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SEEKING VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTORS FOR OLDWAYS TASTE OF AFRICAN HERITAGE CLASSES

June 28, 2017 — The Boston-based food and nutrition nonprofit [Oldways](#) is seeking volunteer instructors around the country for its [A Taste of African Heritage](#) (ATOAH), a six-week community cooking class series.

With detailed lesson plans that simultaneously teach cultural history, nutrition, and cooking techniques, the program introduces participants to the rich history of plant-based foods from the African Diaspora (continental Africa, the Caribbean, Afro-Latin America, and the American South).

Oldways will provide free of charge 1) training for volunteers to become certified teachers and 2) class materials (teaching manuals, student handbooks, African heritage diet pyramid poster, brochures, and survey forms). Volunteer instructors can select any class site with a basic kitchen setup as minimal equipment is needed.

Since 2012, approximately 3,500 students have participated in more than 250 ATOAH classes nationwide. Instructors have included chefs, registered dietitians, home cooks and more.

At a time when African American health disparities are frequently reported in the news, ATOAH works to reverse that trend with its solutions-based, hands-on design. Oldways has found, through carefully gathered metrics, that 64 percent of participants lose weight and more than half lose inches off their waistlines. Additionally, 33 percent saw blood pressure go down one whole stage. Most students also report, well after the series ends, sustaining the positive lifestyle changes taught in the class — such as eating more plant-based foods and cooking at home.

In April, Ben Handy, founder and president of the [Ridgeland Block Club Association](#), hosted a successful program using the kitchen of St. Ailbe's Catholic Church in the Calumet Heights area of Chicago.

"I was really pleasantly surprised to see how many people signed up for it, and how many people who didn't get a chance to participate in this class were asking—when are you going to do the next class?," said Handy.

For more information, please contact Program Coordinator Johnisha Levi at johnisha@oldwayspt.org or 617-896-4801.

About Oldways

Oldways (www.oldwayspt.org) is a nonprofit food and nutrition education organization, with a mission to inspire healthy eating through cultural food traditions and lifestyles. Simply, Oldways advocates for the healthful pleasures of real food. Oldways programs include the Whole Grains Council, Cheese Coalition, Mediterranean Foods Alliance, African Heritage & Health, Supermarket Dietitian Symposium, Nutrition Exchange, and Culinary Travel. The organization is known for creating the Whole Grain Stamp and the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid.