

PRESS RELEASE

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PROFESSIONAL CULINARY INSTITUTE RECEIVES ACF EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARD

Keriann Von-Raesfeld and Chef Randy Torres Receive Prestigious 2008 ACF Presidential Medallions

CAMPBELL, Calif. – July 15, 2008 – The Professional Culinary Institute (PCI), the premier chef-owned culinary school located in Campbell, California, in the heart of the Silicon Valley, was recognized by the American Culinary Federation (ACF) at its annual National Conference held at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas during the General Session on July 14, 2008.

PCI was awarded a very special recognition – the ACF Excellence in Education award – during a ceremony that took place in front of some of the best culinary artists in the country. The ACF Excellence in Education award recognizes PCI as one of America's premier culinary schools. This marks the first time the ACF has given this award. With every American culinary school a possible candidate, PCI was selected for this high honor.

"I was pleasantly surprised," said PCI President Richard Battista. "We are very humbled and appreciative to have been recognized for our many accomplishments and outstanding programs. We've certainly worked hard and take this wonderful award as a great compliment from the ACF for all of our achievements. As one of the United States' premier culinary schools, we will continue to strive toward excellence."

In addition, two members of the PCI team were awarded the prestigious ACF Presidential Medallions. PCI's Culinary Arts Department Chair, Randy Torres and Culinary Arts student, Keriann Von-Raesfeld each received the ACF 2008 Presidential Medallion. This award recognizes their commitment and service to the standards and excellence which the ACF exemplifies.

While it is highly unusual for a student to win an ACF Presidential Medallion, Von-Raesfeld's extraordinary talent puts her among the best in the culinary industry, even at 22-years-old. In May 2008, Von-Raesfeld was the first female to win the title, "Best Young Cook in the World" at the *Hans Bueschgens World Junior Chefs' Challenge* at the World Association of Chefs Societies' biennial 2008 Congress held in Dubai. In addition, Von-Raesfeld was the only female to compete, and the first female to win, the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs National Young Chef Rôtisseur Competition, which was held at Johnson & Wales University in Charlotte, N.C. earlier this year. As a result of winning this competition, Von-Raesfeld will be moving on to Paris, France in September where she will represent the United States in the international competition, The Concours International Des Jeunes Commis Rôtisseurs.

Torres, who has been a respected culinary instructor and department chair at PCI since 2004, is a member of the U.S. Culinary Olympic Team and will represent the United States in the Culinary Olympics this October in Erfurt, Germany. This quadrennial event will attract more than 1,000 chefs from more than 30 countries, all competing for the gold, silver and bronze medals. Torres is PCI's Team Manager and – in addition to coaching many culinary arts and baking and pastry arts students over the years – has assisted Von-Raesfeld in soaring to the top of nearly every competition she has entered.

To learn more about PCI, visit www.pcichef.com or call toll free, 1-888-PCI-LEARN. For more information about the ACF National Conference, which is being held through Thursday, July 17, 2008, please visit www.acfchefs.org.

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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 Hospitality Management. To learn more about PCI, visit www.pcichef.com or call toll free, 1-888-PCI-LEARN