

Cerritos Community College District • 11110 Alondra Blvd. • Norwalk CA 90650 • www.cerritos.edu

View the online release here: <http://www.cerritos.edu/releases-2024/12/Marukan.htm>

Marukan Cup of Culinary Excellence competition showcases student skills and program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 13, 2024

Media Contact: [Aya Aoki](#); Public Affairs

NORWALK, Calif. – December 13, 2024 – Cerritos College's culinary arts program, in collaboration with Marukan Vinegar (USA) Inc., hosted the seventh annual Marukan Cup of Culinary Excellence. After a four-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the event returned to celebrate the 51st anniversary of the culinary arts program, honoring five decades of culinary education and excellence.

The competition featured 12 talented culinary arts students who showcased their skills by creating dishes inspired by various regions and culinary themes, incorporating Marukan Vinegar as a key ingredient. The event drew over 200 spectators, with industry judges providing professional feedback to select the top three winners.



Contestants, college officials, and judges

First Place: Antonio Yarza

Prize: \$1,000

Theme: French Nouveau

Dish: Potato-crusted halibut with saffron Béarnaise sauce, asparagus tips, and asparagus sauce with a mushroom tourné.

Second Place: Danika Yi

Prize: \$500

Theme: Hawaiian

Dish: Huli-Huli Chicken (Frenched chicken breast braised and grilled with sweet-savory sauce), served with rice folded with Hawaiian yam puree and Thai papaya salad.

Third Place: Gisselle Mendez

Prize: \$250

Theme: Southeast Asian

Dish: Asian flank steak topped with a citrusy sauce, served with saffron rice, coleslaw with an Asian

sweet and spicy vinaigrette, and coconut sambal potatoes, garnished with toasted sesame seeds and green onions.

"We congratulate Antonio, Danika, and Gisselle for their remarkable achievements and thank all participants for their hard work and dedication to the craft," said Jesusita Lopez, assistant professor and chair of culinary arts.

The Cerritos College Culinary Arts Program offers pathways to prepare students for careers in the professional food service industry. Students can earn certificates and associate of science degrees in professional cooking, professional baking & pastry, and culinary arts management. The program also offers two associate of science for transfer degrees in food service management and hospitality management, providing a pathway to transfer to CSULB or Cal Poly Pomona to complete a bachelor's degree in hospitality management. For more information about the program and upcoming events, visit www.cerritos.edu/culinary-arts/

About Cerritos College: *Cerritos College serves as a comprehensive community college for southeastern Los Angeles County. Communities within the college's district include Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Hawaiian Gardens, La Mirada, Norwalk, and portions of Bell Gardens, Lakewood, Long Beach, Santa Fe Springs, and South Gate. Cerritos College offers nearly 300 degree and certificate programs in nine divisions. Annually, more than 5,000 students successfully complete their course of studies. Enrollment currently averages 21,000 students. Visit Cerritos College online at <http://www.cerritos.edu/>.*

-END-