



Achievement Academy's 2nd Annual Top Chef of Polk County Event is a multi-course fine-dining experience that places the spotlight on the area's leading chefs while raising much needed funds for programs and therapies for the children of Achievement Academy.

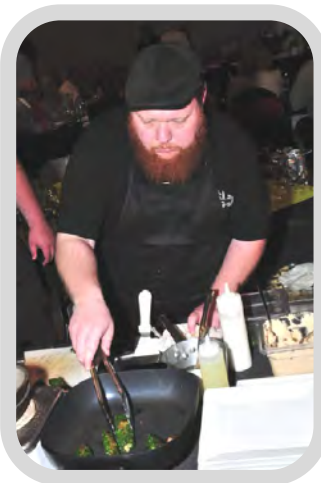
As many as 15 chefs will create and prepare, tableside, their own menu with accompanying wine or libation that complement the flavors of each course. The menu will showcase each chef's unique culinary style and personal techniques for up to 12 guests at each dining station. Chefs are encouraged to create an ambience at their dining stations as unique as their culinary creations.



Guests are invited to arrive prior to the dinner where they can enjoy cocktails from the cash bar, view and judge the unique table décor at each dining station.

Chefs are asked to donate an item for the live auction which takes place throughout the evening. Auction items range from Restaurant Gift Certificates and Gourmet Baskets, to a dinner cooked at a guest home by the chef.

An all-star panel of judges will rate each chef on their culinary creations based on presentation, choice and taste of food to award the title of "Top Chef of Polk County 2016." Judges will also present awards for best in Appetizer, Entrée and Dessert. Dinner guests will rate each dining station to award the title of "Top Table Décor."



Monday, April 18, 2016

Cocktails — 5:30 to 6:30pm

1st Course — 6:30pm

The Lakeland Center

701 West Lime Street

Lakeland, FL 33815



Awards



Top Chef of Polk County 2016

Our panel of judges will taste three courses (appetizer, entrée, dessert) prepared by the participating chefs and award points on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the best) in the following areas:

- Presentation of food
- Choice of menu
- Taste of food

The chef with the highest cumulative score wins the title of "Top Chef of Polk County 2016."

Best Appetizer ★ Best Entrée ★ Best Dessert

Our panel of judges will also make awards for best Appetizer, best Entrée and best Dessert based on presentation, choice and taste.

Top Table Décor

Chefs are encouraged to create a unique dining environment for their dinner guests. All dinner guests are invited to walk around each dining station prior to the first course, awarding points for their favorite table décor. The chef's table with the highest score wins the title of Top Table Décor.



2015 Participating Chefs



Tamara Arrington, The Hunt Dining Room at Water's Edge of Lake Wales ★ **Jason Boniface**, Red Door ★ **Tina Calhoon**, Frescos ★ **Louis deKoster**, The Garden Grill at Hilton Garden Inn ★ **Terry Gracie**, Publix Apron's Cooking School ★ **Wayne Haggard**, Ovations Food Services ★ **Stefan Mahan**, Mahan's Eatery ★ **Ronald Mayer**, Florida Presbyterian Homes, Inc. ★ **Dennis Quisenberry, Jr.**, Tiger Café, Tiger Town ★ **Chad Ward**, Whiskey Bent BBQ Supply



Event Details



Entry Information

Chefs need to complete an application to enter the event. An application form is included with this packet. Because the event capacity is limited, please sign up early.

Expectations of the Chef

1. Personally attend the event and manage your station of servers and guests.
2. Provide a personal bio, photo, restaurant bio, menu for event, and auction item description to Achievement Academy by **Friday, April 1, 2016**. This information will be part of the printed program that will be given to each guest the night of the event.
3. Provide 2 to 4 servers for your station (wearing restaurant uniform).
4. Prepare and serve a five-course meal for 12 people. Additional platings will be necessary for critiquing by the judges. You will be notified in advance if you have any dinner guests with food allergies, restrictions, or vegetarian needs.
5. Bring all necessary cooking and prep utensils to cook tableside. Due to fire restrictions, no open flame grills are allowed.
6. Provide all items necessary to create a table setting for 12, including linens, china, silver, crystal, center-pieces, chair covers (if desired), along with theme-appropriate décor and items related to your restaurant.
7. Set-up and be ready to serve your first course at 6:30 pm. The banquet room will be open for set-up beginning at 12:00 noon the day of the event. Chefs are asked to check-in by 4:00 pm.
8. Chefs are asked to donate an item for the auction that will take place during the event. Examples of auction items: Complimentary dinner for two or more at the chef's restaurant; Dinner cooked at the guest's house by the chef; Restaurant gift certificates; Gourmet basket: Wine and / or Champagne; Hotel stay. Chefs must submit this to Achievement Academy by **Friday, April 1, 2016**.

Achievement Academy will provide:

1. Tables and chairs for each chef (Table placement is three eight-foot tables forming a **U** for the attendees. A six to eight-foot table will be placed in the center of the **U** for the chef to prepare the meal in front of the guests. A six to eight-foot table will be behind the chef for additional prep space.)
2. Water stations for hand-washing
3. A panel of judges, including an expert chef
4. A chef's jacket for each chef with the Top Chef of Polk County logo
5. A Master of Ceremonies and Auctioneer
6. Background music
7. A printed program for guests that will include information about each participating chef, his/her restaurant, menu and auction item. (Chefs must submit this to Achievement Academy by **Friday, April 1, 2016** to be included in the printed program.)
8. Press releases and publicity about the event and the participating chefs



Event Details, Continued



Benefits of Participation

1. The chef's name and restaurant name will appear on the Achievement Academy website and Facebook page, as well as on all promotional materials before, during and after the event.
2. The chef's name and restaurant name will appear in all press releases and other media outlets, such as radio spots.
3. Publicity will raise public awareness for the chef and his / her restaurant (see enclosed Ledger articles from the 2015 event).
4. During the event, attendees will learn about the chef's talents and / or restaurant.
5. Opportunities may be available for media interviews with the participating chefs.

Guest Reservations / Tickets

Sponsorship packages are available. There are a limited number of individual seats available for purchase at \$150 per person.

For questions or additional information, please contact:

Stacy Williams, CFRE

Development Director

Phone: 863-683-6504

Email: Stacy@AchievementAcademy.com



About Achievement Academy



Mission: Assist children with special needs to reach their maximum potential by providing quality education, therapy and family support.

Achievement Academy (formerly Child Development Center of Polk County, Inc.) has served individuals with developmental delays and disabilities for over 60 years. We currently serve children from birth through age five with a comprehensive early intervention program. Opening in 1955 as United Cerebral Palsy, Achievement Academy has expanded over the years to include children with any type of developmental delay or disability.

There are two programs that fall under Achievement Academy — The Birth to Three program and the Charter School. Both programs are offered at no charge to the children and their families.

The Birth to Three Program provides early intervention services to 170 infants and toddlers throughout Polk County who are "at-risk" for developmental delays and/or have been identified with a specific delay. Professional Early Interventionists from Achievement Academy serve these children and their families by offering:

- One-on-one sessions in child's home
- Parent support
- Toys and books to enhance child's learning
- Developmental evaluations

The Charter School has a total of 157 students, age 18 months through age five, with three campus locations: Lakeland, Winter Haven and Bartow. To enable each student to reach his or her full potential, each facility offers:

- Specialized instruction by certified ESE teachers
- Small class sizes
- Individual speech, occupational and physical therapies
- Assistive technologies
- Parent support
- Contracted vision and hearing services

For more information about Achievement Academy or to schedule a tour, please contact Stacy Williams, Development Director, CFRE, at 863-683-6504 or Stacy@AchievementAcademy.com.

Bartow Campus
695 E. Summerlin Street
Bartow, FL 33830
Fax: 863-534-0798

Lakeland Campus
716 E. Bella Vista Street
Lakeland, FL 33805
Fax: 863-688-9292

Winter Haven Campus
2211 28th Street NW
Winter Haven, FL 33880
Fax: 863-968-5016

Phone (All Campuses): 863-683-6504
www.achievementacademy.com



**Chef's Application / Agreement
Achievement Academy's
Top Chef of Polk County**



Monday, April 18, 2016 • The Lakeland Center

Chef's Name: _____

Restaurant / Business: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** FL **Zip:** _____

Primary Phone: _____ **Alternate Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

Jacket Size (choose one):

____ S ____ M ____ L ____ XL ____ 2XL ____ 3XL

I agree to donate, prepare and serve a multi-course meal with accompanying wine for 12 people for Achievement Academy's Top Chef of Polk County event. This includes linens, china, silver, crystal, centerpieces. It may also include chairs, chair covers, and any other items related to my restaurant or theme.

I agree to provide an auction item.

I agree to promote the event in my restaurant.

Chef's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Save a copy for yourself and return the completed form to:
E-mail: Stacy@achievementacademy.com
Fax: (863) 688-9292
Mail: Achievement Academy, 716 E. Bella Vista Street, Lakeland, FL 33805

For questions, please contact Stacy Williams at 863-683-6504.

Fundraiser Seeks Top Chef in Polk County

There is still room for more competitors to join the event

By [Eric Pera](#)

THE LEDGER

Published: Monday, March 23, 2015 at 10:29 p.m.

LAKELAND | A handful of Polk County chefs will cook up a show-stopping five-course meal next month at the Lakeland Center to raise funds for the Achievement Academy.

Organizers say they hope to make it an annual event, giving kitchen professionals a chance to earn Top Chef honors.

A seat at the table is \$100. And while much of the money goes to help the Lakeland charter school for young children with developmental disabilities, the price includes a sumptuous dinner prepared tableside, giving customers an opportunity to chat up the chefs. Each course will include a glass of wine or spirits tailored to complement the food.

Guests will judge each chef on a variety of merits, including presentation, taste, personality and beverage-pairing acumen. A panel of expert judges will provide additional input to crown the winner.

Nine chefs have signed on to date but more are needed to help build attendance, as each contestant is allowed to cook for only 12 diners.

"And nobody knows where they're sitting until the night of the event," said Maria Lewis, development director for the academy.

Because of limited seating, ticket requests are being handled by Lewis. Seating for the April 20 event begins at 6 p.m. To reserve tickets, call 863-683-6504. Diners can request special accommodations for food allergies and other restrictions.

Chefs interested in taking part should consider some of the ground rules, as they're responsible for contributing just about everything — food, wine, plates, glasses, table decorations, even the cooking equipment.

"Each station is going to be different, every chef designs his own," Lewis said. "It is (a lot of work), and that's why it's so hard to find a chef to do this."

Chad Ward, a reality TV barbecue competitor and part-owner of Whiskey Bent BBQ Supply in Lakeland, said he's not much of a decorator, but he hopes to win extra points for personality.

"I just love competing," he said. "I don't have a restaurant, I don't have place settings and stuff like that, so I'm going to have to call in some favors."

Other competitors include: Jason Boniface, Red Door Wine Market; Tina Calhoon, Fresco's Bakery & Bistro; Terry Gracie, Apron's Cooking School; Wayne Haggard, Ovations; Stefan Mahan, Mahan's Eatery; Ron Mayer, Florida Presbyterian Homes; Dennis Quisenberry Jr., Tiger Cafe at Tiger Town; Phil Robinson, The Catering Co. of Central Florida.

Although the menus are something of a guarded secret, Ward allowed that his customers can bank on finding plenty of meat on their plates, smoked or grilled, of course. He did volunteer a few dishes, including a smoked, veal meatball wrapped in prosciutto and finished on a grill. He plans on ending his meal with bourbon-flavored ice cream.

"We will more than likely be pairing a whiskey with each dish," he said.

Other competitors were more guarded about their meals.

Asked what's for dinner, Mayer, executive chef at Florida Presbyterian Homes in Lakeland, would say only that his menu will be a creative twist on traditional American cuisine, with an Asian influence. "It should be fun," he said.

Mayer said he's used to cooking for large crowds. As a former banquet chef for the Shriners in Tampa, he is not intimidated easily. Still, cooking such a large meal in real time is a bit daunting, he said, adding: "Say prayers for me."

Although a first for Polk, the Top Chef event is nothing new for Lewis, who created the concept for her former employer, Champions for Children in Tampa, a nonprofit that oversees a number of child-abuse prevention programs.

The agency's sixth-annual Top Chef Tampa Bay, held March 15, drew 20 chefs and 240 guests to the A La Carte Event Pavilion.

Lakeland's competition is patterned after the Tampa event, and will include a live auction. A goal is to raise \$30,000 for the Achievement Academy. Anyone can make a donation in the name of any participating chef by visiting www.achievementacademy.com. Just click on "top philanthropic chef."

Ward, the barbecue aficionado, extends an invitation for fellow chefs to sign up.

"Why not go for it?" he said. "Go out there and be a part of it. Us culinary folks, we like to challenge ourselves, and there's no better way. It's all worth it."

[Eric Pera can be reached at eric.pera@theledger.com or 863-802-7528.]

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Good Causes: Top Chef of Polk County

Published: Friday, April 3, 2015 at 9:12 p.m.

TOP CHEF OF POLK COUNTY

Polk County's premier chefs will participate in a culinary extravaganza April 20 at The Lakeland Center. Each chef will prepare a five-course meal with accompanying wine or appropriate libation. Guests will rate them to determine the Top Chef of Polk County — People's Choice award. Additional awards will recognize the Top Philanthropic Chef as well as Top Table Decor. Participating chefs include Jason Boniface, Red Door Wine Market; Tina Calhoon, Frescos; Terry Gracie, Apron's Cooking School; Wayne Haggard, Ovations; Stefan Mahan, Mahan's Eatery; Ronald Mayer, Florida Presbyterian Homes; "Q" Dennis Quisenberry Jr., Tiger Café at Tiger Town; and Chad Ward, Whiskey Bent BBQ Supply. Tickets are \$100 and sponsorships are available. The event benefits the Achievement Academy. Call 683-6504.

Polk Chefs Compete at Benefit for Academy

LEDGER STAFF

Published: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 at 9:41 p.m.

LAKELAND | Ron Mayer, executive chef at Florida Presbyterian Homes in Lakeland, was crowned Top Chef of Polk County during Monday night's inaugural competition, a benefit for the Achievement Academy.

The event, held at The Lakeland Center and attended by 120 guests, raised \$26,000 for the Lakeland charter school for young children with developmental disabilities.

Judges were impressed with Mayer's five-course meal that included pecan-crusting pork tenderloin with a Cabernet caramel rosemary reduction, served atop blackberry gastrique.

The People's Choice award went to Jason Boniface of the Red Door Wine Market.

Tina Calhoon of Frescos Bakery & Bistro received top philanthropic chef honors, raising \$4,605 through online pledges.

Best table decor honors went to Tamara Arrington of The Hunt Dining Room at Water's Edge of Lake Wales.

Other chefs competing for top chef honors included Louis deKoster of the Hilton Garden Inn, Terry Gracie of Apron's Cooking School, Wayne Haggard of Ovations, Stefan Mahan of Mahan's Eatery, "Q" Dennis Quisenberry Jr., Tiger Cafe at Tigertown; and Chad Ward of Whiskey Bent BBQ Supply.

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