



Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation awards \$10,000 to First Place AZ for cooking courses

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Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation recently awarded a \$10,000 grant to First Place AZ to fund a collection of “Cook Healthy” courses for adults with autism and other neuro-diversities learning independent living skills.

The Sprouts Kitchen Network will offer cooking courses at the First Place–Phoenix culinary teaching kitchens, which can be viewed from the First Place apartments, according to a press release. First Place AZ, a nonprofit focused on ensuring that housing options for adults with autism and other neuro-diversities are bountiful, broke ground on First Place–Phoenix in December of 2016.

Residents can move in the \$15 million property in the spring of 2018, the release added.

“Learning proper nutrition is important to us all,” said Denise D. Resnik, First Place founder and CEO, in a prepared statement. “Part of living independently involves learning how to make smart food choices and prepare nourishing meals. We’re grateful to the Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation for allowing us to capture and reinforce these important life-skills lessons, adding another valued dimension to community life at First Place–Phoenix.”

The grant from the Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation covers Phase 1 with the creation of the “First to the Table” video concept and prototypes released this summer.

“We’re thrilled to see First Place putting their Neighborhood Grant funds to use in such a creative and impactful way,” said Lyndsey Waugh, Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation executive director, in the release. “Learning how to prepare healthy meals gives young adults with autism and other unique abilities the skills necessary to make healthier food choices and to experience the rewards of cooking.”

Paradise Valley resident, Cheryl Najafi, a lifestyle expert who is a New York Times best-selling author and creator of Everyday Dishes, will lend her talent and expertise to the Sprouts Kitchen Network. She is said to have a mission to make delicious, dependable meals that are easy and affordable for everyday families.

The release added that the Sprouts Kitchen Network will feature videos and recipes from Ms. Najafi along with new films created at First Place–Phoenix involving future residents.

“The kitchen is the most important place in the home,” Ms. Najafi said in a prepared statement. “It’s the gathering spot where happy hearts celebrate and broken hearts mend—where families and friends can momentarily slow the passing of time and truly connect.”

Great Scott Productions of Phoenix is producing the segments. First Place is developing four culinary teaching kitchens at First Place–Phoenix, which will also feature a raised courtyard garden where residents can plant and cultivate herbs and vegetables.

For more information or to get involved, email info@firstplaceaz.org or visit firstplaceaz.org.