



# president's message

## Commit to Compete

Across the country, culinary teams and individual competitors are trading in free time to spend more hours in the kitchen for the opportunity to represent their chapter, region or school in a **culinary competition**, or to test their wits in the **Baron H. Galand Culinary Knowledge Bowl**.

Competition is a way to nurture your creativity and solidify your research and self-study skills, and it is an incubator for the development of cutting-edge presentations and techniques. These traits and skills will benefit you in your career.

I encourage all emerging chefs to engage in culinary competition, but it takes more than just signing up.

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“**T**he master whose student does not surpass him has failed”  
- Leonardo da Vinci  
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### Do Your Homework

Research is a main component of culinary competition. Talk to experienced

competitors and coaches. Attend a state competition near you or **attend a culinary salon in your region**. No competitor becomes a winner without ample research, which is the first step.

### No F.O.M.O. (Fear of Missing Out)

Preparation requires hours of research and practice. Instead of going out with friends or taking weekends or days off, you must be in the kitchen practicing or doing research. If you have serious F.O.M.O., you may need to reassess your priorities.

### Be Open to Criticism

Before you even get to the competition floor, you will practice for hours and you will fail often, but failure is a means of learning. Coaches and the competition judges will critique you on strong and weak points, and at times it may feel like an assault. Open your mind and listen to their guidance; they all started out just like you.

### Be Flexible

Ovens break, equipment gets changed or your proteins don't arrive. By learning to work through your missteps during practice, you'll be able maintain a cool head to succeed in the competition kitchen. And always have a Plan B.

### Understand the Rules

You must have a clear understanding of the rules. Floor judges will assess you on sanitation, organization, butchery skills, cooking techniques and more. Tasting judges will look at presentation, portion size, creativity, taste and menu composition, to name a few. **Study your student competition manual and refer to it often.**

In 2018, commit to compete. It teaches you to be fast on your feet and overcome challenges, and will help you to achieve your personal and professional goals.

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