



**Wait staff is top notch:** American Culinary Federation Chefs of Northwest Indiana celebrated its Chef of the Year Appreciation Dinner at Sand Creek Country Club. Chairman of the Board Jim Galligan recognized Executive Chef Mike Clindaniel, his kitchen staff and wait staff for making the event sensational.

Pictured left to right is wait-staff. front, Joyce Rounds; Row 2, Marilyn Gasik, Jesse Stewart, Christina Kalmuk, Connie Neuschaser, Amy Cushway, Melissa Parker, Gail Murawski, Suzanna Enslin and Hanna Wright. Back, David Kent.

(Photo by Striking Images Photography)

## Chef of the year appreciation dinner celebrated at Sand Creek

By ALEXANDRA NEWMAN

American Culinary Federation Chefs of Northwest Indiana had its elaborate Chef of the Year Appreciation Dinner Reception for the 10th year at Sand Creek Country Club.

Chefs from Chicago, Michigan, Indiana and as far away as Florida attended the event that honors their peers.

The Northwest Indiana chapter is celebrating 10 years, which has had its reception here for all of those years. Several of the members, who were instrumental in founding the local chapter, have been members for many more years in the national organization.

James Galligan, executive chef at Long Beach Country Club (formerly of Sand Creek) was recognized for his 16 years in the organization and was emcee for the gala.

Also, Jack Mix, chef/owner of Comfort's Catering (St. John/Schererville), was not only recognized for his 27 years in the organization, he was selected 2005 Chef of the Year by his peers. Some of the attributes cited for his selection were his help with Meals on Wheels fund raiser; organization the Hospice of the Calumet Area Fall Luncheon; held food preparation classes at Campagna Academy in conjunction with Ivy Tech. He has donated time and products for fund raising efforts for CASA; participated in the March of Dimes "Signature Chefs" Culinary

Showcase; provided services for Community Hospital Cancer Resources Center Walk-A-Thon; served as a team member on the Facility Design Committee for Meals on Wheels kitchen; donated time in serving various community service organizations including Habitat for Humanity.

When William Mix was named the 2005 Junior Culinarian of the Year, he thanked his father for getting him into the business. Bill has worked for his dad at Comfort Catering since he was 10 years old. He participated in Meals on Wheels "Dine with the Chefs" fundraiser; the Hospice "Mum's the Word" Fall Luncheon and the "Care to Share"; March of Dimes "Signature Chefs" Culinary Showcase and several community dinners.

It should be noted the Meals on Wheels fundraiser raised \$65,000.

Both father and son were presented specially embroidered chef's jackets, plaques and monetary awards.

Lisa Jackson-Austin, of Gary, was tapped for a \$500 scholarship award and Sysco Food Company was picked Purveyor of the year.

New officers also were announced, albeit all but one will serve a second term. Returning board of directors include Pete Jeschke, CCC, Harrah's Casino Joliet; Secretary, Cheryl Molenda. The Inn at Aberdeen, Valparaiso; Treasurer/Chairman of the Board, James Galligan, Long Beach

Country Club; Sergeant of Arms, Jack Mix, Comforts Catering. New to the board is Vice-president Glen Brooks of One Genesis Centre Plaza, Gary.

"People should know the staff at Sand Creek really does a great job. They are always complimentary to your needs," said Galligan. Both the kitchen staff and wait staff service is outstanding." Also, Mike Clindaniel, executive chef for four years, took the time to thank his staff for their service.

Prior to the dinner, guests were treated to hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. The spectacular dinner menu included: First course salad of Young Greens with Roquefort stuffed poached pears and a port wine vinaigrette. Second course, Raspberry Sorbet garnished with fresh mint. Third Course, Dinner: Roasted Porkloin with wood grilled Madagascar prawns, truffle sauce, and herbed aioli. It was served with Boursin cheese mashed Yukon gold potatoes, sautéed asparagus and baby carrots. The fourth course, Dessert, was called Plaza Sweets Assortment of Fresh Artisan Desserts. The scrumptious delicacies included chocolate truffle cakes, white truffle cakes, apple cake, and a few other amazing sweets. After dinner, guests were invited to a Port tasting and after dinner drinks.

For more information about ACF Chefs of Northwest Indiana, visit [acfchefsnorthwestindiana.org](http://acfchefsnorthwestindiana.org)