Certified Master Chef Aidan Murphy Places Third Overall at International WACS Global Chefs Challenge and Wins Food-and-Wine Pairing

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla., May 20, 2008 – Aidan Murphy, certified master chef (CMC), American academy of chefs (AAC), executive chef at Old Warson Country Club, St. Louis, placed third overall and first in the food-and-wine-pairing category in the inaugural Global Chefs Challenge, sponsored in part by Unilever Foodsolutions, held at the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS) Congress in Dubai, May 12-15.

Murphy, a member of Chefs de Cuisine Association of St. Louis Inc., represented the Americas as he competed against six other finalists representing Africa, Asia, Central Europe, Northern Europe, Pacific Rim and Southern Europe. Toines Smulders of The Netherlands was declared the winner and Norway’s Tom Victor Gausdal placed second.

“As with all competitions, it was a wonderful learning experience, and the Dubai Chefs Guild along with Chef Reimund Pitz put on a great competition,” said Murphy. “This was the inaugural competition, masterminded by Chef Ferdinand Metz, and I believe it will grow to be a world-renowned competition in the years to come.”

Competitors constructed menus based on a market basket, which was presented the day before the competition. Chefs prepared and presented a four-course menu for eight, including a starter, entrée, main course and dessert. A panel of international judges evaluated, among other criteria, cleanliness, sanitation, work habits, professional presentation, apprentice supervision, timing and proper use of ingredients. Two wine experts awarded Murphy first place for the best food-and-wine pairing.

“Aidan did a remarkable job and we are proud to call him a fellow culinarian. The ability to pair fine cuisine with the most complementary wine is an important skill, but it is arduous. Winning first place in a category judged by international wine experts proves that he truly is a master chef,” said John Kinsella, CMC, CCE, AAC, ACF national president.

Murphy’s winning menu consisted of a chicken crêpe with goat cheese, chicken-stuffed crêpe, beet syrup, smoked and pan seared breast, fruit slaw and carrot coulis as the starter. The entrée was a seafood medley with spiced broth, prawn, salmon terrine, seared scallop, shaved asparagus, tomato petals, and herb-and-roasted-garlic flan. The main course was beef three ways with butter poached and seared loin, barbeque-rib meat and stew-eggplant foam, celeriac silk, fried matchstick potatoes and sautéed vegetables. For dessert, he served a raspberry panna cotta on fruit jelly with raspberry syrup and mint flavored cream.

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Murphy earned the right to represent the Americas when he took first place and a gold medal in the WACS Global Chefs Challenge Continental finals for the Americas July 21, 2007, in Orlando, Fla. Murphy is a longtime competitor. His wins include the 2006 U.S.A.'s Chef of the Year™, sponsored by Unilever Foodsolutions.

Murphy was assisted by his apprentice, Mike Palazzola, a line cook under Murphy at Old Warson Country Club and a member of ACF Culinary Youth Team USA.

The American Culinary Federation, Inc., established in 1929, is the premier professional organization for culinarians in North America. With 20,000 members spanning more than 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 also holds the presidium for the World Association of Chefs Societies, the largest international network of chef associations with more than 8 million members globally. For more information, please visit www.acfchefs.org.

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