



## Simple, Classic Dishes Inspire Kelly Conwell, Central Region 2009 ACF Student of the Year Award Winner

When searching for an idea of what to cook at the Central Region ACF Conference in Schaumburg, Illinois, Kelly Conwell of Johnson County Community College in Orland Park, Kansas knew she had to stick to her guiding culinary philosophy: "I like to cook what I like to eat."

An emphasis on simple, classical foods – with a spin – led Kelly, with her Pan Seared Florida Pompano, to win the regional competition. This garnered her a spot competing against three other regional winners at the ACF Student Culinarian Competition, sponsored by Custom Culinary, Inc., which will take place during the ACF annual conference at the Orlando World Center Marriott, July 11-14.



*Kelly Conwell at the Renaissance Schaumburg Hotel & Convention Center, Schaumburg, IL, February 21-23*

Kelly's love of food started out of necessity. Her mother left recipes and ingredients for young Kelly and her brother to make dinner while she was at work. "Mom trusted us to make the food and that made me love cooking all the more," Kelly explained.



*Kelly Conwell's Pan Seared Florida Pompano on Leek Confit, Savory Lemon Curd, Fennel and Tomato Tart, Lobster Sausage & Spring Vegetable Medley*

Having spent her young working career in the restaurant industry as hostess, waitress, table busser, and dishwasher, Kelly knew she wanted to cook professionally. After starting culinary school and competing on the school's hot-food team, Kelly felt she was ready to try for the ACF Student Culinarian title.

After creating her appetizer and entrée for the national competition, Kelly went to work practicing different sauces, textures, and timing. She cooks her meal for her coach and other chefs from the Kansas City area who judge her on various criteria. She uses their counsel in the kitchen every day perfecting her food for the ACF judges' panel.

In the end, Kelly knows her dish will represent who she is as a chef. "I make simple, classic meals that look and taste delicious."