



# biscuit *Student begins food industry career local business internship*

## BUSINESS

The smell of sweet potato pie drifted through the kitchen when **Taiye Akinjobi**, 12, helped her mother prepare food for a family gathering. Feeling inspired, Akinjobi saw a life of preparing food in front of her.

"Cooking is my love language. I love cooking. When I see people's faces light up, I finally feel like I did something right," Akinjobi said. "I love seeing the faces of shock, like, 'Wow, she really prepared that' I love the art in it."

While already being interested in the food industry, taking culinary classes in high school was the catalyst for Akinjobi's desire for a career in cooking. Her experience with chef **Molly Gordon**, faculty, serving as Gordon's teaching assistant, has inspired her to go beyond a traditional career in the food industry.

"Cooking as a career came to me, I think this year or last year, when I took Culinary 2. But last year, [Gordon] taught me not just how to run a business, but the aspect of owning your own business and cooking," Akinjobi said. "I didn't really get to do that my first year of culinary. Doing all that led me up to doing that as a chef. Learning all the different tools, different knife cuts, just baking a small batch of cookies, I really just enjoyed."

Because of her strong experience with Akinjobi as a teaching assistant, Gordon sees endless possibilities for Akinjobi.

"[Akinjobi] was an awesome culinary student, and now as a [teaching assistant], she is really good at keeping the [students] on track," Gordon said. "She can go [do whatever] she wants in the future. She wants to go to culinary school, and I could see her own her own restaurant, or be on the food network. Anywhere she wants to go, she can."

After gaining enthusiasm regarding a career in the food industry, Akinjobi was recruited for an internship over the summer at the restaurant chain Callie's Hot Little Biscuit. As a result of her enjoyable experience there, she plans to intern there again next summer.

"Going to the eateries and seeing all the people, and really getting to interact with the staff and the customers. I would make bowls and bowls of biscuits until my back hurt like crazy," Akinjobi said. "Throughout the pain and blood, sweat and tears, it was just a fun

experience to just make biscuits and interact with anyone in the food industry, and see how [owner Callie Morey] turns a cookbook into something that she does in her daily life."

Akinjobi experienced the business side of the food industry while interning where she worked in a production facility, catered different events, and worked in local Callie's Hot Little Biscuit restaurants. She also had the opportunity to work with other local businesses and contribute to their creation of dishes.

"[I enjoyed] being in a production facility, where everything gets shipped out all over America. When we vacuum sealed, like I know what it is, but I've never done that with the biscuits," Akinjobi said. "When I went to the catering parts, it was really cool because you had other locally owned businesses cooking there as well. It was cool interacting with them, and trying different flavor palettes that I don't like, but I tried it. I got to tell them what I liked, and what I thought the dishes needed more of. It just reminded me that if they can do it, why can't I do it?"

**Margaret Newton**, 11, was in the culinary classroom while Akinjobi was Gordon. Newton has noticed Akinjobi's growth in leadership skills while cooking.

"[Akinjobi] has definitely gotten more responsible and has grown a lot in her abilities. Not only to cook, [but] has taken more of a leadership role in general," Newton said.

Because of her experience at Callie's Hot Little Biscuit, Akinjobi sees a definite path for herself in the food industry. Not only does she want to achieve her own goals, she wants to inspire others to do the same.

"I love the aspect of learning more. Since I'm a senior and about to graduate, I think I want to keep going, and going into eateries and production facilities. I want to now go into the headquarters, and learn how to run an actual business, doing what [Morey] does every day, behind the scenes," Akinjobi said. "I want to own five restaurants by the age of 40, and I want to continue with a food science background and maybe get my masters [degree], and maybe even my doctorate [degree]."

**Writer Ainsley Doyle**  
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