



AMERICAN CULINARY FEDERATION PRESS RELEASE

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Four Chefs Vie for Title of ACF Central Region Chef of the Year Next Month **Chefs from Illinois, Michigan, Missouri and Texas face off to be named best chef in region.**

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla., February 25, 2010—Four of the best professional chefs in the Central region will step out of their kitchens and onto the competition floor as they vie for the title of American Culinary Federation (ACF) Central Region Chef of the Year. The competition, sponsored by Unilever Foodsolutions, takes place Friday, March 26, at The Chef's Academy, Indianapolis. The competition takes place during the 2010 ACF Central Regional Conference held at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown, March 26-28.

The Central Region Chef of the Year award recognizes an outstanding culinarian who works and cooks in a full-service dining facility. This person demonstrates the highest standard of culinary skills, advances the cuisine of America and gives back to the profession through the development of students and apprentices.

Chefs were first nominated by colleagues for their high standards, outstanding culinary skills and a reputation for cooking American regional cuisine. At the competition, chefs will have 15 minutes to set up, 60 minutes to fabricate and cook four portions of their dish, 10 minutes to plate the dish and 15 minutes to clean up. A panel of judges will select the winner based on cooking skills, taste and professionalism. The winner will be announced at the Celebrating Regional Excellence Awards Gala, Sunday, March 28. The winner will represent the Central region in the national competition in Anaheim, Calif., in August. Here are the 2010 ACF Central Region Chef of the Year candidates:



Illinois

Michael Garbin, CEC, AAC, of Naperville, Ill., is executive chef at the Union League Club of Chicago, voted America's No. 1 city club in 2009 by Club Leaders Forum. He has worked at the club since 1992, and currently directs all culinary operations for the club and oversees a staff of 50 people. Prior to joining the staff at the club, he worked as executive chef at Wigwam Golf Resort & Spa, Litchfield Park, Ariz. Garbin earned an associate degree from Orange County Community College, Middletown, N.Y., in 1974, and an associate degree from The Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, N.Y., in 1976. He has received numerous awards, including Share Our Strength's 2003 Central Region Chef of the Year Award. In 2008, he was inducted into the Honorable Order of the Golden Toque. Garbin is founder and past president of ACF Windy City Professional Culinarians Inc.



Michigan

Randy Emert, CEC, CCA, of Orion, Mich., is executive chef at Great Oaks Country Club, Rochester, Mich., where he has worked since 2001. He is also an adjunct chef-instructor at Schoolcraft College, Livonia, Mich. Prior to joining the staff at Great Oaks, he worked as an adjunct professor at Oakland Community College, Farmington, Mich., and at Henry Ford Community College, Dearborn, Mich. Emert has held executive chef positions at The Golden Mushroom, Southfield, Mich., and Paint Creek Cider Mill

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Restaurant, Rochester, Mich. In 1993, he earned an associate degree from Schoolcraft College. Emert is president of ACF Michigan Chefs de Cuisine Association, and is a member of the Michigan Restaurant Association and Michigan Wine Association.



Missouri

James “Kevin” Storm, CEC, CCA, AAC, of Ballwin, Mo., has been executive chef at Bellerive Country Club, St. Louis, since 1996. Before that, he held executive chef positions at Indian Hills Country Club, Mission Hills, Kan., and the University Club, St. Louis. He has a grand diploma from LaVarenne Ecole de Cuisine, Paris, and an associate degree from Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kan. Storm was a coach for ACF Culinary Youth Team USA, which placed fourth overall in the world among youth teams at the 2008 *Internationale Kochkunst Ausstellung* (IKA), also known as the “culinary Olympics,” in Erfurt, Germany. He is a member of Chefs de Cuisine Association of St. Louis Inc.



Texas

Alex Darvishi, CEC, AAC, of Kingwood, Texas, is executive chef at Houston Country Club, Houston. He has held positions at numerous restaurants and country clubs in Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas. He holds an associate degree in culinary management and a bachelor's degree in business management. Darvishi has won numerous awards throughout his career, including ACF's 2000 Chef Professionalism Award. Darvishi has won multiple gold medals and earned a perfect score at the 1998, 1992, 2000 and 2004 *Internationale Kochkunst Ausstellung* (IKA), or “culinary Olympics,” in Erfurt, Germany. He says one of his major career accomplishments is having coached three junior teams from different states to ACF Student Team National Championships. Darvishi is a member of ACF Professional Chefs Association of Houston.

Hundreds of chefs, cooks and foodservice professionals will attend the three-day culinary event in Indianapolis. There will be educational seminars, culinary demos, networking and social functions, culinary competitions, meal events and more. For information, or to register to attend, visit www.acfchefs.org or call (800) 624-9458.

Sponsors of the 2010 ACF Central Regional Conference and ACF national award sponsors are: American Technical Publishers; Avocados from Mexico; Canada Cutlery Inc.; Central Region State Beef Councils; The Cheesecake Factory Bakery Inc.; Custom Culinary, Inc.; Diamond Crystal Salt; Gordon Food Service; Heinz North America; Kendall College; King & Prince Seafood; Koch Foods, Inc.; MARS Food Services; MenuMax; MINOR'S®; Nestle Waters; NEWCHEF Fashion Inc.; Nueske's Applewood Smoked Meats; Produce Marketing Association; R.L. Schreiber, Inc.; Riviana Foods Inc.; Splenda®; The Sterno Group; Sysco Foodservice; Tyson Food Service; Unilever Foodsolutions; US Foodservice; Vitamix Corp.; and Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board.

The American Culinary Federation, Inc., established in 1929, is the premier professional organization for culinarians in North America. With more than 22,000 members spanning 230 chapters nationwide, ACF is the culinary leader in offering educational resources, training, apprenticeship and accreditation. In addition, ACF operates the most comprehensive certification program for chefs in the United States. ACF is home to ACF Culinary Team USA, the official representative for the United States in major international culinary competitions, and to the Chef & Child Foundation, founded in 1989 to promote proper nutrition in children and to combat childhood obesity. For more information, visit www.acfchefs.org.

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TO ARRANGE INTERVIEWS, FOR A HIGH-RES PHOTO OR FOR PRESS CREDENTIALS TO ATTEND, CONTACT PATRICIA CARROLL OR LEAH CRAIG.