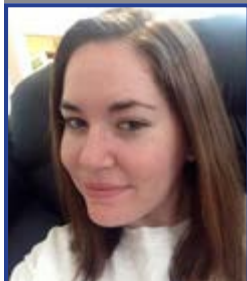


2017 Student Culinarian of the Year Nominees



Victoria Yeasley
College of Southern Nevada

In 2011, I graduated high school in California and decided to get my first job, at a sandwich shop. This is when I truly discovered I had a passion for food. After working part time for just under a year, I decided to attend the local community college under the culinary program. I needed more funds to support my schooling, so then I decided to get a second job as a front desk clerk at a hotel. My front desk clerk position was full time, which made it difficult to maintain two jobs. I then decided to stay with my full time job as a front desk clerk.

As my culinary knowledge was beginning to expand in school, I became engaged and had a wedding to plan. Throughout 2012 I was planning my wedding while working full time and going to school part time. In 2013 I finished the spring semester at the local college, and then got married in June. After the honeymoon we moved to Henderson. I wanted to start school at the College of Southern Nevada right away but due to financial constraints, I decided to take a full time front desk position at Hampton Inn and suites in Las Vegas. After working there for a year, I wanted to get back in to food service. I got a job in the airport terminal as a fast food attendant but after 3 months, it did not work out. I decided to move on to something that would give me the ability to go back to school. I found a position at a local church as a barista in their café. The scheduling was flexible enough for me to go back to school, so I enrolled at CSN in the spring of 2015. When the spring semester was coming to an end, I found a job at a fast casual chain restaurant that was brand new, about to open. I started working there with the intent to advance to a supervisor position. After 9 months, I reached my goal and was promoted to a supervisor.

In 2016 I was still working full time as a supervisor at the fast casual restaurant when I was offered a position as a line cook at Lake Las Vegas for a golf course. I am currently working full time at the golf course while I continue my education. Even though I have always held a part time job, I have found some time to donate to the culinary club at CSN. I volunteered with the club at several events including Chef's for Kids breakfasts, Healthy Kids festival, Sysco foods events, US Foods events, and other catering events provided by CSN. As a member of the club, I was recognized by a former club president as a frequent participant in volunteering events. The former club president granted me a scholarship of one year membership to the ACF Las Vegas chapter.

As a student, I decided to invest in my education by achieving good grades. Maintaining a grade point average of 3.65 was important to me, and within a short time I was offered and accepted a membership to Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. The Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society is offered to students by invitation only. The membership is offered to students who have a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher and have completed 12 units with CSN. While attending school and working in the industry, I have gained experience with working in hotels, fast casual dining, country club dining, along with weddings and banquets including front and back of house experience. I believe that without attending CSN, I would not have been able to reach my goals or have many opportunities to meet industry chefs in the Las Vegas community.

Lynne Turner was one of five children born in Lansing, Michigan to Silas and Ernestine Wilson. Her mother was an educator and was adamant about her children getting a solid education. While growing up it was her sister who would be in the kitchen watching their mother cook, while Lynne was outside playing with the neighborhood children.

At 29 Lynne Got married and widowed soon thereafter. She was the mother of one daughter Chelsea who changed her life and forced her to make good on her mother's desire for all her children to have a quality education. Her daughter grew up and moved to Las Vegas making Lynne an empty nester, so Lynne went back to college first obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree in Management to be followed by a Master of Arts in Ministry Leadership both from Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids Michigan. After completing MIT courses at Christian Embassy Worship Center, Lynne became a Licensed minister.

With everything Lynne had accomplished, there was still a void; while living alone, Lynne found herself spending a considerable amount of her free time watching the Food Network and Cooking Channel, trying out recipes, she would ask her Pastor if she could cook for their family on Sundays to which he and his wife agreed; that was the beginning of her culinary career.

Lynne eventually followed her daughter and family to Las Vegas, NV in 2012. There was an underlying urge to continue cooking, that eventually evolved to the desire to become a chef. Lynne decided to go through a tour at Le Cordon Bleu where she visually saw herself cooking in the kitchens. After a second tour, Lynne enrolled in the Culinary Arts Program where she learned the skills she needed to be a successful chef. Lynne maintained a perfect 4.0 GPA throughout her tenure at Le Cordon Bleu and was consistently on the President's Honor Roll for both GPA and Attendance; she never missed a day of class.

Lynne competed in competitions at the school winning the opportunity to work with Food Network Chef Penny Davidi on more than one occasion. Lynne's passion for cooking went beyond competition, she simply wanted to learn as much as possible so she volunteered for several events and staged at several upscale restaurants to add to her knowledge.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Pellegrino Challenge - Prep Work - January 2015
- Chefs for Kids Benefit Auction - Auction Runner - February 2015
- Emerald at Queensridge - Stage, Prep Work - May 2015
- Sage Restaurant - Aria Hotel and Casino - Stage, Garde Manger - February/March 2016
- Private Party - Food Network, Chef Penny Davidi - January/March 2016
- Hearthstone - Red Rock Hotel and Casino - Stage Prep Cook - May/ June 2016
- Pellegrino Challenge - Prep Work - January 2015
- Taste of Excellence - World Market - Chef De Partie/Sushi Station - March 2015
- Emerald at Queensridge - Stage, Chef De Partie/Soup Station - June 2015
- Taste of Excellence - SLS Hotel - March 2016
- Bouchon Restaurant - Venetian Hotel and Casino - Stage - Garde Manger - April 2016

Other special events include catering for celebrities such as Dr. Bobby Jones from BET's Bobby Jones Gospel, as well as Grammy and Stellar Award Winning Gospel Artist John P. Kee.

Events:

- Stellar Awards Dinner - Bobby Jones PhD March 2015
- Churban Night - Christian Embassy Worship Center (220 in attendance) July 2014
- Churban Night - Christian Embassy Worship Center (300 in attendance) April 2014
- Next Level Tour - Artist John P. Kee and New Life Ministries (Pre-show/Green Room) Oct 2015, Oct 2016
- Private Parties

One of Lynne's goals was to be an active member of the ACF. When Lynne was told of the opportunity to start as a student member, she jumped at the chance to join with the intent to remain and active member of the Federation.

Lynne is currently Garde Manger at the upscale restaurant of Chef Kim Cateenwalla and restaurateur Elizabeth Blau, Andiron Steak and Sea in Downtown Summerlin. Lynne is also the owner of Serenity Catering in here in Las Vegas.



Lynne Turner
Le Cordon Bleu