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Trial by frying pan

Pupils test cooking, management skills by hosting banquet

By LAURA EMERSON
VIEW STAFF WRITER

For the fifth time, UNLV students got the chance to work with a celebrity chef as part of the requirements for their chef artist class.



duane prokop/ViewChelsea Adams, a Harrah Hotel College student at UNLV, makes macaroni and cheese truffles for a fundraising banquet. Students served about 120 meals at the event.

Earlier this month, culinary and hospitality students from the Harrah Hotel College worked side by side with chef Kerry Simon as they fulfilled their class duties. As part of the eight-week chef artist class, about 10 students plan and execute a fundraising banquet that is held at the college inside UNLV's Stan Fulton Building.



Duane Prokop/ViewJonathan Grant, left, a Harrah Hotel College student at UNLV, cooks scallops with chef Kerry Simon, owner of Simon at Palms Place and CatHouse at the Luxor, on Oct. 15 during a fundraising banquet inside the school's Stan Fulton Building. Students learned the ins and outs of putting on such an event as part of the class.

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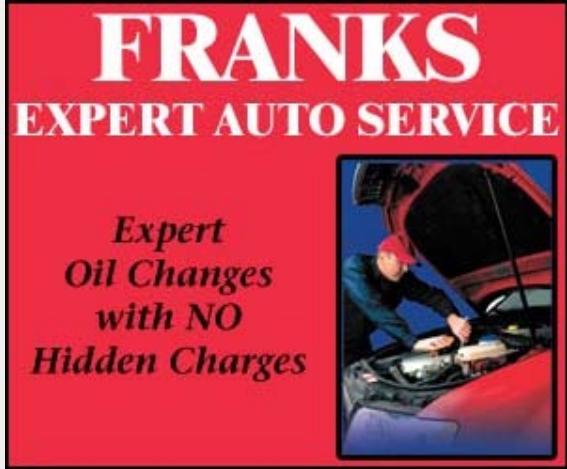
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At the beginning of the semester, Donald Wood, a professor in the food and beverage department, gauged students' interest in the jobs that go along with executing a banquet. Positions were assigned, then the students got to work.



Before the banquet, students learn sequence of service, beverage management, menu planning, restaurant management and food preparation. During service, students learn how a professional chef runs a kitchen, plating techniques and front-of-house etiquette.

Kate Novak, a senior majoring in lodging and resort management, was Wood's student intern for this semester's chef artist class.

"We get to learn hands on how to run a banquet," Novak said. "You can only learn so much out of a book."

Because the students were paired with Simon, who is known as a rock 'n' roll chef, the UNLV students went with a laid-back, rock 'n' roll motif for their linens and centerpieces. In addition to students taking the chef artist class, students in the hotel college can volunteer to serve the meals on the night of service.

On Oct. 15, the UNLV students served about 120 meals. Simon planned a menu that included hors d'oeuvres and a four-course meal for each diner.

"Throughout the semester, he has been coming to our classes," Novak said. "It's a very cool, unique class."

Simon owns the restaurants Simon at Palms Place and CatHouse at the Luxor. Proceeds from the event benefit a scholarship fund for students and faculty in the food and beverage department.

Khalil Tiner is a senior majoring in culinary arts and was the student executive chef for the event.

"This has been good management preparation," Tiner said. "Everything I've learned in my previous classes, I've

applied to this class."

St. Francis Winery and Vineyards in Sonoma County, Calif., and Lee's Discount Liquor provided the wine selections for the banquet.

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