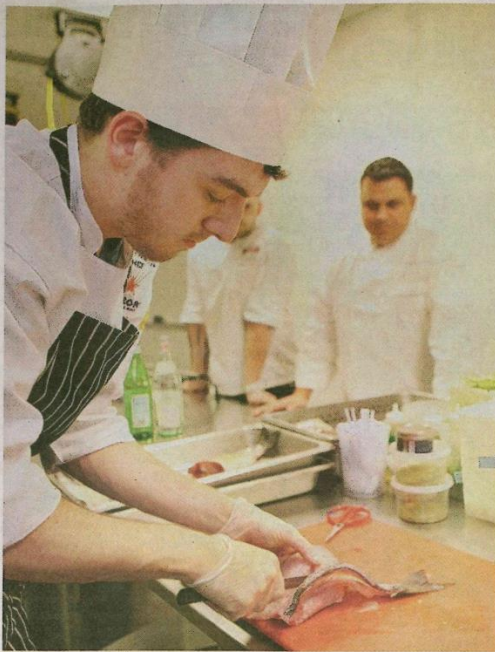


February 24, 2015



COOKING UP COMPETITION



SOCIAL STUDIES
Erica CORSANO

Food-lovin' locals gathered last night at the VIP New England regional dinner reception for the 12th annual S.Pellegrino Almost Famous Chef competition at Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts, Boston.

Six dishes were created by six contestants, all students from regional culinary schools. Hub star chefs judged the pretty plates, including **Jody Adams**, the newly crowned Cochon 555 "princess of pork," **Nicholas Calais** of the Colonnade Hotel and Brasserie Jo, **Bill Brodsky** of Boston Nightlife Ventures, and tatted hottie **David Verdo** of CHOPPS American Bar and Grill (Burlington) — who will be the chef at the new Hotel Envoy in Burlington.

Chefs were very engaged in reviewing dishes, ranging from sweet mentorship and cooking tips and tricks to tough-love critiques.

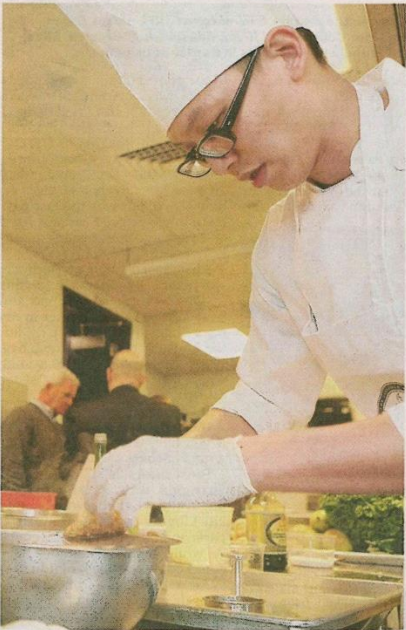
Chef judge **Chris Coombs** was the toughest of the bunch, and the tough love paid off: His mentee, **Dominick Tironi** (of Paul Smith's College) won in the end, sending the upstate New Yorker to finals in Napa Valley this March to compete against the winners of the four other regional competitions.

S.Pellegrino created the contest more than 10 years ago to recognize emerging culinary talent throughout the country.

To learn more, go to www.almostfamouschef.com.

LOCAL FLAVOR: Hub-area chefs, from left, **Bill Brodsky**, **Chris Coombs**, **Jody Adams**, **Nicholas Calais** and **David Verdo** judge the S.Pellegrino Almost Famous Chef Regional Competition.

HERALD PHOTOS BY JACOB BELCHER
HOT STUFF: Jeffrey Buffalino and Ivona Vujnovic, above from left; Charles McSweeney, left; and Ding-Wei Huang, lower left, compete in the Almost Famous Chef competition, while Le Cordon Bleu students, below, watch the chefs in action.



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