

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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TOOWOOMBA LOCAL THROUGH TO TAFE QUEENSLAND IRON CHEF COOKING COMPETITION FINALS

Recently five cookery students from TAFE Queensland South West battled it out for a chance to compete at the TAFE Queensland Iron Chef Cooking Competition final, and win an all-expenses-paid work experience trip to Japan.

South West Regional Finals Coordinator Chef Jason Ford (from TAFE Queensland South West) explained that French Iron Chef Hiroyuki Sakai announced the competition in April during a live cooking demonstration in Brisbane.

“This competition will provide two students with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work at one of Chef Sakai’s restaurants for a week, and from the South West region we are able to send two finalists,” said Chef Ford.

“We are excited to announce that after a gruelling day of competition, Kylie Leask from Kingaroy and Jemaima Gaspar from Toowoomba will represent the South West region.

“Each student had to create three dishes containing Chef Sakai’s special ingredient, coconut, including a vegetarian entrée, chicken based main, and dessert using gelatin.

“We also invited two representatives from industry to judge their dishes, provide commentary and feedback, and help prepare the students for the final competition.”

Experienced chefs Chris Clark and Rob Balderson said that they were both excited and felt privileged to be part of the day and assist in judging because it was a chance to see part of their industry that is not always visible or appreciated.

“This type of competition is very intense for the level these students are at, but they handled the pressure very well which is a credit to their teachers,” said Chef Balderson from Pizza & Pie Co.

“It was such a tight competition. I thought there would be a stand out from the beginning but it twisted and changed all day, so congratulations must go to not just the winners but all of the student competitors.

“These students could very well be working for me one day, or I could be working for them.”

Toowoomba local Jemaima Gaspar was the regional final runner up, and now has the chance to compete in Brisbane for one of the trips.

P: 1300 914 754
E: southwest@tafe.qld.edu.au
W: tafesouthwest.edu.au

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“During the competition I struggled a little, but I finished and I’m proud I finished on time despite the intensity and time pressures of the competition,” said Jemaima.

“For the regional finals I cooked a grilled coconut and parmesan polenta with cold avocado, cucumber and creamy pea puree soup as my entrée, tandoori chicken with coconut pilaf rice as the main, and for dessert a chocolate brownie with chocolate ganache and gelatin sauce.

“I am excited to compete in Brisbane, and to work on refining my dishes for the final.”

All of the staff and students, many of whom are apprentices, involved would like to thank the involved employers for supporting the students’ participation in the competition.

The final will be held in South Bank in August where student finalists from across the state will compete – we wish them all the best.

For more information about TAFE Queensland South West call 1300 914 754 or visit www.tafesouthwest.edu.au

Photo Caption 1: TAFE Queensland Iron Chef Cooking Competition South West Finalists Jemaima (left) and Kylie (right) with coordinator and TAFE Queensland South West teacher Chef Jason Ford (centre).

Photo Caption 2: Toowoomba locals and competitors Darcy Clegg and Jemaima Gaspar (regional final runner up)

Photo Caption 3: Jemaima in action creating her entrée.

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Media Contact: Grace Callan, Communications Officer, TAFE Queensland South West
P: (07) 4694 1502 | **M:** 0439 254 330 | **E:** Grace.Callan@tafe.qld.edu.au
CRICOS 02011C | RTO 0526

P: 1300 914 754
E: southwest@tafe.qld.edu.au
W: tafesouthwest.edu.au

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