

Elite Gastronomic Society Pledges Scholarships to St. Thomas University

Chaîne des Rôtisseurs' Miami chapter offers scholarships as STU's culinary program grows

Yahoo News Staff
Thu, Jun 27, 2024

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla., June 27, 2024/PRNewswire/ – St. Thomas University on Thursday announced a new scholarship pledge from the Miami Chaîne as student enrollment rockets in STU's Culinary, Tourism & Hospitality Management major and the program offers new culinary education certificates.



A student in St. Thomas University's fast-growing Culinary, Tourism & Hospitality Management program cooks food during the fall 2022 semester. The Miami Chaîne, the local chapter of the elite Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, the world's oldest international gastronomic society, plans to provide \$8,000 in scholarship funding to eight STU students during the 2024-25 academic year. Credit: St. Thomas University, Miami Gardens, FL

The Miami Chaîne, the local chapter of the elite Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, the world's oldest international gastronomic society, plans to provide \$8,000 in scholarship funding to eight STU students during the 2024-25 academic year. The chapter already donated \$8,000 in scholarships to four STU culinary students for the 2023-24 academic year.

The Miami Chaîne's latest scholarship pledge comes as STU administrators project the Culinary, Tourism & Hospitality Management program's enrollment will climb to more than 50 students in the fall 2024 semester, which begins in August. That enrollment total represents a 16-fold increase compared with when STU started the program three and a half years ago with just three students.

STU also just launched a 15-credit Culinary Arts Certificate. The new certificate includes courses in managing food and beverage offerings and cooking fundamentals. Plus, among other new certificates, STU plans to launch a Culinary Medicine Certificate as soon as January 2025 to teach students about food's healing properties.

Last spring, STU's inaugural 2024 Chefs Leadership Summit in the Gus Machado College of Business attracted nationally renowned culinary experts and a diversity of eager seminar participants, who benefited from many educational workshops.

Now, STU is proud to accept additional scholarship funds from the Miami chapter of the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, which is among the culinary world's most prestigious professional societies. The society's roots date to France's Royal Guild of Goose Roasters in the year 1248.

STU recently tallied six student and employee members of the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, which has approximately 21,000 members in more than 75 countries. Joining the Chaîne des

Rôtisseurs requires a member's nomination, admission fees, dues, and acceptance of the society's regulations and bylaws.

The society upholds rigorous professional standards for spit roasting, rotisserie cooking, barbecuing, broiling, and grilling; promotes those types of cooking; and advances and disseminates culinary and beverage-related knowledge.

Two of STU's Chaîne des Rôtisseurs are students and four are university administrators, including David A. Armstrong, J.D., President of STU, and Dr. Michelle Garcia Johnson-Garcia, Provost and Chief Academic Officer, and Dr. Samer Hassan, Professor and Program Director of STU's Culinary Arts, Tourism & Hospitality Management Department.

Dr. David Edwards, Dean of STU's business college, and Bruce Ozga, Director of STU's Center for Professional and Continuing Studies, are Chaîne des Rôtisseurs members, too, and Ozga serves as the Miami Chaîne's Vice Consellier Culinaire.

Before recently joining STU to lead the university's certificate programs, Ozga served as

Dean of Culinary Education at Johnson & Wales' North Miami campus, which closed three years ago. Dr. Edwards chaired the College of Hospitality Management at Johnson & Wales' North Miami campus. Dr. Johnson-Garcia served as Dean of Academic Affairs for that campus, and Dr. Hassan taught there.

Since 2021, STU has created robust culinary educational offerings, ably stepping in to fill the void left by Johnson & Wales's departure. Florida's powerhouse food service industry generates \$69.4 billion in estimated eating and drinking sales, while employing 1.03 million people (11% of Florida's workforce) at 47,000-plus restaurants and drinking establishments, according to the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association.

"Florida's economy turns on the wheels of tourism and hospitality, and eating and drinking establishments are their cultural and economic hubs," Dr. Hassan said. "The Miami Chaîne's latest generous scholarship donation affirms the STU Culinary, Tourism & Hospitality Management Department's cutting-edge culinary curriculum while supporting a student and teacher population that is as diverse as dishes they prepare."