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## **GRADUATION CEREMONY CELEBRATES FIRST IN2WORK COHORT AT JONATHAN DELAGRAVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT & CARE CENTER**

**CALEDONIA**—A graduation ceremony was held yesterday at the Jonathan Delagrave Youth Development & Care Center (JDYDCC) to celebrate three youth who earned their ServSafe Food Handler Certification after completing a six-week IN2WORK class.

IN2WORK is a national workforce development program created by Aramark to provide food service training and industry-recognized certifications to individuals impacted by the justice system. JDYDCC recently partnered with Aramark, the facility's food service provider, to bring the program to Racine County for the first time.

Over six weeks, participants received focused training in food safety and prepared for the ServSafe Food Handler Certification exam through the National Restaurant Association. All three youth successfully passed, earning a credential they can add to their resume and carry into future employment opportunities.

"This certification reflects hard work and follow-through," said County Executive Ralph Malicki. "These youth committed to a six-week program, earned a nationally recognized credential, and proved to themselves what they are capable of achieving. Racine County will continue investing in programs that strengthen confidence and open doors to opportunity."

The IN2WORK certification builds on culinary skills already developed through JDYDCC's existing RISE=UP program. Through RISE=UP, youth gain hands-on kitchen experience and have prepared a variety of dishes, including chicken & waffles, quesadillas, grilled cheese sandwiches, pickles, cookies, and brownies.

Together, these programs create a clear pathway by combining practical culinary experience with an industry-recognized certification that supports workforce readiness and expands future opportunities.

IN2WORK graduates are eligible to apply for the IN2WORK Scholarship, offered exclusively to program participants. Graduates may apply once per year for up to four years, with each award providing \$2,500 paid directly to an accredited institution—including community colleges, four-year universities, vocational schools, and trade programs. Graduates can also receive support from a Workforce Development Manager, who assists with education and employment opportunities once individuals return home and are ready to begin their next steps toward training or a career.

"Our goal is to help youth see what they are capable of accomplishing," said Amberlyn Yohn, Administrator of Youth Rehabilitative Services. "When they complete a program and earn a

certification, it helps them recognize their ability to grow, take responsibility, and move forward with confidence.”

“We have continued to invest and drive innovation around IN2WORK because we have a genuine interest in helping former offenders’ transition back into society, and know the program works,” said Tim Barttrum, President of Aramark’s Correctional Services group. “By offering a full suite of solutions, our goal is to fulfill the need to educate, train, and encourage graduates to continue their development once they’ve been released. We consistently see results with those who implement the program including increased self-worth, esteem, and morale – factors that have been proven to promote a safer environment and more positive outcomes for our graduates.”

Due to privacy protections, youth were not photographed or identified; however, family members, caseworkers, program partners, and County leadership attended the ceremony to celebrate this milestone.

Photos from the ceremony are included with this release.

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