

Bonita Unified

SCHOOL DISTRICT

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Bonita Unified ProStart Students Stay Sharp During Summer ‘Culinary Clash’

SAN DIMAS/LA VERNE – Bonita High School ProStart culinary arts students continued to hone their food preparation and restaurant management skills over the summer by volunteering and competing in the California Restaurant Foundation’s (CRF) Culinary Clash fundraiser, held Aug. 7 to support ProStart high school programs. The event raised \$74,000 for culinary arts programs in California public high schools.

Bonita High junior Charli Padilla and Class of 2023 graduate and ProStart alumnus Isiah Greene served as head chefs partnering with CRF sponsor restaurants to create “summer street bite” menus, coming up with the ideas, recipes and timeline, then worked to bring their creations to life with industry professionals acting as their sous chefs.

Padilla and Greene were supported by a host of current and former Bonita High ProStart volunteers, who helped set up tables, sell raffle tickets and assist guests during the poolside party, which was held at the Coca-Cola headquarters in Irvine.

“The Culinary Clash is a wonderful event, giving our students a chance to work with industry professionals, nurture their cooking and creative talents, and meet with other outstanding student chefs,” Bonita High ProStart teacher Laurie Brandler said. “Thank you to the California Restaurant Foundation for continuing to provide exciting new opportunities over the summer for our students to pursue their passion.”

Padilla was paired with an executive from Outback Steakhouse while Greene represented Black Bear Diner. Both Padilla and Greene worked over the summer to brainstorm and perfect their menus, which featured the same base ingredients – fresh point produce, rice wine vinegar and Coke. During the Culinary Clash, Padilla and Greene manned poolside cabanas and served approximately 250 guests and judges.

For Outback Steakhouse, Padilla served an entrée of homemade bread, homemade pickles made with rice wine vinegar, homemade pulled pork made with an orange and lemonade marinade infused with Coke, and homemade ham made with a Coke-based marinade, mustard and Swiss cheese. On the side were pickled and fried lotus root chips with honey sriracha.

For Black Bear Diner, Greene served an entrée of pineapple slow cooked pulled pork and lotus root nachos layered with rice wine vinegar. On the side was a nectarine slaw, garnished with a garlic chili paste mayo, Thai chili honey sauce, and topped with chives and toasted with sesame seeds.

Both Padilla and Greene received kudos for their efforts, with Padilla and Outback Steakhouse winning the Mentor of the Year award, and Greene and Black Bear Diner being declared co-winners of the Marukan Vinegar Champ award.

MORE

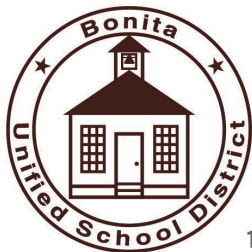


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Separately, the CRF announced the recipients of its 2023 Scholarship Program, which awarded \$140,000 in co-branded scholarships to 57 students across the state, including three Bonita ProStart alumni: Isiah Greene and Sydney Winsor, who both received \$4,000 from the Guy Fieri Foundation; and Ethan Brandler, who received \$900 from the CRA Building Scholarship Fund. Greene and Winsor are attending Cal Poly Pomona, and Brandler is attending Mt. SAC.

“I am continually amazed at the outstanding work being done in our ProStart culinary program,” Bonita High Principal Kenny Ritchie said. “Our students have so much talent, creativity and drive. They understand the value of teamwork and are genuinely invested in the success of everyone in the program. Thank you to Laurie Brandler for bringing these opportunities to our students, and congratulations to our ProStart Culinary Clash and scholarship winners.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

BUSD_CULINARYCLASH1: Bonita High School junior and ProStart culinary arts student Charli Padilla poses with executive members of Outback Steakhouse during the California Restaurant Foundation’s Culinary Clash competition, held in August. Padilla partnered with Outback to create a “summer street bite” menu to serve to guests and judges. The partnership netted the Outback team the Mentors of the Year award.

BUSD_CULINARYCLASH2: Bonita High School Class of 2023 and ProStart alumnus Isiah Greene was the co-winner of the Marukan Vinegar Champ award at the California Restaurant Foundation’s (CRF) Culinary Clash competition, held in August. Greene partnered with Black Bear Diner to create a “summer street bite” menu to serve to guests and judges. Separately, Greene was awarded a \$4,000 CRF scholarship to help him pursue higher education in the culinary field.

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