

# **THE WINSTON CHURCHILL MEMORIAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA**

**Report by – ALISON TAAFE- 2004 CHURCHILL FELLOW**

**THE JAMES LOVE CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIP to study and research the Degree of Culinary Arts in America, with a view to implementing a similar programme here in Australia.**

*“ Gastronomy is one of the greatest of the creative arts, and professions, and after you have given it all your mind, and all your soul, you can eat your words”!*

*Julia Child*

*(Once acclaimed as ‘La Grande Dame’ of the culinary world in America)*

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**Signed: Alison Taafe**

**Dated: 24/01/05**

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## INTRODUCTION

This report will outline details of my experiences in the United States of America over the eight-week period of my Churchill Fellowship in October/November 2004. It will discuss the rationale behind the visit, my findings as a result of the research and suggest possible ways in which the hospitality industry in Australia may be able to implement some of the valuable things that have been learnt.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My journey would not have been possible without the valuable assistance from the following;

- The major invaluable financial contribution received from the **James Love Estate**.
- The awareness of the Winston Churchill Trust both internationally and in Australia which assisted with the preliminary arrangements immensely and helped whilst in the America.
- The support of my Director, Mr Craig Sherrin and my Assistant Director, Mr Marty Rollings for their encouragement and support.
- The overwhelming support and assistance from all the wonderful professors, teachers, directors, chefs, administration personnel and students in America.
- My husband, Mr Stephen Taafe and my mother, Mrs Irene Morgan and all my friends and family for their love and support on the entire 'journey'.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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**Project Description:** To study and research the Degree of Culinary Arts in America with a view to implementing a similar programme in Australia

### **Fellowship Highlights:**

- **New York University-** Mrs Judith Gilbride, Acting chair, Dept. Nutrition, Food Studies and Public Health and her wonderful staff who organised my visit to NYU and also arranged many other functions for me to attend whilst in Manhattan and opened many other doors for me.
- **ICE Academy-** Institute of Culinary Education. Ms Linda Simons and her staff for their invitation to attend the launch of *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Food and Drink in America* where I met many industry chefs, professionals and famous food writers and critics.
- **The Culinary Historians of New York-** Linda Palaccio invited me to a book launch for the infamous Laura Shapiro, food writer, at the launch of; *'Something from the oven'*.
- **CIA-** Culinary Institute of America. Mr Larry Lopez, Director of International Relations invited me to tour the CIA Campus in Hyde Park, NY. A magnificent experience, truly the Mecca of culinary training in the United States.
- **Warren Nish (March Restaurant) and Emeril Lagasse (Food network)-** Interviewed and met with both of these famous chefs.
- **Joseph Amendola-** Ambassador for the CIA and founding member of World Association of Chefs (WACS) and member of the American Culinary Federation (ACF) and WWII Veteran. He arranged my visit to the Orlando Culinary Academy and was inspirational for me with his continuing passion and energy for the profession at the age of 85.
- **Los Angeles Trade Technical College-** All the students and teachers who were so motivated and also very welcoming to me during my visit to California.

### **Findings**

- US colleges and universities offer Associate and Bachelor Degrees in Culinary Arts (2 & 4 yr)
- Training in the USA is predominantly private and scholarships are widely available
- No government apprenticeship programme only private 'Master and apprentice' options
- Average age of students is 28 yrs
- Retention rates at colleges are considerably higher than in Australia
- Hospitality industry is a profession in the USA as opposed to just a service industry
- Curriculum includes liberal arts, general education and restaurant service subjects
- Teaching standards equal to those here but facilities are multi-million dollar designed
- Earning capacity of graduates is much higher than in Australia
- Community colleges exist, are less expensive and similar to TAFE, but offer AOS degrees

### **Conclusions**

My findings have emphasised the major differences between culinary training in Australia and the USA. The extortionate amount of money and considerable time being invested in training in the USA is astounding. The industry is thriving and statistics show that chefs remain motivated and enthusiastic about their chosen professions, staying longer in the industry. They are highly regarded and greatly rewarded financially.

I plan to disseminate my findings by presenting this report to my director and executives at SBIT and also to the Professional Culinary Associations, of which I am a member. I hope also to have this report or sections of it published on the Department of Education and Training and Southbank Institute of TAFE websites.

## PROGRAMME

### New York City, New York – 6<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2004

- **New York University:** Mrs Judith Gilbride Ph.D, Acting Chair, Professor, Dept. Nutrition. Food Studies and Public Health, Mimi Martin MA. Concentration Director of Food Studies and staff in Food Studies Faculty.
- **The French Culinary Academy:** Mr Jaull Lorem, Director of International Admissions.
- **Institute of Culinary Education (ICE):** Ms Linda Simon, Director of Admissions and staff. College founded by Peter Kump, a legend in the food industry in the USA.
- **Oxford Encyclopaedia of Food and Drink in America:** Book launch, which I attended, where I met many industry professionals, food writers, critics and famous chefs.
- **Culinary Historians of New York:** Book launch for Laura Shapiro, a famous food writer, for her new book "**Something from the oven**" hosted by ICE Academy and the Culinary Historian Society of New York.
- **March and Aquavit restaurants:** Dining in some of New York's finest establishments as part of my research.

### Hyde Park, New York 24<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> October 2004

- **Culinary Institute of America:** Mr Larry Lopez, Director of International Relations, Mr Henry Woods, Associate Dean of Faculty Development and Mrs Rachel Birchwood, Director of Admissions and all the teaching staff in the culinary arts faculty.

### Orlando, Florida 28<sup>th</sup> October - 5<sup>th</sup> November 2004

- **Orlando Culinary Academy:** Michael Carmel, Vice-President of Education, Ms Linda Osgood, Career Services Manager and Ms Jan Boscher and teaching staff.

### Miami, Florida 6<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> November 2004

- **Johnson and Wales University, Miami Campus:** Mr Jeff Greenip, Director of Admissions and staff at the University.
- **Emeril's Miami:** Dining at one of Emeril Lagasse's restaurants.

### San Francisco, California 12<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> November 2004

- **CIA- Napa Valley, Greystone Campus:** Mr Mark Erkson, Director of Admissions.
- **The French Laundry:** Dining at the famous award-winning restaurant.

### Los Angeles, California 19<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> November 2004

- **Los Angeles Trade Technical College:** Mr Stephen Kasmar, Director of Culinary Arts and the wonderful staff in the Culinary Arts Faculty.

## RATIONALE

A sophisticated English visitor to Australia's capital cities once remarked; ***“London seems rather provincial in comparison”***. This piece of anecdotal evidence was testimony to the quality, diversity and the sheer volume of food outlets in Australia today. We embrace a melting pot of culinary ideas and cultural influences here and quite honestly we have the ability and knowledge to become a world leader in culinary excellence. At the moment we don't seem to be competing on a world stage as far as our food is concerned. A skill shortage in the area of commercial cookery has been documented as one of the problems that Australia faces. We must adopt a different approach to culinary training if we wish to remedy the situation that we find ourselves in. Tony Bilson argued that; ***“I also blame the emphasis on fusion cooking and the low level of training in our technical colleges for the decline in kitchen skills”***. ‘Standing Order’ Article published in VE+T magazine, Oct/Nov 2004.

Mr Tom Barton, Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations recently launched a new government initiative called; ***SMART VET-Skilling for the smart state***. He said that; ***“....part of this new strategy was to identify the skills needed by industry and to develop new pathways to deliver high-level training and providing opportunities for all Queenslanders to reach their true potential”*** Higher-level training leads to higher-level chefs; maybe this could be one of the solutions.

The rest of the world has adopted a different approach to training, especially in America. They have abandoned the old system of apprentice training and moved into a higher-level degree programme. There is a distinct gap in the training that we offer our chefs here in Australia. Our highest level of qualification is a Certificate IV in Commercial Cookery, which is only offered at select TAFE colleges around the country. There is also no other course for a chef to progress to once qualified, with no real professional development opportunities.

The hospitality and tourism industry in Australia contributes around 10 billion dollars annually to the economy. In Queensland it is the second biggest industry. There are currently over 100,000 people employed in the industry in Queensland and over 30,000 in training (half as apprentices and half in pre-vocational style courses). A recent report showed that over 20% of workers left the industry each year. In this report it was suggested that limited career opportunities and poor conditions were factors contributing to this problem. 34% of workers are between the ages of 15-24, which is much higher than in other industries where it is only 17% of workers. Growth in the industry for the period from 2001-2005 is forecast at 5.6% and 4.52% up to 05/06. My project will focus on developing higher-level training for chefs in Australia with a view to increasing the professionalism of the industry. The focus will be on encouraging high achievers into the industry, motivating and encouraging those in the industry and perhaps those already qualified to return to formal education (i.e. Bachelor Degree of Culinary Arts).

The reason for my choice to travel to the United States to conduct this research was that like us, Americans didn't have a great reputation as ‘World Leaders’ in food. In fact, fast food and unhealthy eating habits have made America, and in particular, Americans the brunt of many jokes in the food industry. Take the recent film ‘Super Size Me’ as an example and also the fact that America is most responsible for the introduction of ‘FAST FOOD’. However, recently there has been a revolution and revival in the American Food Industry. Recently, the US team at the Culinary Olympics took out the gold medal in the team event ‘HOT FOOD’. They are promoting a new food style in the USA becoming known as ‘SLOW FOOD’, which is a direct assault on fast food, being the exact opposite. The industry is now evolving and I felt that we in Australia might take our lead from them and learn some valuable lessons in the process in order for us to start our own ‘FOOD REVOLUTION’.

## **THE AMERICAN COOKING SCHOOL**

So why do so many Americans flock to cooking schools in the USA? During my eight-week trip I visited many schools, but for the purpose of this report, I will concentrate on five main schools; New York University, Culinary Institute of America (CIA), Johnson and Wales University, Orlando Culinary Academy and Los Angeles Trade Technical College. I will briefly describe the schools and what courses they offer.

While I was in America, I had the pleasure of meeting many teachers, professors, students and prominent chefs from industry. Here are a couple of statements made during conversations that I had with two of New York's best chefs;

***“ A culinary education programme is of utmost importance because it provides a broad overview and exposure that a specific on-site restaurant apprenticeship alone cannot deliver. As in any field, formal education is just the beginning. In Culinary Arts it is a doorway to a fascinating, challenging and very rewarding career”***

**Michael Romano, Chef/Owner, Union Square Café, New York City. October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004.**

***“Why go to a culinary school and not just get an apprenticeship like we do in Australia?”***  
***(Alison Taafe-interviewer)***

***“Working in a restaurant helps you decide whether the field is indeed for you. A drawback to on the job training is that your culinary education is limited to the repertoire of a single chef, chefs teach ‘hows’ and teachers teach ‘whys’ ”.***

**Warren Nish, Chef/Owner, March Restaurant, Award winning restaurant, New York City. October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2004.**

## **New York University**

Courses offered:

- Bachelor of Science Degree in Nutrition and Food Science. Concentration in Food and Restaurant Management or Food Studies (3-4 yrs duration)
- Master of Arts or Science in Food Studies and Food Management (2 years approx.)

Course costs: \$30,000 USD per year

The courses here were not as concentrated in the food area as I had first thought and many of the students that I had the pleasure of meeting, didn't have any real intention of becoming chefs and in fact some of them were already qualified as chefs, having previously studied at Institute of Culinary Education (ICE) or the CIA or similar, and were at NYU to progress in the food industry as nutritionists, food stylists, teachers, food historians, food writers or critics and food product developers. Some of NYU recent graduates are now working as food consultants on Fox Food Network, food stylists for popular food magazines and critics for the New York Times, to name a few.

Although NYU was different from what I had expected as far as their courses were concerned, I thoroughly enjoyed my time there and I feel that I have learnt some valuable lessons regarding 'Life after being a chef'. In Australia, chefs who wish to stay in the industry but maybe not in a practical position, have no real opportunity for further studies in these areas. Some of the lectures that I attended might well find their way into a degree programme in Australia. For example; Managing Food Industry Personnel, Managerial Accounting, Food Marketing and, Entrepreneurship in Food Management, all very valuable subjects for inclusion in a chef's training.

## CIA (Culinary Institute of America)

Courses offered:

- Bachelor Degree of Professional Studies- Majoring in Culinary Arts or Pastry and Baking (38 mths+ Externship)
- Associate Degree in Occupational Studies- Majoring in Culinary Arts or Pastry and Baking (21 mths + Externship)

Course costs: \$18,600 USD per year (inclusive of uniforms, knives and textbooks) An additional cost of \$7,000 USD for room and board, if you decided to live in

Of all the schools I visited in the States, this was the most outstanding and memorable for many reasons. Mr Larry Lopez, Director of International Relations organised a wonderful programme for me during my visit. His overwhelming hospitality and kindness made this extremely enjoyable. I look forward to continuing a professional relationship with him and his staff in the future.

The Culinary Institute of America has two campuses; Hyde Park, New York and The Napa Valley in California, which I also visited. The Hyde Park campus is the main one with over 2,300 students. It is a magnificent campus set in the scenic Hudson Valley and the original site of a Jesuit Seminary. The school was moved here in 1970 from its original site in New Haven, CT where it was founded in 1946. Of the 2,300 students enrolled in the above courses, only 5% are international and the rest are American. The statistics show 66% male and 34% female. They employ over 130 chef lecturers and academic professors from all over the world. The teachers I interviewed there were from a variety of backgrounds and countries. Teachers require 7 years of industry experience to be able to apply for a position here. They need not have teaching qualifications initially as the CIA provides them with teacher training. They include a 'mentoring' programme for the first couple of years of their employment, which is very valuable. Lou Jones MBE, an Englishman with many accolades of his own in the food industry and service trained in the British Army has been teaching at the CIA for several years and he indicated that there was no training like this in the UK where they still have the formal apprenticeship style training. He enjoys teaching at the Institute and he stated that the students were enthusiastic and well motivated, with a few normal exceptions!

The school itself is accredited by The Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Assoc. of Colleges and Schools. Also, they have accreditation by The Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology (ACCSCCT). The facilities include over 41 training kitchens, 4 top class restaurants open to the public Monday-Saturday, a bakery also open to the public, a computerized nutrition centre, a wine spectator auditorium and a library built by Conrad N. Hilton with more than 69,000 books, 3,300 videos and DVDs. The students that elect to live-in (70%) have the choice of various accommodations and all meals are provided to them 7 days per week. Incidentally, these meals are prepared and served by the students themselves. A smart financial move, but more importantly, an invaluable learning tool for the students. About 85% of the students qualify for some kind of financial support either from the school itself or from an abundance of other scholarships offered by the government or private enterprises i.e: Marriott and Hilton Hotel Groups. Some students are also employed by the college itself to work and are either paid or receive reduced course or board/lodging costs.

The average age of the students is approximately 28 and some of the students that I had the pleasure of meeting have already obtained degrees from other universities and are studying here as part of a career change. Some of the former professions included; airline pilots, business owners and lawyers. One student I interviewed was Julie-Ann Kirkland from NSW, Australia. She is 21 and is studying her Bachelor Degree at the CIA. I asked her why she came to the States to study and her reply was; ***"There is nowhere in Australia offering a degree quite like this one, so I had to come to America to get it"***. She also said that it was the best thing that she had done and was loving every minute of her time there.

During the degree programme at the CIA, students have to do an externship, which is mandatory. This is a salaried position for a period of time in industry (approx. 18-21 weeks). Some of the approved sites they can go to include; Charlie Trotter's, Chicago, IL, Food Network, NY, NY, Waldorf Astoria, NY, NY, and Les Crayeres, Rheims, France.

***“By working in New York City, new graduates have access to an incredible network. If I am impressed by an extern, I can reach out to some of the best restaurants in the world to help them get their next job”***

**Marcus Samuelson, Executive Chef- Aquavit. Award winning NY restaurant.**

Getting out into industry for a period of time is an essential part of the training and also, a four-week excursion to the Napa Valley campus, Greystone in California is included in the student's fees. During the time spent in California, students visit wineries, vineyards, food suppliers and restaurants and are instructed in food and wine matching and wine appreciation. This is an excellent idea and one that the students really seem to enjoy.

Apart from the stunning facilities, there is a strong concentration on the general/liberal education side of things. At the CIA the philosophy is that general education is a crucial aspect of higher learning and a valuable asset in today's highly competitive world. Course work in this course includes many language, mathematical and managerial components and is designed to ensure that students have the cognitive abilities crucial to their success in the workplace and for their future in the industry. Some of the past graduates of the school include; Rocco Di Spirito, Executive Chef of Union Pacific Restaurant in New York City, Michael Chiarello host of the PBS series 'Michael Chiarello's Napa' as seen on the Lifestyle Food here in Australia, and Walter S. Scheib III, Executive Chef at the White House, Washington DC.

Overall, the standard of education, facilities and food I sampled during my visit were second to none. They are obviously doing something right at the CIA. They have long waiting lists for enrolment and are receiving many accolades and awards from industry and the education sector.

***“The CIA is the best culinary school in the world”***

**Paul Bocuse, World famous Chef**

## **Orlando Culinary Academy**

Courses offered:

- Associate Degree of Applied Science in Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Arts
- Associate Degree of Applied Science in Le Cordon Bleu Patisserie & Baking

(Both courses' duration is 15 months plus a 3 month Externship)

Course costs: Approximately \$40,000 USD (inclusive of uniforms, tools and textbooks)

This school was chosen as part of this research as it was the only one, which trades under 'Le Cordon Bleu' name. It is similar to the school in South Australia, which is also a Cordon Bleu school. It is like a franchise agreement they have with the infamous Paris Cooking School. Officials from the organisation visit from France periodically and regularly monitor them. Le Cordon Bleu sets the curriculum here and they endorse all qualifications. Additionally, the school is accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Schools. This enables them to issue the Associate Degree of Applied Science. The campus is also a branch of the International Academy of Design and Technology in Tampa, Florida.

The college itself is only 2 years old and the facilities are very good. They have a fine dining restaurant where the food is excellent and the service staff are culinary arts students who are about to finish their programme and are doing the restaurant service part of their curriculum. I particularly like this component of the course that all the schools I visited include in their chefs' programmes. They have 740 students currently enrolled and the average age of the student is 25 yrs.

The university employs chef lecturers and teaching assistants to conduct their cooking classes. The teachers need to have a minimum of 7-10 years industry experience and have a teaching qualification in order to teach here. Each class has an average of about 25-30 students and are supervised by one teacher and a teaching assistant, which seems to work very well. The college also employs academic professors to teach the liberal arts and general education subjects included in the curriculum. The teachers, administration staff and students I met on my visit, were an absolute pleasure and very helpful in providing me with valuable information and arranging my time.

Students who have graduated from these programmes are doing very well in industry and as an example, past graduates hold positions in top five star establishments around Florida and the USA. I also learnt that they hope to extend their premises next year and may possibly branch out into the four year Bachelor programme in the not too distant future.

## **Johnson and Wales University- “America’s Career University”**

Courses offered:

- Associate Degree in Science- Majoring in Culinary Arts
- Associate Degree in Business for Culinary Arts or Baking & Pastry
- Bachelor Degree in Science- Majoring in Culinary Arts or Baking & Pastry
- Bachelor Degree in Business in Food Marketing or Food Service Entrepreneurship

Associate Degree 18 months + Externship and Bachelor Degree is 48 months

Course costs: Fees range from \$50,000 US for the AOS Degree and up to \$90,000 US for the Bachelor Degree.

I decided to include a visit to Johnson and Wales University in Miami, Florida after hearing of their great reputation in culinary arts training when I arrived in the States. It was not part of my original programme but I found that they had a campus in Florida, which specialized in Hospitality as well as their flagship campus in Rhode Island. Unlike the CIA and Orlando Culinary Academy, Johnson and Wales is a university as opposed to a college. They are both nationally and internationally recognized and have a great reputation in the industry. Recently they were voted as the top hospitality school in the South Eastern USA and also ranked very highly on a survey of employers nationwide when asked about ‘employability of graduates’. Also, they have the big advantage of being accredited by The New England Association of Schools, who are also responsible for accrediting schools such as Harvard and Yale. It was the first school in the USA to offer four-year Bachelor Degrees in Culinary Arts in 1993 and the first to offer Baking and Pastry Bachelor Degrees in 1997. They also boast a 98% job placement guarantee to all graduates, which is a great accolade and proves to be a good marketing tool. Some of the recent graduates hold positions such as; Head Research Chef for Kraft Foods USA, Corporate Executive Chef for Nestle USA and owner of the very lucrative and successful, New England Soup Factory.

The campus opened in 1997 and it is not considered a ‘live-in style’ campus such as the CIA, however, it does offer inexpensive student accommodations. The students are from varying social and ethnic backgrounds. I interviewed ‘Gloria’ from New Orleans, LA, USA and ‘Nick’ from Romania. They were both enjoying the Bachelor Degree in Culinary Arts and both hoped to find a top position as a chef upon completion of their course early next year. The student body is made up of 10% International compared to 90% Domestic, and about 80% are on some kind of student assistance programme which varied from \$4,000 US - \$9,000 US per year.

The teachers I met were from various backgrounds, some international and some American. They all needed to have significant experience in the industry and needed a Bachelor or Masters Degree themselves to be able to teach there. Some teachers were doing professional development through the university’s own degree programmes. They all must have studied a teaching certificate before their commencement there. The facilities were adequate and the campus itself seemed very busy and although they decided to close their public restaurant a couple of years ago due to inflated costs, the students still get to rehearse their skills in the student dining area which caters for up to 1000 people. It is run by an independent catering company who assess the students placed in the dining room according to the curriculum set by the university. This seems to be a very good approach.

Subjects offered in both AOS and Bachelor degrees are similar in the practical cookery side of things to our apprenticeship, but once again subjects like; English, Communication Skills, Career Planning and Management, Leadership Techniques, Food Service Financial Systems, Dining Room Supervision and Spanish or French Language are all additional and very worthwhile considerations for our proposed course.

My visit to Johnson and Wales proved to be a very valuable and a wise addition to my proposed programme.

## **Los Angeles Trade Technical College (LATTC)**

Courses offered:

- Associate Degree in Culinary Arts
- Certificate of Culinary Arts

The Associate Degree is approx. 2 years while the Certificate is awarded after 1 year if students do not wish to progress into the Associate programme.

Course costs:

Californian residents pay \$26 per unit totaling around \$2,000 USD for the Associate Degree and \$1,200 USD for the Certificate. Non-residents pay \$11,900 for the AOS degree and \$8,500 US for the Certificate. Tools, uniforms and textbooks are not included in the fees and the college is not live-in.

This was the last school on my trip and the only school I visited which was classed as a Community College and is similar to our TAFE colleges here in Australia. It is a Californian Public Tax Supported Community College and you may have noticed above how inexpensive the fees are for their courses. The college itself does not offer Bachelor Degrees but does have a 'University Transfer Centre' where students can obtain advice about transferring to another institution with credits from the AOS Degree programme here.

The facilities were very similar to our TAFE colleges here and not overly glamorous. However, the students and teachers I had the privilege of meeting during my time here were motivated and very professional in their approach to training. The college is situated in the middle of Los Angeles on a very old site. They are accredited by The American Culinary Federation Education Institution (ACFEI) which in itself is a very positive recommendation from industry. They are also accredited by The Western Association of Schools and Colleges, who themselves are approved by the Californian State University. They have very good industry support from the local American Culinary Federation (ACF), Chefs' De Cuisine Association of California (CCAC), Epicurean Society and the Round Table for Women in Food Service. Their industry placement for their graduates is very good and they have a 75-year reputation for excellent culinary training in California. Some students assist Wolfgang Puck prepare food for The Academy Awards annually and other graduates hold top positions in Los Angeles, California and the USA. The teachers all need significant professional experience and a teaching qualification to teach here. Some teachers also have Bachelor and Masters Degrees.

One negative that I discovered at LATTC upon discussions with the Director of Culinary Arts, Mr Steven Kasmar, was that like in our TAFE colleges here, the retention rates and success rates of students was considerably low. There are many students with language and learning problems and the college is a melting pot for many different nationalities and social backgrounds. Approximately 43% of students qualify from the course and of the 75 currently enrolled; only 20 of these will possibly go on to the AOS from the certificate course. The probable cause of this low number is the academic requirement for the AOS.

In retrospect, it was probably a great decision to include this in my list of schools in the USA. I felt as if I had floated back down to earth finally after visiting some of the other schools previously. This college definitely reminded me of home! I was able to obtain a true reflection of the amazing diversity of culinary training available in the USA.

## **CONCLUSION**

All the schools I visited whilst in the States had a profound effect on me as a professional teacher and chef. The students were so well motivated and enthusiastic about their chosen professions and seemed very excited about their future prospects. All courses entry requirements were a minimum of a High School Certificate and some degree programmes required high achievement at high school level. The Masters and Ph.D programmes at NYU required a graduate degree also. Parents and school principles are really behind the student's choice to go to 'cooking school'. Tim Ryan the president of the CIA made this interesting comment;

***"We've arrived at a place where more young people than ever are interested in the culinary profession. And more importantly and interestingly, so are their parents"***  
**Tim Ryan, President of the CIA, 2004.**

Another quotation also emphasises this;

***"People who'd normally say; 'My child is going to law school' now profoundly say; 'My child is going to cooking school'.***  
**Kaplan, Newsweek Inc. 2004**

The colleges all seem to have extremely long waiting lists and the private schools are booming. This is unlike some of our TAFE colleges here in Australia who struggle to reach their budgets due mainly to low student enrolment numbers in the commercial cookery area. Chefs from industry and professional associations ie; WACS (World Assoc. of Chefs) and ACF (American Culinary Federation) are extremely supportive of many of the good schools and even offer their endorsement.

Retention rates are at 85% on average and universities like Johnson and Wales openly advertise, as a great marketing tool, 98% job placement satisfaction for all their graduates. This is considerably different to Australia, where recent figures have indicated that around 30% of apprentices and trainees don't finish their programmes and decide to leave their chosen trade area. The amount of money and indeed time being invested in culinary training is considerable, around \$80,000-\$90,000 for a Bachelor Degree and around 4 years of full time study. Is this the reason why so many of the students remain motivated to succeed and more importantly, to stay in the industry? Is it the money they have invested either themselves or their parents, or is it just that they are more serious about the industry as a career option? Is the training itself the main motivating factor or is it that Americans themselves are willing to devote more time and money on their education? Most Americans have student loans going on for years, but this doesn't seem to act as a deterrent. Also, another important factor here could be the reception they get from industry when they qualify from the top schools and also the working conditions, which seem to be far superior to our industry. The mere fact that a new graduate can make up to \$45,000 USD per year (\$58,000 AUD) upon entering the industry is a motivating factor in itself. There is money to be made in the American hospitality industry. According to the National Research Association the food service industry is the nations' largest private sector employer, providing work for nearly 9% of the American workforce. The good news is that the culinary industry in the States allows for rapid advancement for well-qualified and experienced individuals. Executive chefs with only 6-8 years of experience can demand salaries of up to \$90,000 USD (\$120,000 AUD) per year. A number of factors are responsible for the resurgence of the industry in the States as a true profession.

***"US culinary schools are drawing top talent straight out of high schools in a world hungry for fine dining"***  
**Michael Orecklin, Time Magazine. May 2004.**

I think generally, Australia and Australians need to develop a different way of thinking about this industry. It is merely thought of as a 'service industry' as opposed to a profession. Could it be in the future in Australia that chefs can proudly hang a Bachelor, Masters or Ph.D up on the walls of their own very successful, world famous restaurants?

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To quote the great man himself, Churchill was reported as saying;

***“Everyday you make progress. Every step may be fruitful. Yet there will stretch out before you an ever-lengthening, ever-ascending, ever-improving path. You know you will never get to the end of the journey. But this, so far from discouraging, only adds to the joy and glory of the climb”***

**Winston Churchill (date unknown).**

The start of this journey has only just begun. I will endeavour to recommend my findings as part of this research to as many of the appropriate people I can. This will include government officials, directors and executives at Southbank Institute of TAFE and other Registered Training Organisations, industry associations of which I am a member, and also, most importantly ‘Chefs of the Future’ members which include over 200 schools in the South East Queensland area and many school student members too.

I strongly believe it is the time for our own ‘Food Revolution’ here in Australia. We are beginning to make a name for ourselves on the world stage. Our own Neil Perry is becoming well known overseas and in America (he was visiting and appearing on the Food Network when I, too, was in New York) along with many of our other top chefs. There has been a massive resurgence of cooking shows on the television in recent months, many at prime time viewing recording high viewing figures. Foxtel have even created their own cooking network called ‘Lifestyle Food’ as food programmes are becoming immensely popular.

During this incredible journey, I received very positive feedback from the media with a published article in the Courier Mail regarding my research, many letters as a direct result of the article from teachers and parents alike, and also from industry chefs who were very supportive of this project. I cannot approach this single handed, as there are a lot of other players in this game who could affect the outcome of this proposal. Public interest in our industry is at an all time high. Now is the time to do something about this. Raising the level of training in culinary arts is one step, but it is only the beginning of many steps that need to be taken here.

***“It will require us to increasingly think and act outside the square we live in and to commit our total capability to tackling skills shortages. It is crucial to our State’s economy for DET, employers, industry and government to work together.***

**Tom Barton, Minister for Training, Education and Industrial Relations.**

**Press release to all DET employees, September 2004.**

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