



Media Release

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Alec's Proud to be a Chef

TAFE Queensland North Cairns cookery student, Alec Stemmler is Melbourne bound.

Mr Stemmler is heading south to test his culinary skills against 32 other up-and-coming young Australian cooks at the Proud to be a Chef competition.

Despite only being 19 years old, Mr Stemmler is no stranger to working in a competitive kitchen environment.

"I took part in the Australian Culinary Federation's National Apprentice Competition in Sydney late last year and I picked up a silver medal.

"It was a really great opportunity. I felt a little bit of pressure during the competition but I really enjoyed the experience," he said.

Mr Stemmler, an apprentice at the Shangri-La Marina, Cairns said he is looking forward to the Proud to be a Chef competition.

"When I get to Melbourne I'll be going to a few fine dining restaurants, there will be master classes from a few top chefs and I'll also get to visit the fish market," he said.

Mr Stemmler hopes to reel in high scores from the Proud to be a Chef judges.

"I will be cooking a cod dish. I don't want to give too much away, I just hope the judges enjoy it," Mr Stemmler said.

TAFE Queensland North General Manager, Joann Pyne said all of TAFE Queensland North is cheering on Mr Stemmler.

"The Proud to be a Chef competition is a wonderful opportunity for Alec.

"Not only will he be able to show off his existing skills, but the competition will help Alec to further develop and improve his culinary abilities," Ms Pyne said.

Mr Stemmler also has plenty of support from his workplace.

Shangri-La's Executive Chef, Aaron Habgood said he was over the moon to learn that Alec had been selected to be part of the Proud to be a Chef competition.

"Alec started with us while he was still at high school, before applying to become our 1st Year Apprentice Chef at the start of 2016 and he hasn't looked back since.

"We have placed Alec in as many competitions as possible and these experiences have allowed him to build up his confidence and skills.

"Any challenge we have thrown Alec's way has been met with enthusiasm and I am immensely proud of him," Mr Habgood said.

President of the Australian Culinary Federation North Queensland, Brian Down has mentored Alec in the past and he thinks the apprentice chef will do well.

"Alec really proved himself at the National Apprentice Competition and now he's one of only 32 young chefs across Australia chosen to take part in the Proud to be a Chef competition.

"The great thing about Alec is he is eager to learn, he's going to go far because he has a lot of potential," Mr Down said.

The Proud to be a Chef competition begins in Melbourne on Sunday 19 February and ends on Thursday 23 February.

To find out more about launching your cookery career with a course from TAFE Queensland North visit the Cairns campus, call 1300 656 959 or visit www.tafenorth.edu.au.

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