

For further information,
Please contact Lori Hutzler Eckert
850-855-0055
Lori@Eckert.com



Editor's note: High-res images and graphics can be downloaded at:
<http://thelastword.zenfolio.com/ivcrspencer>

Island View Casino Resort culinary team wins awards at multiple competitions

GULFPORT, Miss. (Oct. 14, 2011) – During the course of four weeks this fall, Island View Casino Resort's culinary team has been mixing it up at area food-industry competitions, winning several honors for the Gulfport resort.

15th Annual Culinary Classic

On August 21, eight Island View chefs participated in the 15th Annual Culinary Classic, held in Biloxi and sponsored by the Gulf Coast Chapter of the American Culinary Federation. It is the fifth consecutive year Island View has been represented at the competition.

The event featured more than 30 chefs from casinos, local restaurants and private clubs, competing in six professional categories, as well as a student/amateur class.

The Island View team, representing the Gulfport resort's The Buffet, C&G Grille and Carter Green Steakhouse, won more awards than any other casino in the competition, taking home eight medals.

The Buffet Assistant Room Chef Eric Spencer won a gold medal in the salad category for his cilantro-macadamia encrusted shrimp and spaghetti squash salad with a mango vinaigrette. Spencer also captured a gold in the soup category with his crab-coconut bisque. C&G Grille Room Chef Walter Smith also placed in the soup category, winning a bronze for his Thai lemon-basil-ginger broth. Executive Chef David Crabtree won a bronze medal in the salad category with his pear and watermelon symphony. The Buffet Baker Melissa James won a silver award in the dessert category for her port pear-a-dice. Carter Green Steakhouse Room Chef Billy Wright won a bronze in the poultry category for his pheasant roulade. And Janet Lloyd, a prep cook at Carter Green Steakhouse and a recent graduate of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College culinary program, won a silver in the student /amateur category for her venison tenderloin with root vegetables.

The 2011 Culinary Classic benefited the American Culinary Federation's Chef and Child Foundation. The American Culinary Federation, founded in 1927, is a nonprofit organization with more than 20,000 members and more than 225 chapters nationwide. The Gulf Coast

Chapter was formed in 1987 by a group of chefs who saw a need for advancement of the culinary industry on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Acadiana Culinary Classic

Island View's culinary team also participated in the 27th annual Acadiana Culinary Classic, held at the Cajundome Convention Center in Lafayette, La. on Sept. 3. The event, which draws more than 1,000 food and wine enthusiasts, is considered by many industry professionals as the largest and most prestigious competition in the Gulf South.

Spencer won a gold medal for his cilantro-macadamia-pesto grilled shrimp and spaghetti squash salad with mango vinaigrette. He competed against eight regional chefs in this category. And Island View Executive Sous Chef Jackie Seavey won a bronze in the dessert category with her bananas Foster cheesecake mousse tower. The dessert category featured 14 chefs from across the region.

The Acadiana Culinary Classic benefits Hearts of Hope, a nonprofit organization that provides support services to sexual-abuse victims.

2011 Chefs of the Coast

Three Island View Chefs received honors at the 2011 Chefs of the Coast, hosted by the Gulf Coast Chapter of the Mississippi Hospitality & Restaurant Association. The event, held on Sept. 23-25 at the Mississippi Gulf Coast Coliseum and Convention Center, marked the 29th year of competition for the association and Island View's fifth year to participate.

At the event's Stockpot Cook-off, Spencer, the only Island View chef to place in all three competitions, won first place in the professional division with his crab and coconut bisque.

At the Chefs of the Coast Venetian Carnival Gala, in the Food as Art competition, which was sponsored by the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chapter of the American Culinary Federation, C&G Grille Production Cook Mariene Warner won second place with her carved-fruit peacock. The edible sculpture included more than 85 pieces of carved fruit and flowers. And Carter Green Steakhouse Prep Cook Janet Lloyd placed third with her medieval Mardi Gras mask created from a carved pumpkin.

Chefs of the Coast is the primary fund raiser for the Mississippi Hospitality & Restaurant Association, which was founded in 1981. A portion of the proceeds will provide scholarships to culinary programs in high school and community college. As well, a portion of the funds will benefit Feed My Sheep, a Gulf Coast soup kitchen.

About Island View Casino Resort:

Island View Casino Resort opened on Sept. 18, 2006 as the only casino in Gulfport, Miss. The land-based casino, located on 40 acres of waterfront property, currently offers an 80,000-plus-square-foot casino with approximately 1,850 slots and 49 table games. The 520,000-square-foot resort also features a 562-room with a tropical pool and cabanas; Carter Green Steakhouse, the resort's signature restaurant; C&G Grille,

offering contemporary, casual dining; The Buffet, a 400-seat restaurant; The Coffee Shop, an upscale deli; and the View Bar, an entertainment lounge. Island View Casino Resort is privately held by Rick Carter and Terry Green, two Gulfport natives and longtime casino executives committed to the post-Hurricane Katrina rebuilding efforts of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.