

## INSIDE THE REGIONAL TEAM

BY MICHELLE WHITFIELD

ACF Culinary Regional Team USA provides a foundation for future national teams and gives team members exposure to competition in the international arena. We spoke with regional team members as they prepare for the most prestigious competition in the world, the *Internationale Kochkunst Ausstellung* (IKA), also known as the “culinary Olympics,” which takes place Oct. 5-10, in Erfurt, Germany.

“Competition is an area where you can connect with other chefs and receive constructive criticism to better your craft. Everything that I have learned during this experience has made me a better chef and competitor. My mantra as an instructor is always improving culinary skills, having a deeper understanding of food and developing professionally. What I am learning from my teammates and coaches is invaluable.

“Our goal has been and will be to represent the United States in every aspect of competition to the best of our ability, and, as a result, come out on top. Excellence is expected. I could not have asked for a better group of teammates to take on this challenge.”

—BRIAN CAMPBELL, CEC, CCE

“A key part of my success thus far has been to get to the next level of difficulty. I wanted to learn from the best chefs—those who work alongside you, lead by example and are always striving to improve. I’ve found that the common denominator with almost all of them is being a member of ACF Culinary Team USA. I hope to have a positive influence on other young culinarians, for them to see me and tell themselves that they can do it, too.

“As the regional team, we are preparing ourselves for that day at the IKA when we show the world that American chefs are among the best in the world.”

—ADAM HEATH, CEC



“No one knows their full potential until they push themselves to perform under the grueling scrutiny of the best in the world. I hope to learn about myself through the challenges of striving for perfection in practice sessions and the competition itself. From my first competition in culinary school my reason to compete has always been to improve my skills as a chef. I hope to share the knowledge and experiences that I have gained and inspire fellow culinarians to pursue their own personal quest for excellence.

“Our goal is to represent the members of the American Culinary Federation, and the entire country, with the utmost professionalism and craftsmanship to show the world the quality and true essence of American cuisine.”

—SHAWN CULP, CEC

“As the newest member, I have learned how much discipline and dedication it takes to be on the team. I like the challenge and appreciate all the help from my teammates and the coaches. This is an investment in continued learning for something I love to do, and I know it will help me in my future endeavors. By experiencing the process firsthand, I hope to inspire young chefs to take part in this great ride in the future.

“As a competitor growing up in Europe, being part of the ‘culinary Olympics’ has always been a goal of mine. I will give 110% to help the team end up on top at the final dance in Erfurt.”

—ANDREAS PROISL, CEPC

“I was advised by my mentors and chefs associated with Team USA that there is no other forum like this to enable one to improve. It is a unique one-of-a-kind apprenticeship where you are always learning and improving your skills. It is an investment in my culinary career. I make a dish and evaluate flavors and techniques with the ultimate goal that the food we show can be taken back to a restaurant and served.

“Going to Erfurt in October will be an amazing journey with the national, youth and military teams. With each other’s support, there is no reason that we can’t come out on top in each of our respective categories.”

—JOHN REED, CEC, CCA

ABOVE: Regional team members get feedback during a practice session. Left to right: John Reed; Steve Jilleba, CMC, CCE, AAC, ACF Culinary Team USA manager; Shawn Culp; Joachim Buchner, CMC, coach; and Brian Campbell.