TTHTI’s Children’s Party

In 2007 TTHTI’s Part Time students hosted a Charity Children’s Party for the Christ Child Convalescent Home. Once again the Part Time students hosted a party, but this time for Sophia House and the St. Dominic’s Home. Planning began in June and the date set for Saturday 6th September 2014. The children, ranging in age from 3 – 17 years, were greeted at TTHTI at 2pm and were given beautiful yellow t-shirts printed ‘I had fun at TTHTI’ and were also adorned with their chef hats on which they put their names.

The day was full of fun and excitement. There was a ‘goodie’ table full of treats from which they could help themselves. They were taken into the Baking Lab to make their own pizzas. There was pizza galore, even chocolate stuffed crust pizza which became a full meal with dessert - eat the main part of the pizza first and then the crust for dessert. Whilst the pizzas were in the oven they ate hot dogs and played games – musical chairs, dancing, face painting, bouncy castle, bran tub and even beating the TTHTI piñata. It was a thrill to see them scramble for the toys and treats.

After devouring their pizzas, the children got to make their own ice cream sundaes with gummy worms and bears, skittles, M&M’s and chocolate sauce for the toppings. And as if that was not enough, they all went home with ‘goodie’ bags, packed with sweets, chocolates, juice, soft drinks, biscuits and toys.

We also raised enough money to be able to pack food hampers for each home to assist with the daily meals for the children. Sophia House also received a hamper from Lebresse for the teenaged ladies at the home.

All of this would not have been possible without the support of the students, management and staff of TTHTI for which we are eternally thankful. Even though we had a lot of much appreciated help from our new Full Time students, we do hope that this will be an annual event on the Part Time calendar. We all made a significant contribution to putting smiles on the faces of these children and memories in their heads and hearts for the rest of their lives.

As one of the thank you letters stated: ..........
“Please know that the children had a wonderful time and your kindness is very deeply appreciated. May God continue to bless and reward you, your family and your Institute as He alone can.”

Thanking you.

Full Time Orientation

The Orientation exercise for the new intake of full-time students was conducted on August 27th and 28th. Mr. Andrew Welch, the President of THRTA, accepted the invitation to deliver the Feature Remarks to the new students. He urged the new students not only to love the industry, but to live it and his message was well received.

On Day 1, the students were also provided with important information from the Student Services, Facilities and Maintenance, Information Technology and Library departments. They were also given tours of the campus, met with their Programme Heads and faculty members and were introduced to the various members of management and staff who were present. Day 2 saw them being addressed by the Student Guild President, Alumni Association President and TTHTI Counsellor. A representative of the St. George West Regional Health Office also delivered a lecture on the proper handling of food which is a requirement for the students to receive their Food Handler’s Badges.

Suppliers of tools, uniforms and textbooks were also invited and the students had the chance to purchase these items on the spot, or place orders for them. The students were entertained by local singing group, Freetown Collective who received rousing ovations for their interactive performances.

Taste of Carnival 2015

13.02.15
TTHTI Alum and Faculty visit Costa Rica

To commemorate the 52nd anniversary of independence of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago our embassy located in San José, Costa Rica, recently hosted a dinner and dance reception at the prestigious Costa Rica Country Club.

Through a collaboration of the Trinidad Hotels, Restaurant and Tourism Association (THRTA) and the Embassy, the culinary talent of Mr. Devon Joseph, and by extension the fine dining cuisine of Trinidad and Tobago was showcased. Devon’s contribution to the Embassy’s independence celebration was truly outstanding and the Embassy continues to receive many compliments about Devon’s talent. Devon led a team of Costa Rican chefs and assistants with the help of a translator to prepare for the event.

The Independence celebration was attended by dignitaries who included, the Vice Minister of External Affairs and Worship of Costa Rica, the Vice Minister of Culture of Costa Rica and Trinidad nationals living in Costa Rica. Following the dinner, and in acknowledgement of Devon’s culinary prowess, the Vice Minister stated before invited guests that the collaboration between chefs from Trinidad and Tobago and Costa Rica was a positive indication of the cultural rapprochement between the two countries.

Following his graduation from the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (TTHTI) in 2008, Devon Joseph joined the team at Chaud Restaurant, where he developed a passion for classic French techniques and international cuisine. In 2011, he competed in the Trinidad Hotels Restaurants and Tourism Association (THRTA) Food & Beverage Competition and participated on the National Culinary Team in the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association Taste of the Caribbean In Miami, where he earned a gold medal in the Chef of the year competition. In 2012, he was again a member of the Gold medal winning team, where he won the title of Caribbean Chef of the Year – a first for Trinidad and Tobago. In 2013, Devon was asked to judge the competition. Currently, he is the Corporate Chef at Linda’s Bakery.

Ms. Jala Bernard, Food and Beverage lecturer at TTHTI accompanied Devon and assisted with the planning before and service during the event. Ms. Bernard, who also serves as TTHTI’s International Liaison Officer, has initiated discussions with the Embassy in Costa Rica to liaise with hotels and tourism organizations there to seek internships for our students.
Cooking with Confidence Kids

On Monday 14th July, nineteen eager kids, from as young as eight years of age to sixteen years old along with their anxious parents or guardians converged on the TTHTI compound. These young ones were entrusted into our care as participants of the second annual Cooking with Confidence Kids short course to be held over a thirty hour period from July 14th to 18th, 2014. This course is an exciting and activity filled programme designed to fuel the curiosity and nurture the skills of young ones and to raise their awareness of the fields of Culinary and Hospitality.

The programme once again comprised cooking, baking and dining etiquette training. However, it featured a few adjustments to the content as we added some new items to the Baking and Cooking components which gave the students the opportunity to try their hand at food art - creating interesting yet simple, edible figurines. The kids were under the tutelage of Chef Seepaul, Chef Francis and Chef Shortt-Charles, who did an excellent job at inculcating the rudiments of culinary and baking skills. This year, Chef Soo Yam and Chef Gloudon also joined the team handling the theory part of the training. It would be remiss not to mention the contribution of the seven TTHTI students who worked one-on-one with the children in the kitchen and supervised them during their break periods. These students did an incredible job of ensuring that they were always accounted for and that they fully enjoyed the ‘camp’ as the programme is fondly referred to by parents and others.

The Dining Etiquette session was facilitated by Mrs. Bunbury, of our Food and Beverage Department and in addition to a theory session in table and dining etiquette, the children practiced their skills over a three course meal prepared by interns in the Hilltop Restaurant, an experience which they thoroughly enjoyed. One of our internship lecturers, Devon Joseph (who won the Taste of the Caribbean, Chef of the Year 2012) spoke with the kids about being a professional chef. In addition, he also invited them to visit one of the top local restaurants to get a “behind the scenes” view, an offer which at least two students accepted immediately.

On the final day, a casual graduation ceremony was organized by our Marketing Department. Parents were invited to see their young ones receive their certificates. In addition to his/her certificate, each child was also given a signature chocolate spoon with his/her name carefully crafted on it. Feedback from the kids indicated that it was truly an enjoyable and enlightening experience with many wishing that the class was longer.

This year, TTHTI again approached a few organizations for sponsorship and this resulted in the National Flour Mills (NFM) contributing aprons, and hampers containing baking ingredients for each child. The Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) continued to lend support by donating stationery items. As we prepare for the upcoming class of 2015, we are grateful for the contribution made by all in the successful execution of this short course and look forward to entertaining our new group of kids for this beginners course and perhaps having a few kids join us again for a level II Cooking with Confidence for Kids!

Job Fair 2014

On Thursday July 24th, TTHTI hosted its second annual Job Fair for its 2014 graduating class. The event, held at the Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre, was part of the Trinidad Hotels, Restaurant and Tourism Association’s Annual General Meeting. The purpose of the event was to introduce our upcoming graduands to members of the hospitality and tourism industry that could potentially be their employers in the near future. The students were given an opportunity to be interviewed by industry members as well as submit their resumes.

Seventy-two (72) students registered for the fair and participating employers were Asa Wright Nature Centre, Cara Suites Hotel and Conference Centre, Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre, Hotel Normandie, Kapok Hotel, Coblentz Inn, Eve Anderson Recruitment, Hyatt Regency Trinidad, Drew Manor and Jaffa at the Oval.
The Trinidad Hotels Restaurants and Tourism Association (THRTA) hosted for the first time this year a Gala Awards Dinner and Dance to recognise and honour our members who have been Outstanding Performers in the Hospitality and Tourism Sector. While the spotlight was on the winners, patrons attending also had a delectable treat as T&T’s top chefs influenced the menu just for the occasion with the support of all ingredients from HADCO Limited.

Guests were welcomed by a very special Champagne Cocktail hour featuring canapes by Chef Debra Sardinha-Metivier, Head Chef at DSM Cuisine and former National Culinary Team Captain. The dinner menu was crafted by Chef Joe Brown, Jaffa; Chef Khalid Mohammed, Chaud Restaurant; Chef Raymond Joseph, Head Chef Courtyard by Marriott & Former National Culinary team captain and the Hyatt Regency Trinidad team led by Chef Fernando Franco. Our Keynote Speaker was Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace, a leading tourism professional and former Minister of Tourism from the Bahamas.

**Business Excellence Award – Tourism Supporting Services**
This award goes to the company providing the most innovative and significant support to the Tourism sector such as, Information Technology, design, wholesale and distributor services. Every aspect of the services provided demonstrates clear, precise and enlightened support of the Tourism industry.
Winner - Mac Farlane’s Design Studio – Mr. Brian Mac Farlane

**Business Excellence Award – Direct Tourism Services**
This award goes to the company providing direct tourism services, for example, restaurants, tourist attractions, tour operators, airlines and travel agents. Creating unforgettable experiences for others is not just a skill, it is an art form. The recipient of this award understands the art and science of tourism and has been enterprising and bold in their contributions.
Winner - Nature Seekers – Mr. Dennis Sammy

**Outstanding Industry Employee Award**
This award goes to an outstanding employee. What is an outstanding employee? Some people work because they are going to be paid. Some work to fill time. The outstanding employee is the one who gives their heart to the job whether a mundane task or a request for something unconventional and is resourceful at all times.
Winner - Ms. Pauline Felix James – Courtyard by Marriott

**Hotelier of the Year Award**
This award goes to an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to the pursuit of excellence. Long ago, one tied up a horse, and said, “Innkeeper, I’d like a room please”. Today, the demand for luxurious facilities with the highest level of personalized services concomitantly demands the hotelier’s commitment and execution of core competencies.
Winner - Ms. Diana Cohen Chan – Kapok Hotel

**Lifetime Achievement Award**
This award goes to an individual who has been active in the tourism industry and who has shown tremendous dedicated professionalism and commitment to the Trinidad Hotels, Restaurants and Tourism Association and the development of tourism. In a world of fast food, fast cars, and movement at breakneck speed only a few understand the value of long term commitment.
Recipient – Mr. William Aguiton

**Winners (L–R):**
Mr. Dennis Sammy
Ms. Diana Cohen Chan
Mr. William Aguiton
Ms. Pauline Felix James
Mr. Brian Mac Farlane