MEDIA RELEASE

HTN launches premium culinary apprenticeship program to attract the next generation of chefs

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Those aiming to reach the top ranks of the culinary profession will have the chance to apply for a new training program which is set to transform cookery skills training in Australia.

Total Chef Aspire is one of three new streams of culinary apprenticeships developed by NSW and ACT-based HTN, the leading group employer of culinary and food service apprentices.

It is the result of extensive consultation across the hospitality, training and education sectors, and involves leading chefs, including Nino Zoccali from The Restaurant Pendolino and Colin Barker from The Boathouse on Blackwattle Bay.

“We are grappling with a chronic shortage of skilled people entering the sector,” said Michael Bennett, Chief Executive Officer of HTN.

“This program is aimed at attracting new and aspiring chefs and placing a priority on developing expertise across a broad range of skills, not just on narrow areas of competency.

“The goal is to lift the overall quality of culinary training, while also raising apprentice completion rates, which are at a disappointingly low level,” he said.

Aspire is a world-class, preparatory program designed to give candidates with passion and capability a chance to get a start in the industry.

It entails an intensive eight-week program of culinary training, combining face-to-face learning with on-the-job work placement.

Fully accredited training will be provided by leading food and hospitality training providers across TAFE NSW as well as the William Angliss Institute of TAFE.

At the end of the eight-week program, graduates will be offered apprenticeships in some of Australia’s finest kitchens.
Aspiring chefs will experience masterclasses and workshops from leading chefs, and will also have access to hundreds of training videos via HTN Online, allowing participants to showcase their skills and work.

One of the chefs engaged in the program, Nino Zoccali from Sydney’s Pendolino and La Rosa restaurants says that one of the biggest challenges for apprentice chefs is to gain a realistic understanding of what is required to succeed.

“They see the image of the celebrity chef, but some of them don’t realise that all of those chefs have already done the hard yards.

“To really succeed you need to be focussed and passionate, but you also need the skills and the capability to operate in a very disciplined way,” he said.

Michael Bennett noted that the completion rate for apprentice chefs across the industry is around 40 per cent, and that a key goal of the new program is to improve those outcomes.

HTN is a not-for-profit group training organisation that has been engaged in hospitality training and employment since 1987 and currently employs apprentice chefs and hospitality trainees throughout NSW and the ACT.

See Total Chef Aspire for application details and more information.

**Media Note:** HTN Chief Executive Officer, Michael Bennett as well as a number of chefs and apprentices are available for interview.

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