American Culinary Federation Press Release

For Immediate Release:
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Memorial Scholarship Fund Honors the Late Chef Johnnie Jones and Continues His Legacy at the Clara White Mission

St. Augustine, Fla., August 11, 2008—After the passing of Johnnie Jones, executive chef/owner of Genesis Café in Jacksonville, Fla., and a member of ACF First Coast Chapter, the Clara White Mission established the Executive Chef Johnnie Jones Memorial Scholarship Fund. The fund will provide opportunities for homeless and low-income students to enter the culinary industry and earn American Culinary Federation (ACF) certification.

Money donated to the scholarship fund will go to the Clara White Mission Culinary Program Inc. Jones introduced the mission to the ACF and its certification process, and helped develop the mission’s culinary program. Since its inception, five students have graduated and there are currently four students enrolled. The program sponsors those who have come from a life of poverty, teaches them basic culinary skills and guides them into a career in the hospitality industry—from getting a uniform to becoming certified through the ACF. Sponsorship is $3,000 per student. Since Jones’ passing on July 23, $1,500 has been donated to the Executive Chef Johnnie Jones Memorial Scholarship Fund, according to Ju’Coby Pittman-Peele, CEO and president of the Clara White Mission.

“The organization has provided meals to the homeless for 100 years. Our founder started to train hostesses and waitresses here during World War I and World War II; we build on the foundation that was already developed, by having volunteers like Johnnie who could actually see the vision and expand what we were doing,” said Pitmann-Peele. “He helped give people a chance to succeed in the hospitality industry through the ACF.”

Jones was an active member of the ACF, serving as chairman of the board of ACF First Coast Chapter. He was president of the chapter from 2006–2007, and was the chapter’s Chef of the Year in 2004. Jones also served the Jacksonville community at St. Nicholas Bethel Baptist Church, and was a member of American Legion Post 244, Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, Jacksonville Northeast Council Chamber of Commerce, Jacksonville Downtown Council Chamber of Commerce and First Coast African American Chamber of Commerce.

According to Pitmann-Peele, this was the first time in the mission’s history that a scholarship fund was established in honor of someone. She says the fund will continue Jones’ legacy for -more-
years to come, by providing a better opportunity for those the mission serves. For more information, or to donate, contact the mission at (904) 354-4162.

**About Clara White Mission Culinary Program Inc.**
The Clara White Mission established a vocational training program in the culinary arts in 2003. The program provides participants with an intensive 625 hours of training. Participants must complete laboratory (kitchen) and academic (classroom) competencies to graduate. Training occurs in 20-week modules, offered twice annually. A certified instructor provides instruction on-site at the Clara White Mission.

The curriculum was tailored specifically to Clara White’s program and is certified by the American Culinary Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education. Culinary students are responsible for the production of 500 meals per day, in addition to catering special events and meetings. Eighty percent of program graduates are placed into employment within 60 days of graduation.

**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 21,500 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. For more information, visit [www.acfchefs.org](http://www.acfchefs.org).

### CONTACT:
Leah Spellman  
Public Relations Specialist  
(800) 624-9458, Ext. 113  
lspellman@acfchefs.net