

Johnson Has a Flair for Food

Staff

A 10,000-plate banquet for Apple Computers? No problem. Or how about a dinner for 3,500 in honor of Nelson Mandela at the

Oakland Coliseum? All in a day's work. JCCC's new executive chef Timothy Johnson has built his reputation and career through the wear and tear of an 80-hour work week. Now he's ready to take on 2,000-3,000 meals a day in existing JCCC Dining Services as well as create food concepts and a business plan for the Nerman café and Regnier Center's catering service, which are scheduled to open with the new buildings in 2007.

"Preparing meals in large quantities requires that you be meticulous, do the math and follow your instincts," Johnson said.

In high school, Johnson believed he had a flair for acting. That idea changed after two semesters as a drama major at the University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg. His flair changed from drama to food, and Johnson earned an associate's degree in culinary arts in 1989 from the New England Culinary Institute, Montpelier, Vt.

His first job was at Bon Appetit, San Francisco (1989-1991), where he became executive sous chef. As a roving chef for other food operations at the company, his titles also included catering chef for Stanford University and private banquet chef for Apple Computers.

Returning to Kansas City in 1991, Johnson worked as executive chef for Metropolitan Catering, Charlie Hooper's, and Sebree and Crestwood Galleries, which moved in 2002 to Webster House, a restored historic building in the Kansas City Crossroads District. During Webster House's renovations, he developed the business concept and plans for the restaurant and catering business and worked with the design/architect/builder team in development of all facilities related to kitchen, catering and restaurant areas.

Johnson's experience makes him a perfect fit to work with Jay Glatz, Dining Services manager, to open food services in JCCC's new buildings.

"We are in the process of creating concepts for the Nerman café that attract outside visitors and are exciting to students and staff," Johnson said. "The Nerman café will be open for breakfast and lunch, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., as well as feature



catered private functions."

As far as Dining Down Under, Food Court and the two coffee bars, Johnson says he wants to upgrade food and add more ethnicity to the menu. He will conduct a cooking exhibition the last Thursday of each month.

"But then I always have to take care of our meat-and-potato customers."

Johnson finds satisfaction in his work at the college. At a restaurant, customers come and go. At the college, he gets to know faculty, staff and students who eat in dining services every day.

And, yes, Johnson still enjoys cooking in his spare time. A gourmet Chiefs tailgate may consist of grilled pork loin with smokey poached eggs and a Dijon hollandaise sauce. And his favorite? Fresh squash blossoms stuffed with gorgonzola cheese, available one month a year late spring to early summer. 🌿

JCCC executive chef Tim Johnson is shown deglazing crimini mushrooms with Marsala wine.