

The Culinary & Hospitality Institute

Jefferson State Community College



Awarded the prestigious American Culinary Federation Accreditation award, The Culinary and Hospitality Institute at Jefferson State Community College takes great pride in its community outreach programs. With four kitchens, hundreds of students, numerous community classes and one of Birmingham's best-kept secret restaurants (the Bistro Pro Vare), the College has made a name for itself in the Culinary world.

What made you decide to switch to Natural Gas?

About nine years ago, we renovated our kitchen at our original campus. We wanted the kitchen to have what was widely used in the industry. Since Natural Gas is the preferred energy, it was an obvious conversion. When we built our new campus on Valleydale, we wanted a world-class kitchen, a kitchen that would truly prepare our students with real-world equipment, and again, with the preferred energy of choice – Natural Gas.

How did your Alagasco Business Development Partner assist you during this process?

James Robinson has been our business development partner since the beginning. He's brought ideas to our facility that have truly made our kitchens inspirational designs. People actually come to our facility to model their kitchens after ours.

“Simply put, Natural Gas brings romance to cooking. The aroma that’s created, the beauty and taste of the food – there’s a reason it’s the preferred energy choice for cooking and it’s what our students learn with. “



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What would you tell a peer about Alagasco and Natural Gas?

When it comes to Alagasco, they are a true business partner, bringing ideas and service that enhance our college. We've had a long relationship that continues to be strengthened with new technologies and opportunities that Alagasco brings to the table. In regards to Natural Gas as a heat source, there's a reason it's the preferred cooking method. With Natural Gas, the quality of food is better. I can smell the garlic, sugar, butter and red wines. I can see the nice, beautiful caramelization of foods from the quickness of the heat. Simply put, Natural Gas brings a romance to the cooking experience.

How has switching to Natural Gas helped Jefferson State?

The switch to Natural Gas was just the beginning for us. Once we built our new facility on Valleydale with state-of-the-art Natural Gas equipment, perceptions changed regarding our Culinary Program. We've gone from less than 20 students in the program to more than 300, and we are one of few in the Southeast to be awarded the American Culinary Federation Accreditation award, which is an unprecedented accreditation for seven years.

We are here to teach, to replicate real-world experiences for our students. We can honestly say we do that, do it well, and we've got the reputation to back it up.



The Facts

Certified chefs and culinary professionals across the country have preferred Natural Gas for decades. The Culinary and Hospitality Institute (CHI) at Jefferson State College is no different. Alagasco partnered with the CHI in its efforts to introduce a new generation of chefs to the attributes of Natural Gas by outfitting the CHI labs with the latest in commercial foodservice equipment and ware washing technology. The primary demonstration lab features 22 pieces of Natural Gas commercial cooking equipment. All total, there are four kitchen labs, including the restaurant, that feature Natural Gas equipment. In addition, the dish machine features a Natural Gas booster heater used to increase the water heating temperature to the required 180 degree F. sanitization requirement. This ware washing technology provides an estimated annual operating cost savings of more than 40% when compared to electric booster heating.



605 Richard Arrington Jr. Blvd. N
Birmingham, AL 35203
1-800-292-4010
www.alagasco.com

