



Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association  
E D U C A T I O N A L F O U N D A T I O N  
MRLAEF

## **2021 Michigan ProStart Competition March 22-25, 2021**

### **Tabletop Design Competition Procedures & Rules**

Participating teams, educators and mentors are responsible for understanding and following all of the procedures and guidelines contained in this document. Please read through these rules carefully to avoid receiving any penalties during the competition.

Questions regarding competition rules should be sent to Jake Osburn  
[josburn@mrla.org](mailto:josburn@mrla.org) or 517.377.3924 **PRIOR** to the start of the competition.

# Michigan ProStart Competition Tabletop Design Competition

## **Student and Teams**

1. All high school students, currently enrolled in a **confirmed ProStart program recognized by the National Restaurant Association**
2. Participating teams will consist of one (1) to four (4) team members.
3. Students may only compete for two years.

## **General Disqualifications:**

1. Teams may not receive coaching or any form of communication from anyone during the competition time or they will be disqualified. There will be no verbal or non-verbal communication allowed between any spectators, educators, mentors or coaches and competing teams. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
2. Misconduct, which includes any nonprescription drug use, alcohol use, or any activity that is illegal under federal, state, or local laws, at the event, during competition or in activities or locations related to the event, may disqualify a participant or the participant's team from awards or further participation. Should any misconduct come to the MRLAEF's attention, the matter will be investigated as the MRLAEF deems appropriate. Any decision and sanction as to appropriate action due to misconduct is at the sole discretion of the MRLAEF and is final. By entering the contest, the student, and the team he/she represents accept this requirement as well as all other conditions of the program.
3. Teams must compete in each event segment in the competition or they will be disqualified.

## **Schedules:**

Competition schedules will be distributed in advance of the competition once all teams have been identified. All schedules are subject to change.

# Tabletop Design Competition

## **Purpose:**

Teams will demonstrate their knowledge of table design, proper table setting which reflects the menu, and their ability to sell a concept. The competition has four main components: development of a menu, development of a table setting, a presentation of the table, and the team's ability to answer critical thinking questions regarding their table. Successful teams will develop a table that meets the needs of the guests based on the scenario provided by event organizers and be able to sell the menu and table setting to the panel of judges.

## **Uniform**

Uniform is not required for the 2021 competition. However competing students should dress to emulate their school's professional classroom.

## **Scoring:**

The total points possible in the tabletop design competition are 100 points. The menu developed and the table designed will be 50 points, the team's presentation of the table is worth 25 points and the team's critical thinking questions will be worth 25 points. If needed, the team with the highest presentation score will determine a tie breaker. An appropriate panel of judges will determine a second tie breaker.

## **Preparation for Competition:**

1. Mentors and educators may assist teams in preparing for the competition; however, they may not prepare the menu or table.
2. Students should practice their sales pitch of the menu and table developed to ensure they communicate everything necessary.
3. The team's work must be unique and not built off another team's previous work.



### **2020 Scenario:**

One hundred years ago, the Michigan State Park Commission set the course for visitors to enjoy and explore four seasons of fun. May 12, 2019 officially marked the anniversary of state parks, and the DNR has a yearlong centennial celebration planned. To celebrate our rich history and take an energizing look forward as we mark this milestone year your banquet facility has been contracted to host the Michigan State Park Centennial Celebration.

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Michigan State Park Centennial Celebration has been cancelled.

### **2021 Scenario:**

Michiganders always find a way to celebrate our states gorgeous beaches, campgrounds, hiking trails and harbors. In Fact, parks set record attendance in 2020, as vacationers sought relief from cabin fever and travel restrictions. With bereavement, isolation, loss of income and fear triggering mental health conditions and exacerbating existing ones. 2021 is predicted to set even higher records as the parks continue to be used as public health sanctuaries.

The Park commission wants the dinner event to be a formal dining experience that will convey the importance of Michigan's state park preservation to attendees, many of whom have restricted diets related to medical issues. The event plans to host 150 guests from all over the state.

As the Leadership team, you are meeting with the client (MRLAEF judges) to review the table setting, offer menu selection and finalize details.

A budget of \$50 ++ per guest has been set. The ++ is a gratuity charge and tax that will be added to the final bill. The \$50 per person includes a food cost calculated at 33% (\$16.50). That leaves you with \$33.50 to cover: non- alcoholic beverages, all linens, and silverware, glasses, centerpieces, and staff. From the \$33.50 the judges will need to see where you have priced out these items (what was purchased versus what was rented) remember to leave some cost for overhead and staff costs).

Labor Cost is a standard 25% (\$12.5) and Overhead is standard at 20% (\$10).

What you are Charging- 33%-25%-20%= what is left-you need to show profit!

## **Menu Development**

1. Teams will develop three different sample menus to meet the needs of the scenario provided, using a 33% food cost. Costing documents do NOT need to be turned in.
2. The team will NOT prepare this food, but a good menu will flow and sound appealing as presented.
3. Teams should refer to FRMCA, Level 2, Chapter 7

## **Table Setting**

1. Your team will design a table to present to the client that seats at least 6 guests. Your banquet hall rents tables from a local event rental company. You may select a table that best suits your design. The table should be set to reflect all the necessary items for the menus developed. (Example: Ice-Cream being served for dessert would require a spoon, there should NOT be a dessert fork set)
2. Proper beverage service for the event will also be evaluated.  
For the competition, no alcohol service is allowed.
3. Teams should refer to FRMCA, Level 1, Chapter 10

## **Presentation (sales pitch)**

The team will present the three menu choices they have developed and the table design to the judges. The judges will be critiquing the table based on the presentation and visual appeal of the table. (Because the scenario is limited you can be creative; creativity and originality are key to this portion. If you want to include roast beef on all three menus because it is the guest's favorite dish, you need to explain that)

## **Critical Thinking Questions**

The judges will ask critical thinking questions of the team, immediately following their presentation. Questions will be from the following categories.

1. Customer Service
2. Menu
3. Dietary Considerations (focusing on chronic illnesses)
4. Decor

## **Day of Competition:**

1. Teams will be given 30 minutes to set up their display table.
  - a. Before your competition time begins, table and chairs must be completely unset.
  - b. All team members, chairs, and table must be visible in camera view.
2. Visual display judges will review the table set up for accuracy, neatness, and overall appeal.
3. Teams will have 7 minutes to present their table and sample menus to the Critical thinking judges.
4. Judges will have 10 minutes to ask critical thinking questions.

**Penalties:**

1. The team does not produce 3 sample menus- 10 points per menu.
2. Team does not participate in all segments of the competition -10 points per segment.

**Event Personnel:**

1. Event Organizers (MRLAEF staff members)
2. Judges from colleges/universities and the restaurant and foodservice industry. There will also be one lead judge.
3. All judges will be consistent from team to team.
4. Judges

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| State Park Representatives |
| Michigan Tourism Experts   |

**Attendees:**

Mentors, teachers, chaperones, parents, public, etc. are encouraged to attend the competition. However, space is limited.