More than 100 attendees were on hand as The University of Connecticut (UConn) hosted its 10th Annual Culinary Competition on Jan. 14 among the chefs of its Department of Dining Services.

The Boiling Point competition, the school’s version of “Iron Chef,” featured 16 teams of three UConn chefs representing the different dining facilities within the department. Each team was presented with a mystery box of ingredients, which included Alaskan King Crab legs, boursin cheese, fennel, mango chutney, horseradish root, blue corn meal and tomatillos. They were tasked with preparing three different tapas (small food or appetizer) on each plate. Teams had one and a half hours to prepare their five dishes (four for tasting and one for display) using only two butane burners at a station.

The team from the South Campus Dining Hall — Sterling Townes, Scott Chapman and Charles Griffin — took first place in the Boiling Point competition, with a mango chutney pastry, blue corn crab leg with garlic horseradish aioli and a shrimp and tomatillo crepe with a mango beurre blanc.

The event has grown since it began in 2001 as a way to showcase the talents of the staff and give them something to look forward to during the semester break. The first competition featured four teams and took place in the kitchen at the school’s Putnam Refectory. This year, it was moved to the Rome Ballroom, where a sea of cooking stations spread across more than half the room.

C. Dennis Pierce, director of dining services, was pleased with the new location. “We had to move it here because of the sheer volume of competitors,” he said “But now that we’re here, it’s clear this is a much better venue. People can smell it, see it, get an idea how to cook something. I think it also enhances the pressure on the teams, who have a limited amount of time to cook something wonderful, but now also have to deal with the constant scrutiny of the crowd.”

The event also featured a recipe contest. The recipes were prepared on site for 12 portions and covered one of the following categories: appetizer, entree or dessert.
Compass Group Launches ‘Flexitarian’ Eating Initiative

Compass Group, one of the world’s largest foodservice companies, has a “Be a Flexitarian” initiative in all of its accounts, including colleges and universities.

The company has expanded the variety and supply of meat-free options for its customers — promoting healthier, more sustainable and more humane eating.

Compass Group executives worked closely with The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) to develop the program, which will promote “flexitarian” eating in the company’s 8,500 U.S. corporate and academic foodservice accounts. A “flexitarian” is someone who actively integrates meatless meals into his or her diet when possible, but is not a full-time vegetarian.

“Compass Group recognizes that there should be more options in the marketplace for conscious consumers,” said Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of The HSUS. “It doesn’t take an all-or-nothing approach to make a major impact, and giving customers more meat-free meal choices will improve health, reduce the impact of global warming and help animals.”

Compass-operated dining operations now showcase meatless foods like veggie burgers, burritos, pastas and stir fries. Many choices feature vegetarian meat alternatives.

“Compass Group is committed to providing healthy meals and building sustainable communities, and our new flexitarian initiative is a great step toward achieving both of these goals,” stated Cheryl Queen, Compass Group vice president of corporate communications. “We’re delighted to have this opportunity to highlight the culinary versatility of meat-free foods that promote better health and preserve the environment.”

dessert. Derek Carlson, chef at Chuck & Augie’s Restaurant on campus, took first place in the appetizer category. Eddie Torres, chef at Union Street Market Food Court, finished first place in the entrée category, while Angela Clarke, with the Not Just Desserts Bakery, took first place in the dessert category.

Clarke also finished first in the Cake Decorating Challenge, where contestants decorated cakes in the theme of “Remembering the Woodstock Music Festival.”

In addition to the competitions, a cooking demonstration by Chef Noel Jones of Polytechnic ON20 Restaurant in Hartford, Conn., and a talk and book signing by Mathew Scialabba and Melissa Pellegrino, a husband-and-wife cooking and writing team, who co-authored the cookbook “The Italian Farmers Tables,” took place.

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Photo taken at Skidmore College dining facility
ACAP Conference Set For San Diego

“Surviving in Today’s Economy and Forseeable Future” is the theme of this year’s Association of College Administrative Professionals (ACAP) Conference in San Diego, Calif., from March 28-30 at the San Diego Marriott Mission Valley.

This year’s conference features workshop programs on Security and Safety at Colleges; Mail Centers and Postal Service at Colleges; Parking and Campus Transit; and Excellence in College Food Service.

The Excellence in College Food Service workshop will focus on college food service today, as well as what lies ahead, including things like food courts, training programs, product testing, healthy menu items, nutrition consultation, wellness initiatives, strategies and tactics, development of a strategic plan, an analysis of competition, strengths and weaknesses, going green and sustainability, student involvement with change and choices, keeping meals and ideas fresh and enticing, keeping the operation self-operated, customer satisfaction and other current trends.

David Prentkowski, director of Notre Dame Food Services, will present “Culinary Arts and Nutrition in College and University Dining,” on Sunday, March 28 from 2 to 4:30 p.m. Prentkowski will share his views and experiences related to the impact of a defined culinary arts program in college and university dining. He will provide an overview of the involvement of the programs of the American Culinary Federation, on- and off-site education and training and certification programs. He will also include his views and experiences with incorporating nutrition expertise into all aspects of the culinary program.

The session will include information on training programs, product testing and concept and recipe development, nutrition consultation and management of food-related allergies. In addition, he will present information related to Notre Dame Wellness initiatives, including a point-of-service healthy menu item identification program, a new healthy-eating restaurant under development and a proposed campus teaching/demonstration education center for students, faculty, staff and the local community.

Russ Meyer, associate director for Housing and Dining Services at the University of Nevada, Reno, will present “Developing an Effective Strategic Plan” on Monday, March 29 from 9 a.m. to noon. He will describe the reasons for, and the need to develop an effective strategic plan. Meyer will cover the components of effective planning, including the development of core values, core purpose and an envisioned future and provide an analysis of the competitive landscape and the strengths and weaknesses of, and opportunities and threats to the organization will be covered. Finally, he will discuss how to develop specific strategies and tactics in the context of the priorities of the organization.

Also on Monday, Joseph Michela, director of Auxiliary Services, and Liz Abrahamson, food operations manager at the University of Minnesota-Duluth (UMD), will present “The Great Success of The University of Minnesota-Duluth’s Retail Food” from 1 to 4 p.m. They will describe how Retail Food Service has achieved its great success. Their presentation will cover: the development of the retail section at the Duluth Campus, making it work with CBord, Micros, Dining Dollars and online sales; serving popular trends and keeping meals and ideas fresh and enticing; how they keep their campus sales on the rise with continued sales growth; how “Going Green” and sustainability friendliness have been part of the development over the last few years; and student involvement with change and choices, keeping meals and ideas fresh and enticing, keeping the operation self-operated.

Dartmouth Hosts Tropics Dinner

Despite snow squalls, scattered flurries and chilly temperatures in Hanover, N.H., it was cozy inside at Dartmouth College’s Beach Night 2010 dinner in January.

Individual portions of Snow Crab Clusters were the hot item of the night. Also on the island-themed Dartmouth Dining Services (DDS) menu were Grilled Beef Tenderloin Steaks with Fresh Tomato Bruschetta, Fresh Spinach Salad with Candied Walnuts and the return of a Beach Night favorite: crispy Coconut Risotto Cakes. Colorful side dishes for the evening included Warm Sweet Potato Salad and Key West-Blend veggies.

Sorbet with mixed berries and macaroons topped off the tropical meal.
Pride of New York Showcase Event at UB

Some of the best from local farmers and food producers that supply the University at Buffalo (UB) were on display as Campus Dining & Shops presented its first Pride of New York Showcase.

The event took place in conjunction with the Greener Shade of Blue and You Day.

Both events were sponsored by the Professional Staff Senate (PSS), UB Green, Campus Dining & Shops and the Faculty Senate.

“Both events provided UB staff, faculty and students with the tools to become better stewards and help build more sustainable communities,” said Jim Simon of UB Green.

The Pride of New York Showcase featured local exhibitors showcasing the very best in locally grown produce and dairy products, ice cream, fresh-baked goods and other prepared foods.

“One of the best ways to appreciate the diversity and abundance of New York State food products is to talk with the people who actually produce them,” said Raymond Kohl, marketing manager for Campus Dining & Shops. “Supporting local businesses, reducing transportation emissions — there are so many benefits to buying local foods. This is a great way to give our consumers the opportunity to talk to our farmers and food producers, and learn more about the Pride of New York.

Pride of New York Showcase participants included:
• **Upstate Farms** – beverage samples
• **Costanzo’s Bakery** – fresh-baked rolls and breads
• **Perry’s Ice Cream** – frozen novelties
• **Rosina Foods** – ravioli and meatballs
• **Wardynski’s** – all-natural beef hotdog and Polish links
• **Desiderio Produce** – New York apples and apple cider
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Roger Williams University Wins Whole Grains Challenge

Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I. was recently named the winner in the College and University category of the Whole Grains Challenge.

The Whole Grains Challenge, sponsored by the Whole Grains Council, rewards restaurants and foodservice establishments for offering at least one healthy and delicious whole-grain option on their menus at all times.

Dining at Roger Williams University, operated by Bon Appétit Management Company, offers whole grains as a standard at every culinary station in both the Upper Commons and Baypoint Café locations, and offers daily whole-grain specials as well. “It is pretty awesome to win,” said Executive Chef Robert Lavoie. “Using whole grains is something we have been regularly doing on campus for many years.”

In addition to a plaque recognizing the achievement, the school received products from Barilla, Schwan’s Foodservice, ConAgra Mills, Lotus, General Mills and Indian Harvest. (See p. 20 for a whole-grain recipe from Chef Lavoie)

Parkhurst Names Sustainability Leaders

Parkhurst Dining Services has named six of its chefs as sustainability leaders to “champion the sustainable cause throughout the company’s organization and communities it serves.

Jamie Moore, Parkhurst dining director of sourcing and sustainability, groomed the following chefs:

- Scott Rattan, Executive Chef, Capital University (Columbus, Ohio)
- Scott Steiner, Executive Chef, Allegheny College (Meadville, Pa.)
- Kevin Jones, Executive Chef, Maryland Institute College of Art (Baltimore, Md.)
- Frank Hummel, Executive Sous Chef, Bucknell University (Lewisburg, Pa.)
- Sean Lockhard, Executive Chef, Gwynedd-Mercy College (Gwynedd Valley, Pa.)

“These chefs will also be a resource for our Parkhurst foodservice teams and our clients, providing the guidance, education and ‘know-how’ when they want to organize sustainable events such as local food dinners on campus, coordinate and conduct tours of local farms, and promote our continuous focus on sustainable food, green practices and other environmental initiatives,” said Moore.

On Feb. 4, the team participated in several sustainable learning experiences at the Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture’s (PASA) 19th annual Farming for the Future conference at the Penn State Conference Center in State College, an event that brings together thousands of farmers, local food activists and sustainable agricultural industry partners.

According to Moore, this was the first time the conference focused on educating chefs to be more sustainable, learn about agricultural practices and how to apply them to their foodservice operations.

Lone Star College System Names New Foodservice Provider

The Lone Star College (LSC) System, the third largest community college system in Texas, recently agreed to a multi-year agreement with Luby’s Culinary Services to manage the foodservice operations for the system’s newest location, LSC-University Park, serving more than 3,500 students and faculty.

Luby’s, etc., the brand’s retail dining food court, recently opened on campus. The renovated, 4,500-square-foot dining facility boasts a contemporary atmosphere and comforting environment that speaks to the student population. Luby’s Culinary Services will also provide catering for the 14,000-square-foot Conference Center, containing 19 conference rooms and exhibition space.

“Lone Star College System has revolutionized the community college experience, and we are honored to be an integral component in their mission to provide a full and rewarding educational setting for their students, faculty and the community,” said Chris Pappas, president and CEO of Luby’s. “We are confident that the students will find Luby’s, etc. to be a substantial benefit to their campus experience.”
Sodexo Donates to Benefit Haiti Earthquake Victims

Sodexo, a leading campus foodservice provider, donated nearly $145,000 to help the victims of the devastating earthquake which took place in Haiti on Jan. 12.

Michel Landel, CEO of Sodexo and president of STOP Hunger, a program which contributes to the fight against hunger and malnutrition in countries where the company is present, donated the funds to the World Food Programme (WFP), a United Nations organization that will be able to put these funds to immediate and coordinated good use.

InnoWare Names CEO

InnoWare, LLC and its two operating companies, InnoWare Paper, Inc., of Wisconsin and InnoWare Plastics, Inc., of Georgia, has named its chairman of the board, Nicholas A. Clementi, to the additional post of chief executive officer (CEO).

In assuming these additional duties, he took over for Charles Woodward, who resigned as CEO and president.

Clementi is an experienced senior executive with a broad background in food service and consumer goods marketing.

Land O’Lakes Launches New Web Site


Leveraging the strength of Land O’Lakes identity as a farmer-owned cooperative, the redesign features farmer-members in their environments — celebrating the simple goodness and authenticity of the company, and showing visitors where dairy goodness begins. The new design allows visitors to customize their experience of Land O’Lakes and its products, and re-introduces them to the richness of the brand.

The user-centric design offers segment-specific information and resources. Visitors select a segment, and content is customized to address the unique needs and issues of operators in that segment.