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## **CULINARY INSTITUTE OF VIRGINIA HOLDS FIRST GRADUATION MAY 30**

NORFOLK, Va. – (May 2008) – [Culinary Institute of Virginia](#), the School of [Culinary Arts](#) at ECPI College of Technology, is holding its first graduation on May 30. The graduating class comprises 50 students who will have completed the 18-month associate degree program in Norfolk.

The graduation will be held at the Norfolk Airport Hilton, 1500 North Military Highway in Norfolk at 4:30 p.m. The keynote speaker is Alisa L. Bailey, president and CEO of Virginia Tourism Corporation. A reception will follow at the Culinary Institute of Virginia at 2428 Almeda Avenue, Norfolk. Admission to both the graduation and reception is by invitation only for graduates and their families and friends.

From its start in September 2006, interest in the Culinary Institute of Virginia has grown significantly, and enrollment is projected to reach 300 students in the fall of 2008.

The Culinary Institute of Virginia offers a 75-week program that awards an Associate Degree in [Culinary Science](#) to graduates. Externships with area restaurants and hotels are a central tenet of the curriculum, and students are required to participate in community service projects with local hospitals, foodbanks and service organizations.

Along with the accomplishments of the students, leadership at the Culinary Institute of Virginia is overwhelmingly pleased with industry validation of the program. The roster of hotels and food service companies that participate in the externship program is impressive and includes 150 companies such as Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Coastal Grill, Tidewater Hotels and Resorts, and River Stone Chop House to name a few.

Soon-to-be graduates of the Culinary Institute of Virginia are finding they are highly sought after for employment not only in the Hampton Roads region, but also throughout the East Coast. Hershey Entertainment & Resorts in Pennsylvania started recruiting before the school even opened. One of the first graduates has already accepted a position as a baker at the Hotel Hershey.

Many graduates are staying in the area and have accepted positions with local restaurants or hotels.

“We are very pleased to showcase our graduates to potential employers,” says Mark Dreyfus, president of the Culinary Institute of Virginia. “Our graduates are entering a job market with lots of opportunity and a tremendous amount of talent. One of our goals is to increase the awareness of the culinary talents in Hampton Roads. We hope to create a culinary destination for tourists. These graduates and the ones in years to come will help us realize that goal.”

Additional training programs continue to develop at the institute. The school has been requested to provide advance culinary training for the U.S. Coast Guard for the second year. The school also offers the general public Casual Gourmet classes designed for the home cook. Information is available for all classes at [www.chefva.com](http://www.chefva.com).

**About ECPI College of Technology:**

ECPI College of Technology is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award Bachelor of Science, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science degrees. With campuses in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia, ECPI, a private college established in 1966, offers convenient classes during the day, evening, or online; graduate employment services are provided. IT certification classes are also available.

ECPI's many fields of study include: TECHNOLOGY: Biomedical Technology, Electronics Engineering, Information Technology, Database Programming, Network Security, Web Development, Medical Imaging Technology, Simulation & Game Programming, Wireless Systems; BUSINESS: Accounting; Business Administration, Criminal Justice; HEALTH SCIENCES: Dental Assisting, Massage Therapy, Medical Administration, Medical Assisting, Medical Radiography, Physical Therapist Assistant, Practical Nursing, Registered Nursing, Surgical Technology; CULINARY: [Culinary Arts](#). (Available programs vary by campus.) For more information, visit [www.ecpi.edu](http://www.ecpi.edu).

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