Farm to School Network. Learn more about TOCA, a partner in the Innovation Center's [Collective Leadership Works](#) initiative.

Activity of the Month: Hosting a Community Dinner

The TOCA team's work honors, among many things, the power food has to bring people in a community together. Whether or not you serve a homemade, gourmet meal or order pizza delivery, hosting a community dinner is a great way to celebrate your community change team - their individual talents, their plans for future work, or the successes they've created. This activity, from the Innovation Center's [Collective Leadership Works](#) toolkit, includes tips for hosting a successful community dinner. [Go to the activity...](#)

Meet an IC Board Member: Roger Curry



Innovation Center Board of Directors Member and Treasurer, Roger Curry, is, in a word, humble. Of course there's much more to Roger than a single word - as the board's oldest member and a true captain of industry, he comes to the work with a lifetime of experiences. Nevertheless, during a recent conversation, his sincere humility resonated soundly in his every story and comment. He is a man who puts others first.

Roger Curry came the way of the IC by, as he sometimes says, "internet dating." As he tells it: "I was prowling around on the Internet one day and saw there was an opportunity [with the Board of Directors], so Wendy [Wheeler, President and CEO of the IC] and I met at a coffee shop in downtown Saratoga, California. The chemistry was right." It's been a perfect match. [Read more...](#)



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