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Three local chefs win top awards in charity cooking event

Dickinson ND – Three professional and community chefs won top honors in the Chocolate Affair Plus April 27 hosted by the Best Friends Mentoring Program (BFMP).

Claiming first place in the People’s Choice Chef Awards was pastry chef Erin Cronbaugh of the Cake Life for her chocolate tarts. Fourteen-year-old Anna Kreidt, a student at the Dickinson Middle School, placed second with chocolate crème brulee and truffles with a surprise flavor. Pastry chef Traci Hamson of Players Sports Bar & Grill placed third with her chocolate cheesecake, Oreo stacks, and varieties of chocolate truffles.

Also winning Best Presentation for their artfully designed mocha cakes was Directing Chef Joseph Gyno Babia and Pastry Chef Karla Joy Wyler of The Crossing.

Other participating chefs included the following: Kirk Hepker of The Foodie Call, Collin Wehner, executive chef of the BrickHouse Grille; General Manager Aaron Zummer and Executive Chef Tom Gordon of Sodexo at State University, and community chef Lois Holland

“Every year, the culinary talents and creativity of our participating chefs expands,” said Kris Fehr, executive director of BFMP. “We were very fortunate to have showcased beautifully displayed and terrific-tasting desserts and entrees. The event proceeds also will allow us to continue mentoring 20 local youth.”

In addition to highlighting local chefs, the Chocolate Affair Plus featured wine and home-brewed beer tastings, live music by the Dakota Jazz, and the chance to win more than 50 prizes, including a mocha and white diamond pendant and earring set donated by Riddle’s Jewelry in Dickinson.

Based in Dickinson, BFMP provides mentors to youth ages 6-16 in southwest North Dakota including the city of Dickinson, western Morton and Bowman counties. BFMP also provides mentors to children at-risk of or in out-of-home placement, such as foster care. For more information, call (701) 483-8615.