

CCC&TI Culinary Students Assist with Television Show

Students in Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute's Culinary Technology Program recently worked with the crew and producers in filming a television show that will be broadcast nationally on RFDTV.

The show, called "Southern Fresh," stars local chef Tim Haas and master gardener Jan Kirby and is shot entirely on location in North Carolina. The show introduces viewers to locally grown, garden-fresh ingredients and shows them how to take the items from the garden to the kitchen. The series is an extension of Haas and Kirby's garden-to-kitchen brand as seen through "At Home in the Carolinas" on MyFox Charlotte and in their new book "Herb Garden Gourmet" published by Source Books. Thirteen episodes of "Southern Fresh" are being produced by Homerun Entertainment and will air on the RFD cable network beginning in early 2010.

When Haas and Kirby, along with the show's producers, were looking for locations to shoot the show, Lenoir was among their first choices. "Both Tim and Jan are from the Hickory area and the show highlights the Southern lifestyle. Lenoir is essentially their hometown area," said "Southern Fresh" producer Greg Spring. The show also filmed segments in Boone, Valle Crucis, and Linville among others. "We chose the iconic parts of the state," said Spring. Spring also noted the support of local leaders and the Caldwell County Chamber of Commerce in helping clear the way for filming. "The Chamber of Commerce and the City of Lenoir have been so supportive. We wanted this to be a payback to them."

Through work with local leaders, the producers were introduced to CCC&TI's Culinary Technology Program as a resource for assistance with the food preparation and other behind-the-scenes work for the local shoots. Students from the program helped prepare the recipes that were showcased during filming, prepared the final dishes that appear in the episodes and a lucky few even appeared on camera as dinner guests of Haas and Kirby.

Students met with a professional food stylist and helped select the food items needed for the show. From there, students assisted with a shoot at a private residence in Linville Ridge for an episode on herbs. "We got to be guests and enjoy the meal at the end of the show so some of our students will be on the program," said Brenda Dietz, Director of CCC&TI's Culinary Technology Program.

Students also assisted with a shoot at Rose Noakes' bed and breakfast, the Irish Rose, on Harper Avenue. "Students prepped the food for the show there which featured products from Midstate mills in Statesville," said Dietz. "We made whole wheat pancakes from their mix and our own blueberry syrup. We also made pumpkin chilli, roasted pork with mushroom sauce, roasted fall vegetables and Cornish Game hens with ricotta stuffing just to name a few," she said.

Students who participated in the filming said that it was a wonderful experience and that they learned a lot about prepping food for television. "I had no idea there was so much work involved in preparing food for tv," said Scott Jett, a first year student enrolled in the program with his wife, Lisa. "We basically had to prepare the dishes four times to show all

the different stages of the recipe, from getting the ingredients together to the finished product.” Second-year student Lisa Reinhardt says that she thoroughly enjoyed the experience. “Everyone that we worked with was very nice,” she said, “and the food we had was excellent and easy to prepare.”

When asked if any of them are now aspiring to a career in food entertainment, Lisa Jett was quick to respond. “I would definitely be interested in working behind the scenes for a food show,” she said. “I really enjoyed working to prepare all the elements for the meal and seeing how much work and time go into producing a cooking show. It basically took us an entire day to put together a 30-minute episode of the show.” All the students said the hard work was worth the effort and their favorite part of the experience was tasting the food at their sit-down dinner with Haas and Beane. “The food was wonderful,” they agreed.

Spring said that the CCC&TI students were a huge asset during the filming and he was impressed with their skills, knowledge and expertise. “The students we worked with were smart, hard working and talented,” said Spring. “We were absolutely pleased from top to bottom with the work they did while assisting with the show. They were well-trained and you could tell they knew what they were doing.”

Spring said that the “Southern Fresh” stars and crew will be returning to the area in the spring to film additional garden segments for the show and may be calling upon the assistance of the students once again. “We couldn’t have done the show there in the Lenoir area without the help and support of the community and the college was a large part of that.”

Look for episodes of “Southern Fresh with Tim and Jan” to air on RFD TV in early 2010.

For more information about CCC&TI’s Culinary Technology Program, call 726-2200 or visit www.cccti.edu.

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Photo Cutlines

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“Southern Fresh” co-hosts Tim Haas, right, and Jan Kirby pause for a photo on location in Caldwell County.

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Pictured are some of CCC&TI's Culinary Technology Students who participated behind the scenes during the filming of "Southern Fresh with Tim and Jan." From left to right are Amy Reinhardt, Scott Jett, Lisa Jett and Christopher Townsend.