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## Northumbria graduate cooks up a storm with TV chef

**A Northumbria University graduate is working with Jamie Oliver's Ministry of Food on a mission to get the North East cooking healthily.**

[Food Science and Nutrition](#) graduate Joanna Lacey is inspiring people about good food in her role as Director of Operations at Food Nation, a social enterprise involved in running the Jamie Oliver Ministry of Food cookery programme in Newcastle.

Food Nation educates people to eat healthily, providing food and nutrition

advice to school, businesses and communities. The organisation is delivering the Ministry of Food cookery course to inspire people of all ages and abilities about food, nutrition and health.

Food Nation and Northumbria University have had a successful partnership for almost six years, working together through a number of placement and volunteering opportunities. For the past two years, Northumbria students have competed against students around the country to secure a placement at the organisation, with Emma Mould, a third year [Food Science](#) student, being the latest to join the team.

Joanna and Emma recently invited senior lecturers [Carole Marshall](#) and [Julie Young](#) to an event celebrating five years of Food Nation supporting Jamie's Ministry of Food on Tyneside.

Working with TV chef Gennaro Contaldo, who has his own show on BBC2 and regularly features in Jamie Oliver's shows, they helped children from Walkergate Primary School to prepare fresh butternut squash pasta and cook it properly.

Joanna said: "Every programme that we run at Food Nation is so important as a starting point to creating a healthier community. We give people the skills and knowledge to be able to make healthier choices for themselves, whilst inspiring and motivating them to want to choose those options too.

"Food is such a great tool for approaching lots of areas, healthy eating being one of these, but teaching people to eat healthily can have a positive effect on their emotional wellbeing, their planning and organisation skills, their communication skills and so much more.

"The students are involved in absolutely everything we do and are an integral part of the team. It is lovely being able to continue working with the staff at Northumbria who taught me whilst I was there and be able to support the new students and hopefully inspire them to have an interest in the public health field and food education."

Placement student Emma said: "As part of my role I use skills that I have practised at Northumbria. I often have to analyse recipes, and it's great that I have had lots of experience in dietary analysis already. I have recently started

delivering the cooking skills sessions, which I love as it's great to teach others about food and nutrition."

Joanna added: "It's always great to see the students develop their skills over the year and more often than not, they end up finishing the placement a completely different, more confident and mature person with lots to be proud of. I really enjoyed my three years at Northumbria and was happy that I had chosen a course that I loved learning about. I have a career that is directly linked to my course and I've worked really hard to get to where I am today."

Julie Young, Senior Lecturer in Human Nutrition and Food Science, said: "Joanna has been fantastic in supporting Northumbria with taking Food Science and Nutrition students on their placements, as well as other students involved in volunteering with Food Nation too.

"Providing young children with an opportunity to have fun cooking, but also learning about the importance of good food and nutrition, will provide them with the foundations they need to ensure they hopefully have a long and healthy life ahead of them."

Northumbria University's Food Science and Nutrition course is ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> in the UK in the Sunday Times University Guide 2016.

For more information on the Food Science courses Northumbria offers, visit [www.northumbria.ac.uk/foodsciencenutrition](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/foodsciencenutrition)

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