



RCC partners with Mission Inn for culinary internship program

Students shadow chefs as they prepare for the Festival of Lights

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Riverside (November 10, 2011) – Riverside City College’s Culinary Academy has partnered with the Mission Inn for a student internship program just in time for the holidays.

Culinary Arts students selected for the program shadow Mission Inn chefs while gaining experience as the hotel ramps up preparations for the Festival of Lights at the end of the month. This is the first time the Culinary Academy has collaborated with the Mission Inn, said Joni Cowgill, a job developer with the college.

“Students are seen and assessed and hopefully hired and kept,” Cowgill said of the internship program. “Even if they don’t get hired, it looks great on their resumes.”

If the program proves to be successful, it may be expanded, hotel management confirmed. Students also are working at the Riverside Convention Center through a similar internship program.

In the current economic environment, it is difficult for students to gain the work experience they need in order to be hired once they graduate, which makes these internship programs all the more valuable, Cowgill said.

Samuel Hong, 23, is a freshman in the Culinary Arts program, began interning at the Mission Inn a few weeks ago. He already holds a bachelor’s degree from UC-Riverside and is a part-time

barista-in-training at a café in Little Tokyo, but his dream is to one day run a small restaurant with a Brazilian twist, serving cuisine that includes churrasco meats.

He's gaining essential experience to reach his goal through his internship at the Mission Inn. The chefs are glad to have the help, and it's a privilege for the students to work with them whether it's rolling enchiladas, peeling shrimp or chopping vegetables, he said.

"For any student who is in the Culinary Arts program or thinking about their career, I don't see why anyone wouldn't take advantage of this opportunity," he said.

Amanda DeLapp, 21, is a resident of Corona and a freshman in the Culinary Arts program. She aspires to become a pastry chef and has been assigned to shadow one at the Mission Inn.

"I've never worked in an industrial kitchen before," she said. "You have to be fast and efficient; you have to always be ready for the next step. It's all about preparation and organization."

Some day she would like to own her own bakery, and she's gaining behind-the-scenes skills that are critical for reaching that goal. Since starting her internship, she has worked on desserts for banquets, weddings and brunches, all of which has involved baking a lot of cakes, she said. Her favorite part has been preparing the crème brulee.

"There's just something about using a blow torch in a kitchen," she said.

About the Desert Regional Consortium of Community Colleges: The Desert Regional Consortium consists of 13 community colleges and two community college districts in Riverside, San Bernardino and Kern counties. The consortium assists colleges in providing professional development opportunities and designing programs to improve workforce training and technical education. The consortium was formed to address the economic development needs of industry, government and the community.

More info: www.desertcolleges.org

Consortium members: Barstow College, Cerro Coso Community College, Chaffey College, College of the Desert, Copper Mountain College, Crafton Hills College, Mt. San Jacinto College, Moreno Valley College, Norco College, Palo Verde College, Riverside City College, Riverside Community College District, San Bernardino Community College District, San Bernardino Valley College, Victor Valley College

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