

PRESS RELEASE

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FIRST AMERICAN, FEMALE TO WIN THE PRESTIGIOUS TITLE, "BEST YOUNG COOK IN THE WORLD"

Keriann Von-Raesfeld of the Professional Culinary Institute first female to win renowned international title in Dubai

Campbell, Calif. – May 19, 2008 – The prestigious title, "Best Young Cook in the World" has been awarded to 22-year-old Keriann Von-Raesfeld, a graduate of the Professional Culinary Institute's (PCI) Culinary Arts program and a current student of their Baking and Pastry Arts program. On Wednesday, May 14, 2008, Von-Raesfeld, took first place in a competition against 17 other countries including Germany, who placed second and Portugal, who placed third, in the *Hans Bueschkens World Junior Chefs' Challenge* at the World Association of Chefs Societies' (WACS) biennial 2008 Congress held in Dubai. Von-Raesfeld, a member of the American Culinary Federation's Santa Clara Valley Chapter, was sponsored in part by Custom Culinary, Inc.

In response to what it feels like to be the best young cook in the world, Von-Raesfeld says she has enjoyed seeing her hard work pay off, and is appreciative and thankful to the PCI team, including her mentor and team coach Randy Torres. "Without the support of the PCI team, I would not be where I am today," says Von-Raesfeld. "This is the greatest feeling ever!"

As a result of winning this biennial competition, Von-Raesfeld was awarded an educational trip to Bavaria, Germany, a stunning trophy with her name engraved, and the honor of being recognized as the best young cook in the world. Von-Raesfeld is the first female and the first American to win this competition since its inception in 2002.

"I am thrilled at yet another extraordinary accomplishment of PCI," says Richard Battista, president of PCI. "We have had a long list of unprecedented accomplishments in our short history. I am so proud of Keriann having won the world title in Dubai; it sure is a testament to who we are, what we do, and how well we do it at PCI. I attribute this to our tremendous staff of very talented and accomplished chef instructors, especially Chef Randy Torres our culinary department chair whose hard work and dedication has paid off in real dividends working with the students at PCI."

Participants in the *Hans Bueschkens World Junior Chefs' Challenge* were given a mystery basket and three and a half hours to complete a three course meal. Von-Raesfeld's meal included: first course, crab stuffed ravioli with a crusted salmon, and sautéed fennel and tomato with a citrus beurre blanc; entrée, duo of lamb, which included a lamb leg and roasted lamb rack with an eggplant puree, roasted potatoes, and sautéed asparagus and mushrooms; dessert, chocolate mousse with raspberry filling, a butter cookie and a vanilla mango salad with a salted caramel sauce.

WACS is a global network of chefs associations first founded in October, 1928 at the Sorbonne in Paris. The biennial WACS Congress brings together over 1,000 of the world's leading leisure industry professionals. Operating in more than 73 member countries, WACS represents over 10 million professional chefs, and is recognized as a global voice on all issues related to the culinary industry.

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The PCI campus, located in Campbell, in the heart of the Silicon Valley, includes seven teaching kitchens, all designed by chefs; two ultra modern kitchen demonstration theatres; a wine cellar classroom; a student library and resources center, complete with computer terminals, wireless internet access and a wide range of reference material; and computer labs. For more information about PCI and its culinary, baking and pastry arts, hotel and restaurant management and sommelier programs, visit www.pcichef.com or call toll free 1-888-PCI-CHEF.

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About the Professional Culinary Institute

Founded by Chef Richard Battista in 2005, the Professional Culinary Institute (PCI) is a premier chef-owned culinary school located in the heart of the Silicon Valley in Campbell, California. Offering full- and part-time programs in culinary arts, baking and pastry arts, a certified sommelier program, and a hospitality management program, PCI offers small class sizes, renowned instructors, state-of-the-art equipment and facility, a required paid externship and an Artisense method of teaching that is unique to PCI. Degrees and diplomas offered at PCI include: Diploma of Essential Professional Culinary Skills, Diploma of Essential Professional Baking and Pastry Skills, Certified Sommelier, and Associates of Occupational Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management. To learn more about PCI, visit www.pcichef.com or call toll free, 1-888-PCI-LEARN.