TAFE Illawarra Takes on Australia’s Largest Apprentice Chef Culinary Competition

TAFE Illawarra took part in the largest Apprentice Chef Culinary Competition in Australia at the regional Illawarra event which was held at TAFE Illawarra’s Wollongong Campus on Wednesday 25 July 2012. Thirteen competitors from around the region took part.

The competition is run by Hospitality Training Network (HTN) and open to all apprentices and trainees. Each regional heat consisted of the preparation and presentation of a pre-determined menu. The menu had to be suitable for service in an upmarket food service operation and a menu card was also provided.

Each competitor was required to create two portions of the following dishes. First Year Apprentices/Trainees had to prepare a rack of lamb (main) and chocolate tart (dessert). Second Year Apprentices prepared a tasting plate (entrée) and lamb backstrap with port wine jus (main). Third Year Apprentices prepared a confit of chicken wings with pan fried scallops, parsnip, truffle vinaigrette and baby herbs (Entrée), Assiette of Lamb and Madeira Jus (Main) and chocolate mousse and strawberry coulis (dessert). The dishes had to be prepared and served within three and a half hours.

“The competition provides an opportunity for apprentices and trainees to display the skills they have gained through their TAFE studies and in their workplace,” said Gabrielle Frawley, Head Teacher Commercial Cookery and Catering.

“It’s not very often apprentices have the chance to compete against their peers locally and nationally, and some students travel from as far as Bega just to compete,” added Ms Frawley.

Apprentices or Trainees who achieved first place in the regional competition will be automatically invited to compete in the Grand Final, to be held in Sydney on Tuesday 28 August 2012.

The first placed competitor in each apprenticeship year at the Grand Final will each receive prize money of $2,500.

The prize for the highest scoring HTN Apprentice Chef at the Grand Final Cook Off is a new motor scooter and helmet valued at over $2,900.

The competition was judged by various HTN officials, TAFE Illawarra Commercial Cookery teachers and some professional Chefs from the Illawarra region.