

# 10 complete culinary, hospitality course

By AESHA DUVAL  
Daily News Staff

ST. CROIX — Ten young people have taken the first steps toward establishing a career in the culinary arts field and the hospitality industry. They graduated Thursday from a three-week course at the Career and Technical Education Center designed to familiarize them with those fields.

Program organizers and parents gathered Thursday at the culinary arts classroom at the Career and Technical Education Center to congratulate the students. The free course, which was made possible through funds raised at A Taste of St. Croix and sponsored by the St. Croix Foundation, was offered to young people older than 16.

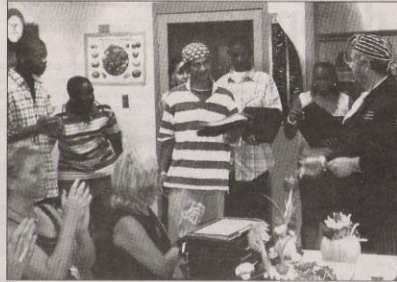
Anton Doos, a culinary arts instructor at the center, taught the students the basic aspects of food preparation and service, food safety and sanitation, baking, catering, hospitality and customer service.

Doos said that the training was tough for some. He said that at the beginning of the 35-hour course that some of the students arrived late for class and he wasted no time in correcting them.

"They got yelled at a lot," he said. "If they can't take me for three weeks, then they can't handle a chef for year."

Doos said that he explained to the students what it is like working in a busy restaurant and the importance of first impressions, particularly when on a job interview.

Before signing up for the course, 22-year-old Joshua George worked at a warehouse for Divi Carina Bay Resort. Now he aspires to open his



Daily News Photo by AESHA DUVAL

Culinary Arts instructor Anton Doos, right, presents certificates Thursday to 10 students who completed a three-week culinary arts and hospitality training workshop sponsored by St. Croix Foundation and A Taste of St. Croix.

own restaurant.

"I learned that operating a restaurant is more than just cooking," George said.

Katherine Pugliese, who started A Taste of St. Croix in 2000 along with Kelly Odom, said she and Odom felt encouraged by the first group of students who signed up for the program.

"This first course was a model and we hope to make it longer than three weeks," Pugliese said. "And we hope to expand it to persons already in the hospitality industry who would like a refresher course."

Pugliese said they never imagined that A Taste of St. Croix would grow into such a success. Pugliese and Odom, proprietors of Tutto Bene and Bacchus Restaurant, respectively,

started the event to showcase the island's talented restaurateurs. Each year a portion of the funds are set aside to promote the hospitality industry. More than a thousand people attended this year's food- and wine-tasting event, which featured more than 50 restaurants, hotels and caterers.

Proceeds from A Taste of St. Croix are donated to the St. Croix Foundation for initiatives focusing on public safety, education, economic development and community revitalization in addition to supporting hospitality and tourism.

The students were awarded certificates and a recipe file.

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