

Local restaurants dish out summer job opportunities

Available positions include openings for waiters, bartenders, dishwashers and others

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Staff Writer

Local restaurants serving everything from fast food to fine French cuisine offer a wealth of job opportunities for students who will be remaining in the area this summer.

Local restaurants employ students in a range of capacities — from dishwashing or busing tables to the more sought-after jobs waiting tables or bartending.

Waiters and bartenders usually make more money than some of the other employees, but these jobs can be the most difficult to get because students tend to keep them and work through the summer, said Michael Mezei, a senior from Mt. Holly, N.J. "There is a little bit of a hierarchy about the jobs in restaurants."

Mezei has worked at several local restaurants, including Ham's and La Residence. During the summer he worked approximately four shifts, or 25 to 30 hours per week.

"Most of the jobs are only part-time, so I don't think anyone should expect to make a ton of money," he said.

Working part-time has its advantages. Mezei said he was able to take two summer school classes in addition to his job and still have free time during the days.

"I prefer to work during the evenings so I can have my days free, so I work some strange hours sometimes," he said.

In general, working at a restaurant is a good way to earn money and is fairly enjoyable, Mezei said. "Some jobs you like, some you don't. It depends on the people you work with."

Many local restaurants experience a decrease in business during the summer, but most will have at least a few openings available because of graduating seniors or other student-employees who go home for vacation. Crook's Corner attracts a "town

crowd" and does the major part of its business when the University is closed, said Manager Bill Neal.

"We do most of our business from April to October," he said. "We are probably the only restaurant in town who increases their business in the summer."

On April 10, the restaurant's patio will open and the restaurant will double in size, Neal said.

The restaurant will hire people to work as cooks, bartenders and in other capacities, and students are eligible to apply for any of the jobs, he said.

Students make up fewer than half of the employees at Crook's Corner and there are no allowances made for the academic calendar, Neal said.

But some students stay on even after graduation, he said. "There is very little turnover here. Most people keep their jobs if they can."

Waiters and waitresses at Crook's Corner receive a base pay of \$2.35 per hour and can make excellent tips, Neal said. Bartenders and busboys are paid \$3.50 per hour, and bartenders also receive tips.

"This is one of the few places you can really make money," he said.

Almost every job at Crook's Corner requires previous experience, Neal said. In addition, he looks for employees who are dressed fairly well and look clean, modest and presentable.

"If they walk in chewing gum or smoking a cigarette, they're out," he said. "I want to see respect for the restaurant when they walk in the door."

Restaurants have different application processes, but most require a completed application and personal interview.

Competition can be fierce. Crook's Corner receives an average of 50 to 100 applicants for every available waiting job each year, Neal said.

Some restaurants will hire students

for the summer, while others are looking for a more permanent commitment from their employees.

Students who are available for the summer only can find a job at Darryl's Restaurant & Bar, but the restaurant employs a smaller staff during the summer, said Manager Eddie Murphy.

Of the 150-member staff at Darryl's, more than 60 percent are students and are employed as waiters, waitresses, bartenders and dishwashers.

Spanky's Restaurant will hire about four new employees for the summer, and the pay depends on prior experience, said Perry Dowd, owner's assistant. More than 50 percent of the restaurant's staff is students, and there is a high turnover rate.

"I look for honest and hardworking employees that work well with a group under pressure," Dowd said. "Intelligence is also a big factor. A lot of what they (the employees) do they pick up as they go; some come in without experience, but if they are quick to learn, they can turn out to be some of the best people."

Applebee's is now looking for kitchen help, which pays a minimum of \$4.50 per hour. Students are not hired for summer employment only, but it is acceptable for them to work full-time in the summer and drop down to part-time hours once classes begin in the fall, said Kay Farmer, general manager.

Shifts at Applebee's range from four to eight hours in length, and students work an average of 20 hours per week, she said. About 85 percent of the waiters and waitresses are students, and several students cook or tend bar.

"I hire drive, energy and personality," Farmer said. Applications are accepted at any time and are kept on file until there are job openings, she said.

"I look for honest and hardworking employees that work well with a group under pressure."
— Perry Dowd, owner's assistant at Spanky's Restaurant

At Four Corners Restaurant, students make up 96 percent of the staff, most of whom are hosts, bartenders or waiters, said Kelly Dolan, assistant manager.

"Students are drawn here because it's a late-night hangout and a fun place to go," she said. "Most of our employees like to come here and hang out when they're not working — it's like a family here."

Students interested in summer employment should come to the restaurant in mid-April to fill out an application and to have an informal interview, Dolan said.

In the summer, the staff decreases from about 75 to 30 people because the restaurant is seasonal, she said. Students who do not work in the summer are guaranteed their job in the fall, and many students choose to work at the restaurant all four years they are in college.

Students who want to go away for spring break or other vacations are always allowed to take off from work, and as a result they develop job loyalty and the turnover rate is very low, Dolan said.

Waiters and waitresses at Four Corners start at \$2.01 per hour and on a busy night can earn as much as \$125 in tips. Busboys and hosts are paid \$4 per hour, she said.

Ian Schwartz, a junior from Rochester, Minn., works at Four Corners as a bartender and said he averages \$8 to \$9 per hour during the week and \$16 to \$17 per hour on weekends, including tips.

He said he plans to work during the summer while attending classes at the University. "It's the best job for a student to have — it's pretty basic and the stuff stays the same, but I like working with and interact-

ing with students."

La Residence owner Moreton Neal described her restaurant as "a very bad summer job place," because she almost never hires anyone for short-term employment. And with the decrease in business during the summer months, she finds it unnecessary to hire many new employees.

However, La Residence has several student employees who bus tables, prepare salads and cook.

Waiters and waitresses must be able to read and pronounce French fairly well, and should have experience at another restaurant, she said.

"I usually don't hire students as waiters or hostesses, because most are underage and cannot discuss wine intelligently."

Most kitchen jobs at La Residence pay between \$4.50 and \$5 per hour, and busboys receive between \$3.35 and \$5 per hour plus a percentage of the tips. Waiters are paid \$2.01 per hour and can make approximately \$40 to \$110 in tips per night, Ms. Neal said.

Fast food restaurants also offer students opportunities for summer employment. At Taco Bell, students account for almost half the staff and start at \$4 per hour, with a pay review after 30 days of employment, said Manager Phil Tetreault.

The hours are very flexible and can be set according to a student's class schedule. The minimum number of hours an employee is allowed to work is approximately 10-15 hours per week, and most students choose to work an average of 25-30 hours per week, he said.

Burger King will hire only three or four new employees this summer. Employees should be available to work on weekends, and should be

willing to stay until closing time on some nights, said Assistant Manager Kurt Gibson. Employees start at \$4 per hour, and raises are based on test results.

At Pepper's Pizza, employees are hired and are taught every aspect of the job, including cooking, running the cash register and washing dishes, said co-owner Erwin Shatzen. "This allows for more flexibility, and makes it easier on everybody."

Entry-level employees start at \$3.50 per hour and receive \$4 per hour after they finish their training period. "The training period can last as long as they (the employees) decide it should last — whether it be one week or one month. There are no time limits, but they should be realistic about it," Shatzen said.

Experience is not a requirement, but applicants should be outgoing and should have the ability to work well with others, he said. "We have a low turnover rate here, hopefully because they get treated well and enjoy their work."

Applications are accepted at Pepper's Pizza at any time, and two or three new employees will be hired for this summer.

Shatzen, who has worked at restaurants for 17 years, said students should not be afraid to call back and express interest in a job. "Persistence is worth it if it is a job you want. If the interviewer says they'll call back in a week, and they don't — call them. You don't want to bother people, but if they say they'll call back, they should."



Pizza Hut on Franklin Street

DTH/Evan Elle



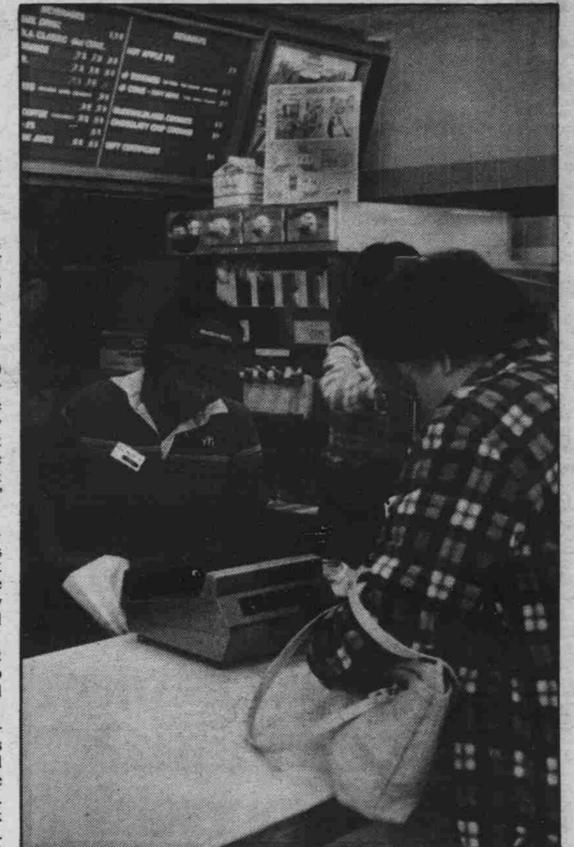
The door is open for summer employment at Spanky's

DTH/Evan Elle



Like many restaurants, Ham's loses business during the summer months

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Put yourself behind a counter at McDonald's

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Look into working at Franklin Street's Four Corners this summer

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Wendy's all-you-can-eat Superbar includes pasta and salads

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