With a background in the pastry industry, Cindy Schwanke has worked in a variety of settings including restaurants, catering and hotels. But out of the many great adventures she’s had, perhaps the most memorable is when she worked at Spago for Sherry Yard, one of the best pastry chefs in the country.

“We were creating desserts for the Governor’s Ball, the big party after the Oscars,” she explained. “We had been working very long hours to prepare desserts for 2,000 people. I was responsible for decorating the little chocolate Oscars for the top of the dessert that night by brushing them with edible gold, a very time-consuming task. Once dessert was served, we were cleaning up the huge makeshift kitchen in the parking lot of the Pantages Theater, and in walks Julia Roberts through the kitchen to escape the paparazzi! She was so beautiful and thanked us for the delicious dessert.

“We had just five little Oscars left over, so I decided to take them home after the event. They were quite unique and I was going to save them forever – or so I thought. At the time, my daughter was 6 years old and when I showed her one of the beautiful chocolate Oscars, sure enough, she took a big bite out of this one-of-a-kind creation. I’m sure she was the only 6-year-old in the world to taste that treat! Ah, sweet memories.”

Schwanke, who has lived locally in Santa Clarita for more than 24 years, was originally drawn to College of the Canyons because of its proximity to home. After years of long commutes and early morning shifts — sometimes starting work as early as 4 a.m. — Schwanke’s current schedule at COC allows her to better keep her stress levels in check, which in turn has made her a more patient instructor. “Whether you’re making a cream puff or chicken soup, patience is a good attribute to have when teaching the culinary arts,” said Schwanke.

Schwanke goes on to say she loves “cooking and baking with seasonal, local ingredients and sharing that passion with the students. It is very important to know where your food comes from and to appreciate what is on your plate.”

Schwanke finds teaching to be quite rewarding and said, “It has been wonderful to pay it forward in my hometown and share my experiences and skills with future chefs.”
If you have a passion for food, love to cook, and a desire to have a career in the culinary field, the culinary arts training program at College of the Canyons (COC) would be a perfect fit for you.

“The program at College of the Canyons is called ICUE, Institute for Culinary Education,” explains Cindy Schwanke, department chair, culinary and wine studies. “We pride ourselves on small class sizes and have the best professionals in the foodservice industry teaching our culinary classes. We have over 300 years of experience in the kitchen between our five instructors. We all know what it takes to succeed in the foodservice industry and are passionate about paying our knowledge forward. We are building a brand new culinary arts building on the Valencia campus and look forward to offering more classes, a café run by the students, and a demo kitchen for community events.”

The culinary program at COC prepares future working cooks and chef assistants, provides courses for students desiring personal enrichment, and enhances the skills and professional qualifications of chefs and cooks currently employed in the industry. Providing students with intensive professional and practical experience, the program gives them a hands-on approach to the daily operation of a professional kitchen. There is a balance between developing the skills of food preparation and the restaurant management qualities necessary for career growth. With a focus on cooking skills development and problem solving, the curriculum challenges students to critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of culinary operations and identify entrepreneurial approaches to operations.

In addition to a culinary arts certificate of achievement, the ICUE offers a baking and pastry certificate of specialization. This program includes a comprehensive study, with an emphasis on application of fundamental baking techniques and the use of ingredients, designed for those interested in professional baking. Students who complete the program will be prepared for entry-level employment as bread bakers, pastry cooks, cake decorators or confectioners.

Those trained in the culinary field are continually needed in both the hospitality and tourism industries. Employment in the foodservice area is growing and will continue to grow. There are many different kinds of kitchen organization and, as a result, position titles vary. Job examples include the following: executive chef; chef de cuisine; sous chef; expeditor; chef de partie; cooks and assistants. A self-motivated person might also take these skills and open a catering or food service business.

Schwanke says, “There are so many great careers you can obtain with a culinary degree. You can work in a restaurant, hotel, catering company or have your own blog site. You can own a food truck and travel around or you can be a private cook for a famous rock band, really the sky’s the limit.

“The foodservice industry is one of the top employers in the country and the job market is very good for new chefs out of culinary school. We have students working in over a dozen restaurants locally and I am always being asked to send good, motivated students to apply at restaurants, hotels and catering jobs.”

For more information about this program please contact Cindy Schwanke, department chair, culinary and wine studies at Cindy.Schwanke@Canyons.edu or 661.257.1538.
With a bright outlook, jobs within this industry are expected to show growth over the next several years, especially in California. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment trends for areas, as stated in the main article, are on the rise, both locally and nationally. For example, employment in California for chefs and head cooks is expected to rise by 21 percent between the years 2010 and 2020, as compared to an almost flat trend nationwide. Similar results can be seen for bakers. Employment in California is expected to rise by 15 percent during the same time period, compared to the national average of two percent.

In the case of state versus national wages, California is again ahead of the national average for both chefs and head cooks as well as bakers. **Chefs and head cooks** earn in the range of **$25,200-$82,600/yr** in California, as compared to **$24,500-$74,100/yr** nationally. **Bakers** currently earn **$18,100-$39,400/yr** in California, as compared to **$17,200-$37,000/yr** nationally.

For more industry and career information, visit the following resources: O*NET OnLine at ONetOnline.org/, the Bureau of Labor Statistics at BLS.gov/ooh and California Career Café at CaCareerCafe.com/Pathways/.

**Culinary Curriculum**

- Knife Skills (CULARTS 050)
- Culinary Safety and Sanitation (CULARTS 055)
- Introduction to the Culinary Arts (CULARTS 120)
- Culinary Fundamentals I (CULARTS 121)
- Culinary Fundamentals II (CULARTS 123)
- Principles of Garde Manger I (CULARTS 125)
- Principles of Baking I (CULARTS 127)
- Culinary Fundamentals III (CULARTS 132)
- Food Service Costs and Controls (CULARTS 150)
- Dining Room Service (HRMGT 126)
- Wine and Food Affinities (CULARTS 083)
- Principles of Baking II (CULARTS 128)
- International Cuisine (CULARTS 133)
- Restaurant Operations (HRMGT 220)
- and Cooperative Work Experience in Education (CWEE 188).

**Baking and Pastry Certificate of Specialization**

- Culinary Safety and Sanitation (CULARTS 055)
- Principles of Baking I (CULARTS 127)
- Principles of Baking II (CULARTS 128)
- Cake Decorating Essentials (CULARTS 129)
- Pastry Art (CULARTS 130)
- Chocolates (CULARTS 131)
- and Cooperative Work Experience in Education (CWEE 188).

An internship is required as part of the culinary coursework (Cooperative Work Experience Education: CWEE) and therefore, students may find internships on their own or they may search the COC internship website to find a program at: Canyons.edu/Interns.

**Occupational Profile: Culinary/Baking Careers**

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**Calendar**

**Universal Studios Internship Opportunities**

**Informational Meetings (choose one)**

- Tuesday, Nov. 12, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m., Towsley 106
- Wednesday, Nov. 13, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m., Boyken Hall 105
- Saturday, Nov. 16, 9:00 – 10:30 a.m., Mentry Hall 343

Internships available for all work Crafts. Theme Park Operations Internship #3883. This is the single biggest hiring that Universal Studios Technical Services Dept. has done. Representatives from Universal and the internship office will be on hand to answer questions. For more information call 661.362.3309.

**Careers on the Go**

- Thursday, Nov. 21
- 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
- Valencia Campus, Mentry Hall 351

This month, explore a career in marketing and sales with industry professionals serving as guest speakers. RSVPs encouraged: Canyons.edu/Offices/CTE/Reg/.
Accounting | Administration of Justice | Administrative Assistant | American Sign Language Interpreting
Animation Production | Architectural Drafting | Automotive Technology | Commercial Photography
Computer Applications | Computer Networking | Culinary Arts | Customer Service | Early Childhood Education
Emergency Medical Technician | Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management | Filmmaking | Fire Technology
Graphic & Multimedia Design | Hotel & Restaurant Management | Human Resources Management | Interior Design
Land Surveying | Manufacturing Technology: Machining/CNC | Marketing | Medical Laboratory Technician
Medical Office Administrative Assistant | Nursing: Registered Nurse | Paralegal Studies | Personal Training
Real Estate | Retail Management | Robotic Welding Automation | Solar Energy Technician | Sound Arts
Sports Medicine | Video Game Animation | Water Systems Technology | Welding Technology | Wine Studies