



Eat for Good

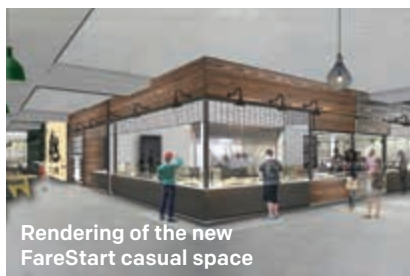
Amazon and FareStart partner to serve the community.

For more than two decades, Seattle-based nonprofit **FareStart** (farestart.org) has trained those who are homeless or living in poverty for jobs in the food service industry. Within three months of completing the program, an impressive 90 percent of graduates are gainfully employed in kitchens around the city.

Now, thanks to a donation from Amazon, FareStart is set to help train more than 7,000 people in the next 10 years.

"We feel incredibly fortunate that Amazon is giving us the opportunity and providing a facility for us to really make a difference in creating living wage training in our area and helping people in the food industry move up the ladder," says Megan Karch, CEO of FareStart.

The tech behemoth's contribution includes 25,000 square feet around the Amazon campus for five eateries, a catering space, and training classrooms. The list of new eateries will include a full-service restaurant, three fast-casual units, and a coffee shop. They're all slated to debut toward the end of summer and will be open to the public.



Rendering of the new FareStart casual space

Along with the new digs, FareStart is also rolling out an apprenticeship program that focuses on helping low-income food service workers to prepare for higher-paying positions. Apprentices will receive up to 24 weeks of paid on-the-job training, one-on-one time with a career coach, help with interview skills and résumés, and the chance to work side by side with industry veterans. Even after they've gotten a job, support services will be provided. The type of roles they'll be trained for pay between \$17 and \$28 an hour.

Those selected for the apprenticeships will be job seekers in need who have had significant barriers in their life, such as

homelessness. "Anybody who's going to move up on their own is not who we're designing the program for," Karch says. Some will be graduates of FareStart's regular program, but it's not a requirement.

"FareStart has provided opportunity and job training to more than 8,000 people who are homeless or living in poverty, and we're excited that this new space will help them double their training program over the next 10 years," says Jeff Bezos, founder and CEO of Amazon, in a statement. "We're lucky to live in a city with such innovative organizations, and we look forward to having FareStart as part of our urban campus."

As for FareStart, the nonprofit is preparing to become an even bigger part of the neighborhood as it works to elevate people out of poverty to long-term financial stability. "We are an organization that cares deeply about involving the community in what we do," Karch says. "We're going to launch some pretty exciting places to eat, and we look forward to deepening our relationship with people who live and work in South Lake Union."

—Haley Shapley