

For Immediate Release

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July 19, 2019, Temecula California - Each year, Temecula hosts the Annual So-Cal Chef Open, attracting great - as well as up and coming - chefs to compete head on, for the prized Pinnacle Award. This year's event will be held on August 26th at Pechanga Resort and Casino. With over 650 people in attendance, this event benefits Oak Grove Center, a nonprofit, residential educational and treatment center for children with psychological, emotional, behavioral problems and special needs. Proceeds from the Chef Open specifically help the vocational and culinary programs at Oak Grove.

Acclaimed E.A.T. Temecula Chef Leah Di Bernardo will serve as Lead Judge and will be joined by Daragh Matheson, Executive Chef, Leoness Cellars; Josh Kopelman, Editor, Dining Out San Diego; Dean Thomas, Chef, and Rosie O'Connor, Chef, Provecho Grill.

Competing this year are Chef Kenneth Danko - Devilicious Eatery; Chef Steven Moore- The Trendy Chef; Chef de Cuisine Armando Cota - Avensole Winery; Chef J. Rivas - LatitudebyJR; Chef Angel Tapia - Tap's Taco Catering; Executive Sous Chef Luis Ortega - Westside Cafe-Grill; Chef Martin Corso - The Chef's Grille; Chef Daniel Johnson - Naughty Pig; Chef Kevin Grant - Oak Mountain Winery; Chef Rachel Siripakdi - The Bamboo House Asian Bistro; Chef Andres Casillas - Tacos Express; Chef Giampi Giammanco - Il Tramonto Ristorante; Chef J. Wayman Wells- New Birth Heart & Soul Café; Chef Pete Lent- Pete's Firehouse BBQ; Chef Andy Churchill- 8Bit Brewing; Chef Dylan Soro- Soro's Mediterranean Grill, as well as Executive Sous Chef Sterling King and Chef Matthew Steffen, Cork Fire Kitchen.

Tickets are available online: \$40 for individuals and \$75 for couples.

<https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E232316&id=92>.

Tammy Wilson, CEO said: "Oak Grove provides care for at-risk and special needs youth and their families through building character and instilling hope. The Culinary Creations program at Oak Grove is one of the many programs that allows youth to apply skills they have embraced, skills include customer service, responsibility and teamwork".

Culinary Creations is a vocational program that now is located in the Truax Building in Old Town Temecula. At risk and foster youth are learning culinary, hospitality and customer service as they work in the Bakery under the direction of Executive Pastry Chef and Director of Culinary Instruction Robin Mc Coy. The last two months, youth have competed to create the "winning dessert" judged by a team from Temecula Creek Inn and Cork Fire for the month of July and from The Mill for the month of August. Both times, the desserts created ended up being judged a tie. Desserts are featured at Temecula Creek Inn as well as Culinary Creations through the end

of the month. Beginning in August, Dessert Pizza as well as Snickerdoodle Toffee Ice Cream Sandwich will be featured at both locations. Tammy Wilson stated: "We so appreciate the philanthropy and generosity of our Culinary Champions from Cork Fire and The Mill. The support and encouragement they have given to our youth is commendable. What a great honor it is for these youth to have had the opportunity to work with Robin and to create a dessert that will be on the menu in two great establishments. We are looking forward to our youth providing the desserts for the Chef Open on Aug 26. Funds raised support the vocational and culinary programs at Oak Grove and we so appreciate the community support as we *"change lives one dessert at a time"*.

Oak Grove Center is a nonprofit residential, educational and treatment Center (with multiple campuses) for children throughout California with psychological, emotional and behavioral problems and special needs. Oak Grove Center's mission is to rebuild the lives of at-risk children and their families through education, healing, restoring relationships, building character and instilling hope.

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