



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Thompson Announces \$500,000 in Federal Funding for IUP Punxsutawney**  
*Renovation Scheduled for the Academy of Culinary Arts*

**PUNXSUTAWNEY, Pa.– April 15, 2022 -- U.S. Representative Glenn “GT” Thompson** today announced \$500,000 for Indiana University of Pennsylvania to rebuild and renovate its Academy of Culinary Arts Building located in downtown Punxsutawney.

Updates to the facilities will serve as a central hub for downtown Punxsutawney Borough, providing educational and experimental opportunities for students and the surrounding community. In addition to the federal funds, this project has received state and private resources totaling more than \$1.5 million.

“IUP has been an anchor in the community for years. With these funds, IUP will be able to expand and strengthen its educational offerings in Jefferson County, resulting in a stronger regional workforce,” **Rep. Thompson said**. “Updating the culinary facilities will provide significant opportunities for current and future culinary students and attract and retain top talent in the region, leading to economic and community development in Punxsutawney and the surrounding communities.”

“Today’s announcement from Congressman Thompson helps us to advance the Academy of Culinary Arts master plan and continue the ongoing momentum for the Academy of Culinary Arts project,” **IUP President Dr. Michael Driscoll said**. “Both IUP and the Academy have benefited from the outstanding and steadfast support from our legislators, our partners, and our local stakeholders. We could not be successful without them. We are fully committed to Punxsutawney and to the region. The expansion and modernization of our culinary facilities is critical to the growth of our program, and we anticipate that this project will complement and stimulate further development in downtown Punxsutawney. We are very grateful to the Congressman and his team.”

Congressman Thompson, IUP President Driscoll, Academy of Culinary Arts Chair Chef Lynn Pike and Shakyra McNeal, a student at the Academy of Culinary Arts from Verona, presented remarks at the press event.

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## **ABOUT IUP's ACADEMY OF CULINARY ARTS AT PUNXSUTAWNEY**

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Since its founding in 1989, more than 4,200 students have studied in Punxsutawney at the Academy of Culinary Arts, which has continued to meet and exceed its enrollment goals.

The 16-month program offered at the Academy of Culinary Arts is nationally recognized and accredited by the American Culinary Federation. After completing a final semester at a paid externship, graduates earn a certificate in culinary arts and can also complete a separate baking and pastry program through the Academy.

The Baking and Pastry program became a stand-alone program in 2019 to allow for additional growth in this program. Academy of Culinary Arts graduates of either the Culinary Arts program or the Baking and Pastry program are eligible to complete an associate degree in Culinary Arts with an additional semester of study at IUP Punxsutawney. Students who successfully complete the Culinary Arts or the Baking and Pastry program also have the option to apply up to 38 credits toward a Bachelor of Science degree in hospitality management at IUP or 32 credits toward a Bachelor of Science degree in nutrition. Admission into the nutrition track is guaranteed for culinary graduates.

Graduates can also apply 21 credits toward a Bachelor of Science degree in education with a major in K–12 family and consumer sciences. Graduates of the program can choose to take advantage of applying their credits toward any of these bachelor's degree option any time within 10 years after culinary graduation.

## **ABOUT THE ACADEMY OF CULINARY ARTS LONG-RANGE BUILDING PLAN**

IUP's Council of Trustees formally endorsed an updated Academy of Culinary Arts master plan at its March 17 meeting. This plan is focused on providing state-of-the art facilities and providing new opportunities for increased enrollment at the Academy.

Significant updates to the original 2014 master plan were endorsed by the Council of Trustees in February 2018. This 2018 revised master plan reflected the intention to locate all of the educational facilities for the Academy to new or renovated buildings in downtown Punxsutawney adjacent to the Academy's Fairman Centre along West Mahoning Street.

The 2022 master plan updates include plans for full utilization of the properties in downtown Punxsutawney acquired or gifted to IUP in August 2018 and March 2021, all with a focus on improving the student educational experience.

Funding for the overall project will come from a combination of funding from the Capital Spending Plan and private donations. Total cost for the project is estimated at \$20 million. Private fundraising for the project is ongoing.

## **ABOUT THE ACADEMY OF CULINARY ARTS FACILITIES**

The Fairman Centre (the former J.B. Eberhart building), was gifted to the Foundation for IUP by the Punxsutawney Regional Development Corporation and the Punxsutawney Chamber of Commerce in November 2006. After a year-long, \$4.7 million renovation, the building was repurposed with classrooms and teaching kitchens for the Academy of Culinary Arts and has been in use by the Academy since 2009. The first floor of the building is retail space.

The original Fairman Centre gift was made possible through a \$1.9 million gift from the Alan and Roy Fairman families, and the building is named in honor of the late Alan Fairman and the late Roy Fairman.

The buildings donated by the Foundation for IUP to IUP for use by the Academy of Culinary Arts in August 2018 are located at 105, 115, 117 and 119 West Mahoning Street (adjacent to the Fairman Centre). The Dorothy Miller property, gifted in part by building owners Jesse J. Miller and Duane A. Miller, is at 131 and 133 West Mahoning Street. It also is adjacent to the 2018 donated properties and the Fairman Centre.

The 2018 master plan, and the 2022 update, recognizes that the Academy has outgrown its original 36-year-old building on Gilpin Street both in size and in instructional needs for current and future students.

The recommendation in the master plan is that this facility does not continue to be used by the Academy of Culinary Arts. Specific plans for this property, or a timeline for when instruction will no longer take place at that building for Academy students, has not yet been determined.

The 2022 revisions to the master plan also include recommendations for enhanced use and increased impact of the Fairman Centre, more efficient planned space use within the culinary building (dual use kitchens), improved delivery vehicle access and vehicular traffic flow.

The new facility, as proposed in the master plan, would offer between 32,836 and 36,644 square feet of instructional space for Academy students.

A timeline for completion of the new facility has not yet been finalized.

Authorization for \$2 million in funding to raze the buildings acquired in 2018 and 2021 has been approved within the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Capital Spending plan; the tentative timeline for this demolition has been set for 2023-24.

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