Colorado’s Aran Essig, CEC, CCA, Receives 2010 ACF Western Region Chef Professionalism Award

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla., February 9, 2010—Aran Essig, certified executive chef (CEC), certified culinary administrator (CCA), of Loveland, Colo., received the American Culinary Federation, Inc., (ACF) Western Region Chef Professionalism award at the 2010 ACF Western Regional Conference held at the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque, Albuquerque, N.M., Feb. 6-8.

Sponsored by Minor’s, the ACF Western Region Chef Professionalism award is presented annually to the culinarian who exemplifies the highest standards of professionalism through certification, continuing education and training, culinary competitions and community involvement. As this year’s Western Region recipient, Essig is a candidate to receive the national 2010 Chef Professionalism award that will be presented at ACF’s national convention in Anaheim, Calif., Aug. 2-5.

Essig has served as executive chef/trainer at the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colo., since 1998. There, he develops menus and oversees five unit operations and 6,000 meals a day and catering for presidential and VIP events. Previous positions include working as a baker at Il Fornio, Denver; sauté chef at Rocky Mountain Diner, Denver, and chef at Pebblewood Country Club, Bridgman, Mich. Essig continually serves his community, from conducting elementary school cooking demonstrations to coordinating university donations to a local food bank.

In 1998, Essig earned an associate degree in applied science in culinary arts from The Art Institute of Colorado, Denver (formerly known as The Colorado Institute of Art). The following year, he studied in France through an overseas culinary education program. Essig has competed in several culinary competitions, earning numerous medals and recognition. In 2009, he was named Community Nutrition Role Model for the Colorado Dietetics Association. In 2007, the University of Northern Colorado named him Professional Employee of the Year. Colleagues say Essig exemplifies culinary excellence and dedication, and stresses the importance of continued education. He has been a member of ACF since 1999, and served as president of ACF Colorado Chefs Association in 2005. Essig is also a member of the Colorado Restaurant Association, the National Association of College and University Food Service and the National Restaurant Association.

Chosen for its New Mexican cuisine, scenic beauty and entertainment options, Albuquerque was the location of the 2010 ACF Western Regional Conference hosted by ACF Rio Grande Valley Chapter.
Bringing chefs, cooks and foodservice professionals to the city, the conference provided attendees with opportunities to advance their professional development and enhance their culinary skills through business seminars, cooking demonstrations featuring the latest trends and techniques, cooking competitions and awards.

Sponsors of the 2010 ACF Western Regional Conference and ACF national award sponsors are: American Technical Publishers; Avocados from Mexico; Barry Callebaut; Ben E. Keith; Boyd Coffee Company; California Rice Commission; Canada Cutlery Inc.; The Colorado Potato Administrative Committee; Custom Culinary, Inc.; Diamond Crystal Salt; Fisher-Nickel Inc.; King & Prince Seafood; Koch Foods, Inc.; MARS Food Services; MenuMax; Minor's®; NEWCHEF Fashion Inc.; R.L. Schreiber, Inc.; Riviana Foods Inc.; Shamrock Foods Company; Splenda®; Sterling Silver Premium Meats; Sysco New Mexico, LLC; TexaSweet Citrus Marketing, Inc.; The Sterno Group; Tyson Food Service; Unilever Foodsolutions; U.S. 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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