State University of New York at Delhi Students Named 2010 National Student Team Champions Following Competition in Anaheim

St. Augustine, Fla., August 9, 2010—Since September 2009, students at the State University of New York at Delhi, Delhi, N.Y., members of ACF Chefs and Cooks of the Catskill Mountains, have been preparing for the American Culinary Federation (ACF) 2010 National Student Team Championship, sponsored by R.L. Schreiber, Inc. All of that practice — more than 30 hours a week — finally paid off Aug. 5 when the team earned a gold medal and was named national champions at the 2010 ACF National Convention held at the Anaheim Marriott, Anaheim, Calif., Aug. 2-5.

“Seeing the team finally take home a national championship was a dream come true,” said Victor Sommo, CEC, the team’s coach who was team captain of the first two student teams to compete many years ago. “This team is driven and passionate about food, but the thing that made them so great was the synergy they had with each other. They were no conflicts; they just cooked and had fun the entire time.”

Teams from SUNY-Delhi have made it to the national competition four previous times — 2001, 2003, 2007 and 2008 — but have never won the national title. To prepare for the competition, the team — Chase Devine, Julie Hernandez, Kenneth Liranzo, Joseph Michaud and Sarah Thurgood — sold its practice meals to the public three days a week. Thomas Recinella, CEC, AAC, served as team manager, and James Margiotta served as an assistant coach. The team’s final score was 37.10.

In second place, earning a silver medal with a score of 35.55, was ACF Louis Joliet Chapter. Team members are students at Joliet Junior College, Joliet, Ill.: James Bingham, Matthew Cappellini, CC, Lindsey Ciszewski, Molly Meehan and Lauren Mulvey. The team was coached by Timothy Bucci, CEC, CCE, CHE, and Kyle Richardson, CEC, CCE, CHE, AAC.

Santa Clara Valley Chapter took home third place and a silver medal with a score of 32.54. Team members are students at Professional Culinary Institute, Campbell, Calif.: Sarah Ho, Patricia Liu, Reilly Meehan, Khuong Nguyen and Tiffany Young. The team was coached by Jeremy MacVeigh and managed by Randy Torres, CEC.

In fourth place, earning a silver medal with a score of 32.21, was ACF Chefs of the Low Country, Bluffton, S.C. Team members are students at Savannah Technical College in Savannah, Ga.: Valarie Barnes, Zebulon Berry, Elizabeth Estes, Alexander Jabr and Kevin Jump. The team was coached by Jean Vendeville, CEPC.

The ACF Student Team Championship, established in 1992, is designed to raise the standards of culinary excellence and professionalism among students, promote camaraderie and educational opportunities, and act -more-
as a staging area for research and development of culinary concepts. Each of the four teams first competed and won state and regional competitions (the Delhi team won gold medals at both competitions). At the regional awards ceremonies, each team received $1,000 from the American Academy of Chefs (AAC), ACF’s honor society, to assist them with expenses to travel to Anaheim. In addition, teams received $1,100 and financial support for convention registration from R.L. Schreiber, Inc.

At the national competition, teams prepared a four-course signature menu, with 24 portions of each course. Teams had 3 hours, 20 minutes to prep and cook, and 60 minutes to plate up and serve. There was a 30-minute setup window and a 30-minute cleanup window. A panel of distinguished judges selected the winning team.

For a list of past Student Team National Champions, visit www.acfchefs.org/Content/NavigationMenu2/Events/Competitions1/Student/Winners/default.htm.

Anaheim was the location of the 2010 ACF National Convention, bringing approximately 2,000 chefs, cooks, students and foodservice professionals to the Golden State. The national convention provided attendees with numerous opportunities to advance their professional development and enhance their culinary skills through informative workshops and seminars, cutting-edge demonstrations, a trade show featuring more than 95 exhibitors, national competitions and ACF’s annual national awards.

Sponsors of the 2010 ACF National Convention are: Allen Brothers; American Technical Publishers; Barilla America, Inc.; Barry Callebaut; Beef Information Center; BelGioioso Cheese Inc.; Buckhead Beef; Butterball Farms, Inc.; California Olive Ranch; Canada Cutlery Inc.; Canola Council of Canada; The Catfish Institute; The Cheesecake Factory Bakery Inc.; Chef’s Hat Inc.; Christopher Ranch; Cleveland Range, LLC; Contessa Premium Foods; Custom Culinary, Inc.; Diamond Crystal Salt; Dietz & Watson, Inc.; Ecolab; Eneron, Inc.; Fisher-Nickel Inc.; Five Star Gourmet Foods, Inc.; French’s Foodservice; GFF, Inc./Girard’s Dressings; Guittard Chocolate Co.; Hudson Valley Foie Gras; The International Culinary Schools at The Art Institutes; J.R. Simplot Company; Johnson & Wales University; Kingsburg Orchids; King & Prince Seafood; Koch Foods, Inc.; Lactalis; Le Cordon Bleu Schools North America; MARS Food Services; McCormick For Chefs; MenuMax; Michael Foods, Inc.; MINOR’S®; Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch; NEWCHEF Fashion Inc.; Plugrá European-Style Butter; PreGel AMERICA; Rastelli; Riviana Foods Inc.; R.L. Schreiber, Inc.; Saputo Cheese; Sara Lee Foodservice; The Schwan Food Company; Smeralina; Splenda®; The Sterno Group; S&D Coffee; Tanimura & Antle Fresh Foods, Inc.; Tyson Food Service; Unilever Foodsolutions; U.S. Foodservice; Victorinox Swiss Army, Inc; Villeroy & Boch; VitaMix Corp.; Washington State Potato Commission; and Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board.

About the American Culinary Federation
The American Culinary Federation, Inc., established in 1929, is the premier professional organization for culinarians in North America. With more than 20,000 members in 225 chapters nationwide, ACF is the culinary leader in offering educational resources, training, apprenticeship and programmatic 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.

Editor’s Note: To arrange an interview or for a high-res photo from the event, contact Leah Craig at (904) 484-0213 or lcraig@acfchefs.net, or Patricia Carroll at (904) 484-0247 or pcarroll@acfchefs.net.

To download team photos, visit www.acfchefs.org/Content/NavigationMenu2/About/Media/Photos/default.htm.