

# PRESS RELEASE



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## FUTURE CHEFS COOK UP A STORM AT YEOVIL COLLEGE

For the second time, Yeovil College's Da Vinci Restaurant has hosted the local finals of the 2009/10 FutureChef cookery competition for young people aged 14 to 16.

Gifted pupils from three South West schools took part in the competition. Elliott Healey (15) of Crispin School, Street, Alice Dingle (14) of Sidcot School, Winscombe, and Maz Ahmed (14) of St Katherine's School, Bristol, had just 90 minutes to prepare and cook a hot main course and a cold dessert for two people. Each contestant had an overall budget of £6.

The young chefs were judged on their workmanship, creativity and presentation, the balance of the menu they had designed and the composition, taste and flavour of their culinary creations.

Level 3 Professional Cookery student Jody Groves and Yeovil College lecturers Steven Lowrie and David Hammond had the difficult job of choosing between the meals. After much deliberation, they selected Elliott Healey's caramelised pork stuffed with apple, apricot and onion served with fondant potatoes, braised leeks, beetroot puree and sweet and sour jus and his dessert dish of chocolate orange fondant served with whipped orange cream as the winner.



Judge David Hammond said *"Well done to all of the contestants today. It's really hard to come into a kitchen you don't know and hit the ground running. That's a pressure in itself, so for Elliott, Maz and Alice to produce these superb dishes is highly commendable. They're all very complex dishes from a chef's perspective, requiring a lot of work and multitasking skills. All of the contestants clearly worked hard at their planning and I would be very happy to serve any of this food to customers in the Da Vinci restaurant."*



This is the second time in a row that Elliott has won his local final. He said *"Winning last year was a real confidence boost. I'm now much more knowledgeable and more confident. I'm very keen to be a chef and get as much experience as possible. I've already got a job with the Olive Mill in Chilton Polden and am going to carry on training. I didn't want to serve the same menu as last year – I like experimenting and making modern food. I love watching cookery programmes. They give me lots of ideas which I then mix up in my head."*

Jason Duffield, Elliott's Food Technology teacher, said *"I am very proud of Elliott. He's worked really hard and he's remained completely focussed. I've told him already that winning this means he has to give me an A at GCSE!"*

Alice Dingle and Maz Ahmed were also highly praised by the judges. Alice created a spinach and ricotta cannelloni with tomato sauce, followed by chocolate fondant with raspberries. Maz's entries were butter chilli chicken with fragrant rice and kheer surprise with vanilla snaps. Maz said *"I really enjoyed today. I'm relatively new to these dishes, it was my first trip to Yeovil and my first time in a professional kitchen, so I was a bit nervous. It's something I could get used to though. I like to learn how to cook new dishes."*



Alice said *"I'm pleased with how today went, it was good. I've always enjoyed cookery and am currently doing my GCSE. I like it as a subject, but I'm not sure about doing it for a living!"*



Ralph Pitts, the Springboard Regional manager for Wales and West, organised this stage of the competition. He said *"This year is the tenth anniversary of the FutureChef contest and it's going from strength to strength. More schools than ever are interested in taking part, which is fantastic. We've come back to Yeovil College for the second time this year and we've received such a good welcome. It's great to have the staff here involved because they're really switched on. They're not just teachers, they also know and understand the industry and what it's all about."*

Elliott will now go forward to the West Regional Final in Tiverton in February 2010.

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### **Notes to Editors**

All press enquiries to Eileen Furze, Marketing Officer t: (01935) 845428 e: [eileen.furze@yeovil.ac.uk](mailto:eileen.furze@yeovil.ac.uk) [www.yeovil.ac.uk](http://www.yeovil.ac.uk). Details of all the contestants' menus are available upon request.

**Yeovil College's Da Vinci Restaurant** – Yeovil College's Da Vinci Restaurant is a training environment that has been specifically developed to give Hospitality and Catering students realistic experience of a busy, modern restaurant service. Students taking a wide range of vocational and work-based courses work in the Da Vinci, supervised at all time by fully trained staff. The Da Vinci is open to the public five lunchtimes per week and special evening events take place regularly throughout the college year. For more information, please call 01935 845341 or visit [www.yeovil.ac.uk/davinci\\_restaurant.htm](http://www.yeovil.ac.uk/davinci_restaurant.htm).

**Springboard UK** - Springboard UK is a young dynamic organisation which promotes careers in hospitality, leisure, tourism and travel to a range of potential recruits and influencers through a network of centres across the UK. Our specialist careers service now provides well over 14,000 people with free objective advice each year. For more information, please visit [www.springboarduk.org.uk](http://www.springboarduk.org.uk).

**FutureChef Competition** – FutureChef is a four-stage nationwide culinary competition; helping young people aged 12-16 to learn to cook. It also provides a unique insight into the world of professional cooking by capturing imagination, recognising talent and providing a potential platform to launch a fabulous career. Now in its tenth year, FutureChef was developed as a result of research findings into young people's perceptions of the industry. The research revealed that young people regard chefs such as Brian Turner, Gary Rhodes and James Martin almost as highly as pop or television stars. Surprisingly, however, few genuinely considered a career as a chef! FutureChef addresses these perceptions directly by introducing young people to cooking, helping to develop their skills, developing direct work experience in the industry and providing expert advice on the career options and entry routes available. It provides teachers and young people alike with a wonderful insight into what it's like to be a chef and the related career opportunities.