

# Class teaches cooking ins and outs, food safety to Karen community

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By Karin Elton , Marshall Independent

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MARSHALL - What's the difference between a teaspoon and a tablespoon? What is the best cooking temperature for turkey sausage?

Darlyce Rangaard, SNAP-ED educator, addressed those questions and more at a cooking class provided to members of the Karen community living in Marshall.

The class participants may be proficient in their kitchen, but incorporating western terms and foods into an immigrant's diet may be problematic, said Rangaard.

## Article Photos



Photo by Karin Elton

Three members of an English Language Learners cooking class measure ingredients to make pumpkin pancakes Wednesday morning at St. Stephen Lutheran Church.

"They love American food, but it should be clean food," said Rangaard. "Too often we're adding too much sugar, fat and salt."

Hser Lar Kpaw Htoo, a Marshall High School sophomore who was acting as interpreter for his mother and others attending the class, said he likes corn dogs and pizza.

On Wednesday morning at St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Rangaard divided the class participants into groups to make pumpkin pancakes, cook turkey sausage patties and egg frittata on electric skillets.

The session was the final class in a six-week basic cooking course for English Language Learners. The course was funded by Southern Prairie Community Care working with University of Minnesota Extension and Western Community Action. The Salvation Army provided electric skillets to class participants to take home so they could try the new recipes.

Rangaard also gave the students measuring spoons and cups, meat thermometers and a refrigerator magnet that lists common food temperatures.

"We want to help people be safe and healthy," Rangaard said.

In addition, Rangaard said, a good rule is "cold foods need to stay cold and hot foods need to stay hot."

The Karen (pronounced Ka-REN) are an ethnic group from the mountainous border regions of Burma and Thailand, according to [mnkaren.org](http://mnkaren.org). They have long been subject to persecution and ethnic cleansing by the Burmese government, and many have been living in refugee camps in Thailand for years before being resettled to Minnesota, according to the Karen Organization of Minnesota.

There are 500 Karen refugees in Marshall, said Karen volunteer liaison DeAnn Wilson, who has been helping the Karen for about seven years, including learning the language.

"They work at Turkey Valley, Schwan, Christensen Farms, Jonti-Craft in Wabasso and Arctic Glacier Ice," she said. "There is always someone in the family that works. They need help at first but want to get off government assistance. They are eager to be citizens."

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