



For Immediate Release

The Calhoun School Raises \$25,000 for Hurricane Relief

New York – A crowd of 500 people streamed into The Calhoun School gym on Sunday, September 18th, for “A Taste of New Orleans,” a special dinner to benefit victims of Hurricane Katrina. Prepared by Calhoun’s Executive Chef Bobo, Chef de Cuisine Ilya Malachias and a staff of volunteers, the dinner raised more than \$25,000 for America’s Second Harvest, a national food bank providing direct relief to hurricane victims.

Hosted jointly by the Calhoun School and the school’s Parents Association, the buffet dinner featured a menu of Cajun and Creole dishes, including muffaletta and po’ boy sandwiches, shrimp gumbo, red beans & rice, fried catfish, jambalaya and bread pudding. Parents, students and volunteer chefs from The French Culinary Institute helped Calhoun’s food service staff prepare and serve the meal. But the heartfelt desire to help and contribute to the fundraising effort uncovered numerous stories of Calhoun’s younger students reaching out: a fourth grader raised \$40 selling lemonade, a third grader made and sold beaded jewelry; and a fifth grader asked for extra chores around his home – all to raise money to donate to the cause. A group of fourth- and fifth-grade boys, who were helping serve bottled water and tea at the event, collected tips and presented them to Chef Bobo at the end of the evening.

In an emotional speech to the crowd, Chef Bobo praised the city of New Orleans and the generosity of the Calhoun community. He thanked attendees, his staff, and the many volunteers for creating such a successful event on such short notice. “To me, New Orleans is the soul of America,” said Chef Bobo. “It boasts the oldest, purest cuisine in the country; it has given us so much musically and artistically. That city is the creative conscience of who we are.”

Chef Bobo (aka Robert Surlis) lived in New Orleans for twelve years and has continued to serve as the official chef for the Krewe of Orpheus, a Mardi Gras parade group founded by entertainer Harry Connick Jr. As Executive Chef of Calhoun’s “Eat Right Now” lunch program since 2002, he has received international recognition for his focus on nutrition and received an IACP award last year for his first cookbook, *Chef Bobo’s Good Food Cookbook*. He was trained at and served as an instructor at The French Culinary Institute. Chef Ilya Malachias, Calhoun’s Chef de Cuisine, was born and raised in New Orleans, and holds a B.A. and M.A. from Tulane University. He also has a degree from The French Culinary Institute and has been working with Chef Bobo at Calhoun for two years. Ilya’s parents are the owners of Café Maspero, located in New Orleans’ French Quarter.

America’s Second Harvest is a national food bank and the largest domestic hunger-relief organization in the United States. The organization distributes more than two billion pounds of food products to more than two-hundred regional food banks and rescue organizations in all 50 states. For more information, please visit www.secondharvest.org.

Founded in 1896, The Calhoun School is a progressive, independent school on Manhattan’s Upper West Side serving children from 3-years-old through twelfth grade.

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