Cake Decorating Workshop

Johnson County Public Library White River Branch

Adults

|

Young Adult

Cake Decorating Workshop

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$101-250

$$
Byline

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Patrons were invited to learn buttercream piping and decorating techniques with students from Central Nine Career Center's To the Nines Restaurant. Participants rotated through stations to learn to mix icing, write script and perform other decorating techniques.

Each participant left with a set of piping tips and a pastry bag. All supplies were provided, and participants were asked to pay $5.

Advanced Planning

To begin, I contacted the school's culinary arts program and scheduled a meeting to discuss what the potential program might look like, cost, etc. I made initial contact with the chef — and proposed the program idea to her — at the end of September the previous year. Planning around the school's breaks made things a little tricky.

Our goals were to create this new partnership and to offer a program that has been long requested by library patrons. I had also hoped (as it did turn out) that the culinary students would find it benefited them, too.

Marketing

We marketed this program on the library website, in our program guide, and with event fliers.

Budgeting

The cost was $12 per person, but we only asked participants to pay $5 each on the day of the program. The library had an internal grant program — that I applied for and got — to cover the remaining $7 per person cost for the program.

Day-of-event Activity

The room only required tables/chairs and the culinary school's equipment. The Central Nine's staff member and two students did all of the actual program set-up. I only had to set up a library book display on cake decorating.

Program Execution

We had 21 participants. I was the only staff member in attendance, as it was my program, but I was mainly just there to collect the program fee from participants and make introductions.

The two culinary students began mixing the cake icing. Then the chef led everyone in getting started and moved around assisting participants with learning different decorating techniques, such as making roses and leaves with the icing. We had a book about cake decorating donated, and I did a random drawing for it at the end.

The only unexpected challenge I faced was having enough cash to use as change for participants when they paid their program fee.

Advice

It is best to keep this program small. I wanted to attract and allow as many patrons as possible to attend, but at the advice of my director (due to the grant), we capped registration at 22 attendees, and had 21 attend.

When partnering with a school, it is best to plan early because of their breaks and other things. If you wanted to hold this program without a partner, you could perhaps buy your own supplies and possibly execute the program at a lower cost.

Participants really enjoyed this program, and there were several requests to hold this type of workshop again. So, we met our goals: we built a new partnership and are now looking to partner with other departments at the career preparatory high school.

The program also allowed the culinary students an opportunity outside of the classroom to practice their skills. The students were a junior and a senior in high school and both said they felt like doing this program helped them realize their potential and practice their skills further, giving them greater confidence.

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

Supporting Materials

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