

### **Monroe College Selects America's Best High-School Chef**

At the end of a weekend of high-pressure culinary competition, the Monroe College School of Hospitality Management and the Culinary Arts has awarded Kerry Pace of Staten Island, N.Y., the title of America's Best High School Chef. For her winning dish, the 18-year-old Tottenville High School senior cooked up a scrumptious plate of chicken rollatini, tarragon mushrooms, roasted potatoes and sautéed green beans.



As a result of her achievement, Pace will receive a full scholarship to the Monroe College Culinary Arts Program and admission into the college's study-abroad program in Italy.

"Kerry's performance was outstanding," says Dean Frank Costantino, who was one of the judges of the competition. "Her plate was creative. She pan-fried the chicken and stuffed it with mozzarella cheese. She executed and timed her precise game plan perfectly. This is a very important aspect of being a top-notch chef."

After an extensive search that began in the fall, seven high-school teams of four students were given the opportunity to participate in the competition, April 17-19 in the state-of-the-art Monroe Culinary Arts Center in New Rochelle, N.Y. After cooking on Saturday and Sunday morning, two teams were chosen for first and second place. Then on Sunday afternoon the four students from the winning team competed for the title of America's Best HS Chef. The other Tottenville students who qualified were Nikki Rizzo, Steve Young and Anna Belfiore. The Tottenville coach is Vincent Corigliano.

The second place team was Warwick (R.I.) Area Career and Technical Center. Each of the team members won a \$750 cash prize. The first-place Tottenville team was also awarded \$2,000 for its culinary-arts program and each of the team members received \$7,500 scholarships to Monroe College. Prizes for other teams included cash prizes, gift certificates for gourmet restaurants, autographed cookbooks, medals and trophies.

The other participating schools were Food and Finance High School (Manhattan, NYC), Harry S. Truman High School (Bronx, NYC), Middletown High School (Middletown, N.Y.), Port Richmond High School (Staten Island, NYC), and St. Croix Career and Technical Education Center (Kings Hill, Virgin Islands).

The judges of the event were Dean Costantino, culinary-arts director Chef Daniel Hinder, Monroe instructor Chef Eric Pellizzari and Chef Sue Torres of Suenos Restaurant in Manhattan.

"This is the first year we've held this competition, and we were thrilled with the response and thoroughly impressed with the talent of the students," says Evan Jerome, director of admission. "They were well prepared and created some amazing dishes. Because of the enthusiasm they've shown, we plan to make this an annual event."