

Hard work and commitment realises dreams

Jackie Cameron School of Food & Wine students achieved nine of nine possible distinctions in the final examinations. And this from the school's inaugural intake.

External verifier Noeline Dunn was in awe of the value-for-money training Cameron's pupils received.

"This school offers so much more than other institutions of its kind," she said adding that, with the farm visits and other excursions included in the curriculum, the students received "holistic training".

The results achieved in the six-hour international exam had all the examiners in awe.

"It's a privilege to have been part of this first intake because we seldom find schools with enough evidence to justify proficiency. Here there is sufficient evidence 10 fold over," concluded Dunn.

Cameron's international moderator, Fatima Stanley was equally impressed.

To the students she said: "Your parents must be so proud of you. You are getting more than a qualification here. Jackie has exposed you to an unbelievable wealth of knowledge. You have participated in numerous out-of-kitchen experiences and enjoyed exposure in magazines and social media yet you have still managed to get through the curriculum."

Cameron's aim was to develop well-rounded students with an understanding of the industry, an eye for detail and a finger on the pulse. She, however, admits to dreaming that, one day, the school's students would reach distinction level; so this accolade was another dream come true.

Her first was the culmination of 15 years of thinking, planning and developing a school of food and wine which opened in April 2015.

"My undertaking is to prepare students for the culinary arts," she explained. "The correct attitude together with confidence, not arrogance, is hugely important to me. I want to see the school's students staying in the industry, remembering there are many facets to the world of food. Leading by example, striving to be better every day, wanting to impress and being competitive is what gets one ahead."

With distinctions all around, the first intake of students who graduated in October 2016, are testament to the high standard demanded for this 18-month, internationally-recognised, mentoring course that produces respected chefs - a cut above the rest.

And, as guaranteed by the school, all graduates have been offered permanent positions; this made possible because of the demand for leavers from this culinary institution, in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands.

Apart from the distinctions they achieved, Carla Schulze was top student for French culinary terminology and language, and the Culinary Equipment Company Student of the Year; Cara Conway, who was presented with the Waterford Estate Wine Award for Top Wine Student, attained top marks in the culinary arts practical examination and for pastillage cake icing, she also gained the top mark ever achieved, at KZN School of Wine, for a Wine & Spirit Education Trust Level 2 course; Catherine Cousins earned top marks for the final practical dinner and in-service placement, and took the Deltrade Top Patisserie Practical Chef award.

"It was hard work for all of us," explained Cameron. "Establishing something new is never easy and I am grateful to the students who believed in my ability to help them reach their goals and who worked tirelessly – and diligently – to put Jackie Cameron School of Food & Wine and themselves on

the world's culinary map. I look forward, with great excitement, to making a difference to the lives of those who have enrolled for the 2017/2018 course – and to the difference they will make to me and to themselves.”

For an appointment to visit Jackie Cameron School of Food & Wine on Old Howick Road in Hilton, phone: 033 343 1784 / 072 241 8421 or email: jackie@jackiecameron.co.za

For information on the school visit: www.jackiecameron.co.za