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COOKING UP COMPETITION

SOCIAL STUDIES

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Food lovers gathered last night at the VIP New England regional dinner reception for the 12th annual S. Pellegrino Almost Famous Chef competition at Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts, Boston.

Six dishes were created by six contestants, all students from regional culinary schools. Hub star chefs judged the pretty plates, including Judy Adams, the newly crowned Cochon 555 “prince of pork.”

Michele Calais of the Colorado Hotel and Brasserie Jo, Bill Brooksby of Boston Nightlife Ventures, and late-night host David Verde of CHOPPS American Bar and Grill (Burlington) — who will be the chef at the new Hotel Envoy in Burlington.

Chefs were very engaged in reviewing dishes, ranging from sweet to savory and cooking tips and tricks to tough-love colleagues.

Chef judge Chris Cuneo was the toughest of the bunch, and the tough love paid off. His winner, Dominick Trend (of Paul Smith’s College) won in the end, sending the upstate New Yorker to finals in Napa Valley this March to compete against the winners of the four other regional competitions.

S. Pellegrino created the contest more than 10 years ago to recognize emerging culinary talent throughout the country.

To learn more, go to www.almostfamouschef.com.

LOCAL FLAVOR: Hub-area chefs, from left, Bill Brooksby, Chris Cuneo, Judy Adams, Michele Calais and David Verde judge the S. Pellegrino Almost Famous Chef Regional Competition.