



AMERICAN CULINARY FEDERATION PRESS RELEASE

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American Culinary Federation Announces Three Certified Master Chefs® After Rigorous Eight-Day Test

The chefs are now among only 68 culinary professionals to hold the distinction, the highest level of certification a U.S. chef can receive

St. Augustine, Fla. and Livonia, Mich., October 10, 2017—After an exciting display of culinary expertise, Gerald Ford, CMC, Joseph Leonardi, CMC, and Shawn Loving, CMC, were named to the prestigious group of culinarians known as Certified Master Chefs® (CMCs®) by the American Culinary Federation (ACF). The ACF Certified Master Chef designation is the highest level of professional certification that a chef can receive in the United States. The 2017 exam took place Sept. 30-Oct. 7 at Schoolcraft College in Livonia, Michigan.

“The American Culinary Federation is proud to honor our 2017 class of Certified Master Chefs,” said ACF National President Stafford DeCambra, CEC, CCE, CCA, AAC. “The skill, creativity and discipline called for by the exam are considerable, and the experience gained is invaluable to the chefs themselves and to the culinarians they mentor. We are inspired by their commitment to the culinary arts and congratulate them on an extraordinary achievement.”



Chefs Joseph Leonardi, Shawn Loving and Gerald Ford received the Certified Master Chef® designation from the American Culinary Federation after completing a rigorous eight-day exam.

The newly certified chefs traveled from across the U.S. to test their culinary mettle.

- [Gerald Ford, CMC](#), winner of the Les Amis d'Escoffier competition in 2010 and former executive chef of Château Robert in Montgaillard, France, is executive sous chef at The Everglades Club in Palm Beach, Florida.
- [Joseph Leonardi, CMC](#), captain of the silver medal-winning 2012 ACF Culinary Team USA and 2009 U.S.A.'s Chef of the Year, is director of culinary operations at The Country Club in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts.
- [Shawn Loving, CMC, CCA](#), is culinary arts department chair at Schoolcraft College. A seasoned culinary competitor, he also served as executive chef for the U.S. men's and women's Olympic basketball teams in Beijing and Rio de Janeiro.

The path to the CMC title requires immense dedication to the craft of cooking and calls upon the candidates to demonstrate their abilities across a broad range of styles and techniques. During the progressive, eight-day practical exam, chefs are tested on healthy cooking, buffet catering, classical cuisine, freestyle cooking, global cuisine, baking and pastry, Continental and Northern European cuisines and "market basket," a mystery basket of ingredients from which they must prepare a five-course meal.

Chefs are evaluated and assessed by current CMCs and earn points based on kitchen skills, presentation and taste, as well as on the leadership they demonstrate in working with a student apprentice each day. Candidates are required to maintain a 75-point average in order to continue.

"A lot of time, dedication and sacrifice went into the CMC exam and it all paid off. I'm delighted that I proved to myself that I'm able to do it," said Joseph Leonardi, CMC. "I had to be sure I was prepared mentally and needed to believe in myself," explained Leonardi. "I felt confident in my skills and ability because chefs train every day. At the end of the day, it's just cooking at the highest level."

Chefs Ford, Leonardi and Loving received their certifications after successfully completing nearly 90 hours of culinary demonstration throughout exam. With the addition of these chefs, there are now 68 current CMCs in the United States.

"The ACF Certified Master Chef designation is a journey of culinary excellence," said Ron DeSantis, CMC, AAC, MBA, and CMC exam evaluator. "Regardless of the outcome of the exam, each chef becomes a better and stronger culinarian. Having been part of the ACF CMC exam for more than 25 years, I am proud that the chefs of our nation have the outstanding craftsmanship required of this level of certification."

CMC and CMPC are the culmination of the progressive ACF credentials that enable foodservice professionals to certify their skill, knowledge and expertise at each stage of their careers.

More information on the 2017 exam and the new Certified Master Chefs can be found at www.acfchefs.org/CMCEXAM.

Editor's note: To arrange interviews or request high-resolution photos, contact Catie Gainor, 610-455-2780, or cgainor@vaultcommunications.com.

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About the American Culinary Federation

The American Culinary Federation, Inc. (ACF), established in 1929, is the standard of excellence for chefs in North America. With more than 17,500 members spanning more than 150 chapters nationwide, ACF is the leading culinary association offering educational resources, training, apprenticeship and programmatic accreditation. In addition, ACF operates the most comprehensive certification program for chefs in the United States, with the Certified Executive Chef®, Certified Sous Chef®, Certified Executive Pastry Chef® and Certified Culinary Educator® designations accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies. The American Culinary Federation Education Foundation is home to ACF Culinary Team USA, the official representative for the United States in major international culinary competitions, and to Chef & Child, founded in 1989 to promote proper nutrition in children and to combat childhood obesity. For more information, visit <http://www.acfchefs.org>. Find ACF on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

About Schoolcraft College

Schoolcraft College is a predominantly two-year public community college, offering classes at three locations and online at www.schoolcraft.edu. The college enrolls more than 30,000 students each year in both credit programs and continuing education and professional development (non-credit) courses. The college has more than 70 different academic majors and programs leading to a skills certificate, certificate, associate degree or post-associate certificate. Schoolcraft College also offers a Bachelor of Science in Culinary and Dietary Operations Management degree. Students also can take advantage of bachelor degree-level courses and programs offered by several university partners on Schoolcraft's campuses or online, and through transfer of credits to other four-year institutions.