

# Mt. Diablo High School - Sustainable Hospitality Pathway - Model Program

## The Sustainable Hospitality Pathway

The Sustainable Hospitality Pathway is a Career Technical Education program for students in the International Hospitality & Tourism Academy (IHTA) at Mount Diablo High School (MDHS) in Concord CA. Students pursue a rigorous curriculum focusing on growing, cooking and serving healthy, sustainable meals; students also study eco-tourism, agri-tourism, outdoor recreation, and "greening traditional tourism". Sustainable Hospitality students take a sequence of classes which prepare them for the knife skills and menu planning necessary to cook healthy meals for themselves and students and teachers in the Pathway (serving more than 50 plates/day). Students also study Environmental Science and Sustainable Tourism, culminating with a professional internship in their senior year where they work with local businesses, non-profits and public agency partners -- such as the National Park Service (John Muir Unit), MDUSD Food Services, and Wellness City Challenge.

Some students participate in the Sustainable Hospitality summer program and after-school program in which they learn to cultivate organic produce on campus for use in the healthy food service program on campus. Patrick Oliver is the Science Teacher in the Pathway. He was a CSA and certified organic market farmer for many years. The kitchen gardens at MDHS are roughly .25 acres; the beds are approximately 3 feet wide by 40 feet long. There are over 40 of them. In addition, there are 3 parcels totaling more than 2 acres that are in the process of being developed into productive farm fields, orchards, and outdoor classroom.



### It Takes a Community

**Sustainable Hospitality Pathway is Linked with Key Community-Based Initiatives**  
Creating healthy communities requires community-based strategies and support from a broad array of funders, advocates, policy experts, health practitioners, educators, students, and community residents. Partnership and collaboration are critical factors in driving positive change in community environments by bringing together multiple sectors that work together to create integrated approaches to lasting positive change.

#### Key Initiatives Linked to the Sustainable Hospitality Program

- Kaiser Permanente Healthy Eating / Active Living
- The Monument HEAL Zone Collaboration
- (2014 The East Bay Leadership Council's Philanthropic – Outstanding Collaborative Project)
- Cooking Matters
- CYC – Foster Youth Association
- America Heart Association 2020 Task Force
- (Taskforce on Govt. Policy & Regulation / Heart Disease 2020)



### SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS!

Both Jessica and Chris exemplify our program! Jessica graduated in Spring 2014 and now attends UC Davis. Chris says the program has changed how he views food and has positively effected his school and sports performance!

Organizational Framework					
Mt. Diablo Unified School District					
MT. DIABLO HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIES					
WORLD	ACME	INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY & TOURISM ACADEMY (IHTA)	MBTA	DSA	
IHTA PATHWAYS					
Culinary Arts			Sustainable Hospitality		
SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY TRACKS					
Environmental Science & Sustainable Tourism			Food, Nutrition & Sustainable Business		
SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY TEACHERS					
Patrick Oliver			Chef Cindy Gershen		
SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY CURRICULUM					
Intro to Sust. Hospitality	Environmental Science	Sustainable Tourism	Intro to Sust. Hospitality	Culinary Arts & Wellness	Business of Sust. Hosp.
TEACHING ENVIRONMENT Environmental Science Classroom + Production Garden			TEACHING ENVIRONMENT Kitchen Classroom + 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Learning Cafe		
SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY STUDENTS = 120					

## Vision Statement

Together our students/faculty, local businesses, agencies/non-profit organizations and colleges/universities will create solutions to meet the economic and ecological challenges facing the Hospitality & Tourism Industry in the 21st century.

## Mission Statement

The Sustainable Hospitality Pathway invites students to explore new career opportunities through the lens of sustainability and health/nutrition. The Sustainable Hospitality Pathway, a rigorous, relevant and innovative career-technical-education program, will prepare Mount Diablo High School students in the growing fields of healthy food service, nutrition & cooking, agri-tourism, eco-tourism, outdoor recreation and greening traditional tourism.

## Mt. Diablo High School Academies

Mount Diablo High School is a wall-to-wall academy school. We have five academies: ACME (Architecture, Construction, Manufacturing, and Engineering), DSA (Digital Safari), IHTA (International Hospitality and Tourism Academy), MBTA (Medical Bio-Technical Academy), and World Academy. All of our academies provide academic and workplace rigor in order to prepare our students for high-skill, high-wage, high-demand careers and to be successful citizens in the 21st Century.



## Sustainable Hospitality Pathway Partners

- American Heart Association 2020 Task Force
- Bay Area Wilderness Training
- Contra Costa Food System Alliance
- CYC – Foster Youth Association
- East Bay Regional Parks
- Garaventa Enterprises
- Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County
- John Muir Health
- Kaiser Permanente
- Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa
- Monument Impact HEAL Zone
- National Park Service
- PGE Food Service Technology Center
- Republic Services
- Saint Mary's College
- Sierra Club
- Sustainable Contra Costa
- The Concord Hilton
- The Institute for Responsible Nutrition
- Wellness City Challenge



## Wellness City Challenge (WCC) [wellnesscitychallenge.org](http://wellnesscitychallenge.org)

The WCC mission is to mobilize community resources, empower citizens, and improve health through nutrition, education and physical activity. WCC supports the Sustainable Hospitality program as a model program that has potential to be scaled and replicated.

## Key Stats on the Mt. Diablo High School

Student Population: **1372**  
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged: **78.8%**  
English Learners: **41.3%**  
**Ethnicities:** Hispanic/Latino (58.2%), White (16.3%), African American (9.4%), Filipino (6.3%), Asian (4.9%), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (2.2%), Two or more races (1.5%), American Indian/Alaskan Native (0.7%)

## Sustainable Tourism:

Students in the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade science classes learn about careers in outdoor recreation and eco-tourism opportunities by: kayaking with East Bay Regional Parks, backpacking with the Bay Area Wilderness Training, camping with the Sierra Club in Mount Diablo State Park and elsewhere, sailing and rock climbing with the Youth Empowerment Institute, and studying lodging in Yosemite National Park with Delaware North Inc.

## Internships in Sustainable Tourism:

12<sup>th</sup> grade Sustainable Hospitality Pathway students partner with local non-profits, public agencies, and local businesses in a spring internship where students learn about college and career readiness through meaningful and practical work off campus. Local partners include: National Park Service (John Muir Unit), East Bay Regional Parks, MDUSD Food & Nutrition Services, Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, City of Concord Parks & Recreation, Bay Area Wilderness Training, and many more.

## The Kitchen Classroom:

The Kitchen Classroom is where students learn the basics of healthy cooking, preparing meals using only whole, real ingredients. Chef Cindy Gershen operates the kitchen classroom infusing nutrition education with culinary arts to give students a holistic view of food. Students use produce picked from our on-campus garden and learn everything from how to chop an onion to making kale chips to roasting a chicken. By the time students graduate, they can cook a variety of healthy meals for themselves and their families along with understanding the science of food.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Café:

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Café will be an incubator for new learning methodologies in the food and agriculture industry that can be scalable/replicated. Concepts that will be taught utilizing a STEM approach will include youth entrepreneurship and career readiness/sustainability as well as how to make systemic change to the food eco-system with a focus on food access via a collective/collaborative approach beginning at the local level.

**The Garden Program:** The Garden is also considered our "outdoor" classroom as the students spend time each week tending to the vegetables, fruits, flowers and herbs we produce year round. From turning the soil, planting the seeds, weeding to harvesting, students are learning where their food comes from and how it is grown. Produce grown is used in our kitchen classroom.



## Key support for documenting and framing the Sustainable Hospitality Model provided by the Institute for Responsible Nutrition

The Institute for Responsible Nutrition (IRN) was founded by Dr. Robert Lustig in 2013 to reverse the pandemic of childhood obesity and Type 2 diabetes. A strategy of the IRN is to find and document best practices and model programs that create food system change. Programs such as the Sustainable Hospitality Pathway model at Mt. Diablo High School offer great potential because they can be scaled and replicated, and include a range of components that are attainable and sustainable, even in low-income communities.

## The Alarming Reality of Childhood Obesity

- The health consequences are serious and long term.
  - Overweight children are at risk for high blood pressure, high cholesterol and type II diabetes-diseases once seen predominantly in adults.
  - It's estimated that up to 70% of overweight school children will remain overweight into adulthood.
  - Overweight or obese individuals are more likely to be depressed and suffer from chronic diseases.
  - African American and Hispanic/Latino children, ages 5 to 19, are more likely to be overweight or obese than white and Asian children.
  - The economic impact of this health crisis is equally dire; overweight children are more likely to become obese adults. Adult obesity costs the State of California taxpayers \$25 billion each year.
- Source: Contra Costa County Health Services – Community Wellness & Prevention Program

## Contra Costa County – More Than One Third of Children are Obese

Childhood obesity continues to be a growing problem in Contra Costa and the majority of counties in the state. The number of school-age children who are overweight or obese in Contra Costa rose by 3.5 percentage points to an *alarming overall 33.85 percent between 2005 and 2010*, according to the statewide study by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research and the California Center for Public Health Advocacy (CCPHA).



### Patrick Oliver

Past Organic Farmer and now science teacher at Mt. Diablo High School, Patrick has helped pave the way for the Sustainable Hospitality Pathway. His passion and knowledge around sustainability, the environment and especially the outdoors make him a perfect fit and partner in this program. In addition to teaching, Patrick also runs the after-school garden program that produces fresh, seasonal food that is used in the kitchen and taken home by students.



### Cindy Gershen

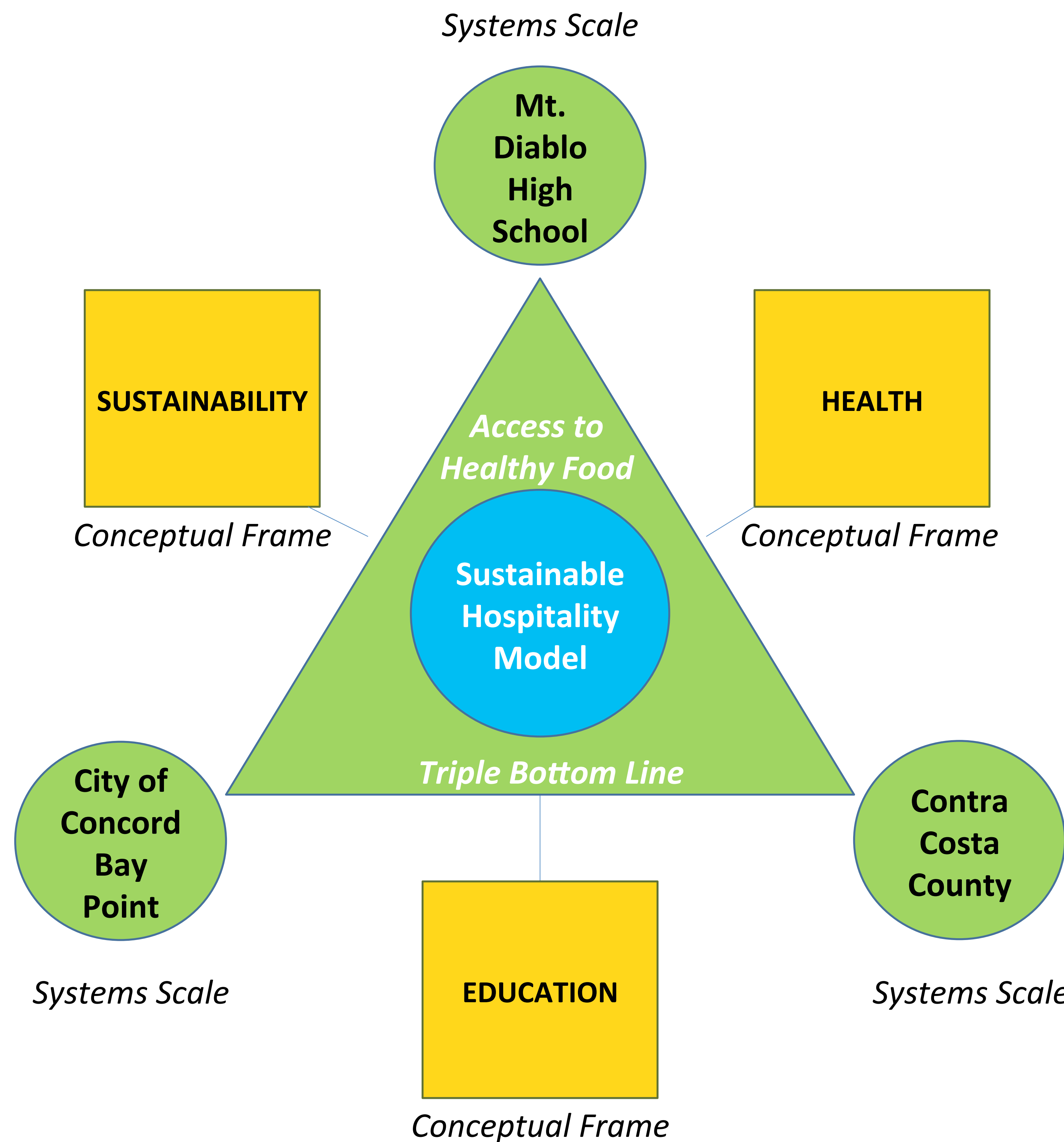
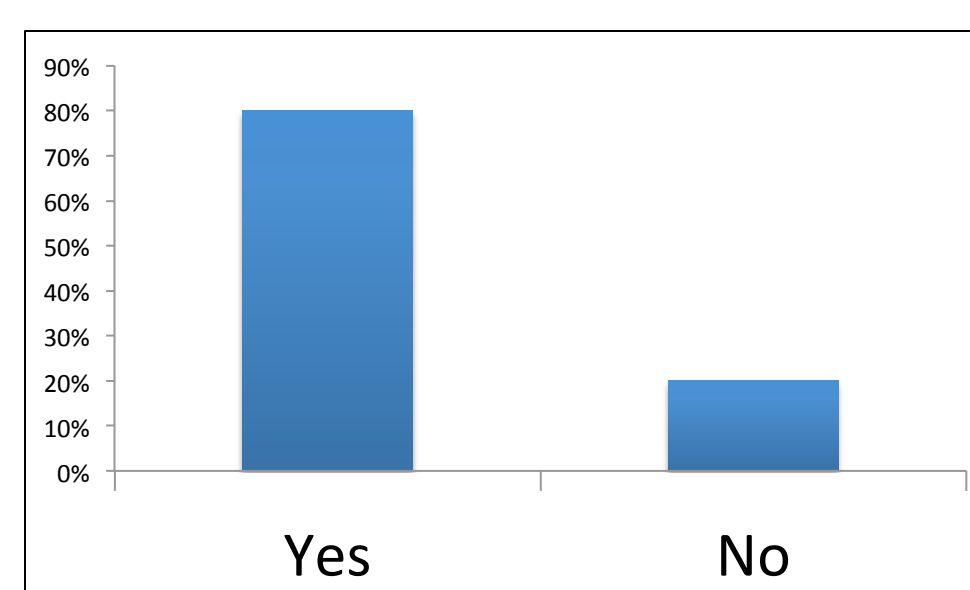
Chef Cindy Gershen is passionate about food. She's also passionate about health. She wants to help people understand how the "industrial American diet" is making us fat and making us sick. She has become a nationally-known advocate for a healthier diet. She owns Sunrise Bistro & Catering restaurant in Walnut Creek, CA and recently became the Chef Instructor for the Sustainable Hospitality Pathway where she has changed hundreds of students lives through her knowledge and skills with food.

## SURVEY AT MT. DIABLO HIGH SCHOOL

Revealed the following:

- Students in the Sustainable Hospitality (SH) program are **6%** more likely to cook at home than non-program students and are **13%** more likely to have some control over their diets
- 85 %** of students in the SH program believe **what they eat has an impact on their lives**
- 96%** of students in the SH program **care about what they eat** at least sometimes
- Over half** of SH program students want to change how they eat
- Most students, both in the program and out, obtain **the majority of their food from home** over school or fast food

## STUDENTS WHO KNOW SOMEONE WITH A CHRONIC DIET-RELATED DISEASE



Mount Diablo High School  
2450 Grant Street  
Concord, CA 94520  
International Hospitality & Tourism Academy/Sustainable Hospitality Pathway  
Program Type: Garden Classrooms, Kitchen Classrooms, Academic Classrooms  
Grade/Age: High School  
Number Served: 120  
Year Founded: 2012

### The Project Team for assembling this poster exhibit include:

Wolfram Alderson (IRN Founding Executive Director), Cindy Gershen (Teacher/Wellness City Challenge Founder), Patrick Oliver (Teacher), Kristin Zellhart (Wellness City Challenge Education Program Manager), Pamela Singh (Wellness City Challenge Executive Director), and the students of the MDHS Sustainable Hospitality Pathway