ACF CULINARY TEAM USA excelling on the global stage

EXCELLING ON THE GLOBAL STAGE
By Michelle Whitfield

THE JOURNEY FOR ACF CULINARY TEAM USA 2012 came to a successful conclusion at the 23rd annual Internationale Kochkunst Ausstellung (IKA), Oct. 5-10, in Erfurt, Germany. All ACF Culinary Team USA teams—national, military, regional and youth—finished in the top 10, with a medal count of two gold and five silver, proving that American cuisine continues to excel on the global stage.

The IKA is a melting pot of chefs of the highest caliber from around the world and is considered the most challenging and prestigious competition in the industry. This year, more than 1,500 chefs representing 54 countries participated in team and individual competitions. ACF Culinary Team USA 2012 has dedicated countless hours to improving and enhancing the flavors and technique of their dishes. They were honed and proud to represent the American chef and showcase American cuisine in this tough competition.

The teams arrived in Germany a few days before the official start of the IKA Friday, Oct. 5, to begin their preparations. The national, youth and regional teams were graciously hosted at TBZ Eisenach, a technical school in Thuringia. Chef Sören Billhardt, the school’s culinary department chair, and his team were excited to have members of ACF Culinary Team USA at the school. They went above and beyond, from preparing meals and ordering fresh ingredients to staying open on a holiday and over the weekend to provide support.

Through teamwork and perseverance, the teams overcame several hurdles, including a damaged tabletop, ingredients held in customs and a long, twisty transportation route from Thuringia to Erfurt. The passion and dedication of the team members and support team was evident as they pushed themselves to the limit to deliver food of the highest quality for the competition.

The atmosphere during Friday’s opening ceremony was indescribable as the countries marched into the hall, proudly representing their nation and cuisine. It was an unforgettable moment for team members as they stood in front the cheering crowd of friends, families and peers.

NATIONAL TEAM

Adrenaline was running high as national team members stepped into the kitchen for their first competition Sunday, and the team gave a stellar performance. They impressed the judges and guests with flavorful dishes reflecting current American cuisine trends using American products, and earned a silver medal. The menu of sauteed black cod with chive butter sauce, roasted Strip loin with a red wine sauce, and chocolate Bavarian bar with almond cake and vanilla custard is available for download at www.acfchefs.org/ika. The cold-food display showcased the national team’s exceptional skill and technique, receiving the second highest score and missing the gold medal by less than a point. Overall, the national team placed sixth out of 35 competing countries.
ACF MEMBER TEAMS
2012 Michigan “culinary Olympic” Team, ACF
Michigan Chefs de Cuisine Association
Randy Smith, CEC, team manager; Doug Ganhs,
CEC, team captain; Brian Beland, CMC; Shawn
Loving, CEC, CCA; John Miller, CEC; Sarah
Rougeau, CSC; and Gabriel Vera
Sullivan University, Louisville, Ky.
Derek Spendlove, CEPC, CCE, AAC, team coach;
Kendall Knies; Jordyn Moseley; Kelsee Newman;
and Halie Raymer

ACF INDIVIDUAL COMPETITORS
Michelle Brown
Scott Craig, CEC, CCA
Stafford DeCambra, CEC, CCE, CCA, AAC
Lawrence Matson, CEC, CCE, AAC
Patrick Mitchell, CEC, AAC
Scott O’Farrell, CEC, CEPC, CCA
Michael Scott, CEC, AAC
Daryl Shular
Mark Spelman, CEC, AAC

YOUTH TEAM
The youth team was exceptionally strong
and disciplined in the hot kitchen, and pre-
pared extremely flavorful dishes with a
high degree of professionalism. They were
awarded a gold medal and were overjoyed
and full of pride for winning gold for their
country when they heard the results next
day. Team members worked hard on their
cold-food display, paying special attention
to detail, and earned a silver medal. Overall,
the youth team placed fifth out of 25 com-
peting countries.

REGIONAL TEAM
The regional team was the first ACF
Culinary Team USA 2012 team to compete
and experience the high expectations of the
judges, presenting their cold-food display
Saturday. The team focused intensely on
preparing skillful platters and received posi-
tive feedback from the judges. Overall, the
team received a silver medal, missing gold
by only a point, and placed fourth out of 46

MILITARY TEAM (USACAT)
The U.S. Army Culinary Arts Team (USACAT) gave a strong showing in both
cold-food display and hot kitchen. The team
shone during the hot kitchen, serving hot
and flavorful food of the highest quality, and
earned a gold medal. The USACAT team
delivered a cold-food display with discipline
and precision, resulting in silver. Overall,
the team placed fourth.

Supporters
Gold
Silver
Bronze
Cobalt
Copper

It takes an incredible amount of dedica-
tion, effort, and commitment to compete at
the international level. Congratulations to
ACF Culinary Team USA members on suc-
cessfully representing ACF and their coun-
try on the global stage. Special thanks to the
generous sponsors, ACF chapters and mem-
bers for their unwavering support and belief
in ACF Culinary Team USA.

Experience the journey with day-by-day up-
dates and photos on www.acfchefs.org/ika.