

Oregon Culinary Institute Faculty



ERIC STROMQUIST, FMP
Campus President,
Oregon Culinary Institute

Bachelor of Science in Political Science, Portland State University, Portland, OR
Eric Stromquist has been in and around the hospitality industry for over 30 years.

A Portland native, he began his career with the McCormick & Schmick organization, first waiting tables at Jake's Famous Crawfish Restaurant, later at McCormick's Fish House, and eventually serving as Director of Operations for Jake's Famous Products. Four years later Stromquist, together with three partners, developed the concept and wrote the business plan for Hot Lips Pizza, a chain of pizza-by-the-slice restaurants that grew to seven stores in four years. For the next five years, Stromquist taught for Portland Community College and worked with restaurant clients as a start-up business and operations consultant. He then developed Zeebento, a popular Japanese box lunch venture in downtown Portland, and in 1996 began teaching dining room service and wine studies at Western Culinary Institute. By 1998, he was acting as Administrative Dean, and accepted the position of Director of Education in January of 1999. Over the next five years, as the chief academic officer of the school, he oversaw implementation of their landmark partnership with Le Cordon Bleu, the addition of Hospitality & Restaurant Management and Pâtisserie and Baking programs, and the achievement of associate degree-granting status. In April of 2006, Stromquist partnered with Brian Wilke and Pioneer Pacific College to open Oregon Culinary Institute. He now serves as Campus President for the school which offers diplomas and degrees in Culinary Arts, Baking and Pastry, and Restaurant Management. Stromquist is certified as a Foodservice Management Professional by the National Restaurant Association.

"Each (chef instructor) has an incredible passion for food and education. The experience that I have had has been life changing. I have found my passion, and have experienced success thanks to OCI employees, instructors, and peers." – Jennifer Seligmann, OCI Graduate Culinary Arts

"(The chefs are) all very attentive to every single student and I feel they're all always available. All of them are experienced and very intelligent. It's like having a bunch of walking encyclopedias. It's awesome to be in the kitchen every single day, and there's a lot of hands-on. It gives me the skills I need in a restaurant, and knowledge about almost everything culinary." – Michelle Ormando, OCI Graduate Culinary Arts



CHEF BRIAN WILKE, CEC, CCE
Executive Chef & Director of Education

AOS Degree in Culinary Arts, High Honors, Western Culinary Institute, Portland, OR
Born and raised in Chicago, Chef Brian Wilke has been interested in cooking and good food all of his life. While traveling the world between 1984 and 1994, he studied international cuisine with local chefs and developed an appreciation for the wide variety of ingredients and cooking methods used in various cultures. An extended trip to India, a tour of Southeast Asia, and repeated trips to Mexico have made him particularly adept at preparing cuisine from those regions. To cement his knowledge and experience, Wilke enrolled in Western Culinary Institute in the spring of 1994. He graduated a year later at the top of his class, and was immediately hired by the school to be an instructor. In 2000 he was promoted to executive chef, having full responsibility for all kitchen lab and restaurant operations. Chef Wilke was also involved in the training and supervision of nearly 60 full-time faculty members, as well as management for a population of more than 800 students, until he left in November 2005. Aside from school responsibilities he and his wife, Jill, have owned and operated Peacock Catering since 1998. Chef Wilke has also served as the private chef for a prominent Portland family since 2000. His professional designations include Certified Executive Chef and Certified Culinary Educator by the American Culinary Federation.

RAY COLVIN, Location Director



Master's in Business Administration, Marylhurst University, Marylhurst, OR
Ray Colvin joins Oregon Culinary Institute after serving eight years at Western Culinary Institute in various positions, most recently as Dean of Hospitality & Restaurant Management. Prior to that

he was Vice President of Academics and Student Services, Dean of Students, and Educational Director of the Le Cordon Bleu Hospitality & Restaurant Management program. Before joining Western Culinary Institute, Colvin worked in senior management, including as a regional vice president and owner, for three nationally recognized hospitality organizations including Piatti Restaurant Group, McCormick & Schmick's Management Group, and The Holland Corporation. At Oregon Culinary Institute, Colvin is responsible for management of the school's facilities and restaurant, as well as acting dean of students. He is also significantly involved in new program development.

ALLISON BLYTHE, Restaurant Management Instructor

BA Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies: Psychology, Communications, Human Studies; Certificate in Mediation, Marylhurst University, Marylhurst, OR

Allison Blythe has over 18 years experience with some of Portland's best restaurants, starting with serving at James Beard Award-winning Wildwood Restaurant and Bar and nationally acclaimed Bluehour; moving up to manager and event coordinator at the renowned Genoa and then manager at Lucere in the RiverPlace Hotel. Restaurant ownership began with Feast, a private dining business she started with her husband specializing in high-end cuisine for in-home dinner parties, where she served as general manager. She opened Roux with her husband and two partners where, as a manager, she also expanded her repertoire to include wine buying. This eventually led to full-time wine sales with Oregon Brand Management, but Blythe returned to the restaurant industry with Nostrana and most recently Lincoln. She brings a wealth of experience to Oregon Culinary Institute's Restaurant Management programs.

JOSH BLYTHE, Lead Chef Instructor

AOS Degree in Culinary Arts, New England Culinary Institute, Montpelier, VT

Chef Josh Blythe has over 20 years of experience in the restaurant industry. Starting as a dishwasher and prep cook and advancing to line cook and kitchen manager, Chef Blythe worked his way up in kitchens in New England and Colorado before deciding to go to culinary school at the New England Culinary Institute. After finishing school in 1998 he moved to Portland to work at James Beard Award-winning Wildwood Restaurant and Bar as a roundsman. He graduated to sous chef at Paley's Place Bistro and Bar, then executive chef of 750ml. In 2002 he became a chef at Ripe, the nationally acclaimed entity that introduced family-supper concept to a retail market, later moving to Genoa where he was menu chef for their signature seven-course prix fixe dinners. While at Ripe and Genoa, he and his wife formed Feast, a private dining business specializing in high-end cuisine for in-home dinner parties. Chef Blythe was most recently the founding executive chef at Roux which he opened with his wife and two partners. Roux was a highly acclaimed Portland restaurant which garnered rave reviews both locally and nationally while Chef Blythe was at the helm.

MAXINE BORCHERDING, Lead Chef Instructor

*BA in Biology, Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, IL
Masters in Public Administration, Honors, Roosevelt University, Chicago, IL / Post Graduate Certificate in Public Administration and Environmental Management, University of Southern California at Los Angeles*

Chef Maxine Borcharding has over 23 years of experience in catering, restaurant management, and consulting to the hospitality industry. In 1985 she co-founded The Best of Everything Catering Company and Cafe. In 1992 she founded Smart Bytes, a consulting firm specializing in software application for the hospitality industry, and in 1995

established a catering division. She has extensive industry experience and professional associations including two years as legislative committee chair and legislative liaison for ACEP (Association of Caterers and Event Professionals); and 16 years as a board member of Potluck in the Park. She was most recently at Western Culinary Institute where she taught Professional Communications and Hospitality Business Law for the Hospitality and Restaurant Management program and was awarded Instructor of the Year in 2004; and in 2006 placed third among nominees from Culinary, Hospitality and Restaurant Management, and Pastry and Baking divisions of thirteen Le Cordon Bleu culinary schools as Career Education Corporation Instructor of the Year. Chef Borcharding is a certified Spanish Wine educator.

DANIEL BROPHY, CEC, CCE, Lead Chef Instructor

BA in Biology, University of Sioux Falls, SD

Chef Brophy's culinary employment encompasses 34 years in food service from dishwasher through executive chef, including ten years with Jake's Famous Crawfish and the McCormick and Schmick organization as sous chef and executive chef, and eighteen years of formal classroom instructing. Diverse hands-on experience includes teaching, catering, and private cheffing. Chef Brophy has worked for both large corporations and individual owners, with responsibilities including research, recipe development, menus design and extensive costing. As an edible inner-tidal specialist, he leads field trips during negative tides to expose students to sustainable life at the tertiary level. His wide-ranging garden and back-yard projects include providing trick vegetables, herbs, edible flowers, wild mushrooms, heirloom turkeys and organic eggs for local restaurants and culinary schools. Chef Brophy's professional honors and designations include ACF Certified Executive Chef and Certified Culinary Educator; ACF Chapter President 1998-2005 Pacific NW Chapter of Portland; Chefs Collaborative Member; Oregon Mycological Society Member; Oregon Tilth Member; Instructor of the Year 2003, Western Culinary Institute; ACF and Le Cordon Bleu Schools member, winning Professional Knowledge Bowl Team 2003 and 2004.

MELINDA CASADY, CCC, Chef Instructor

*BS in Sociology, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR
AOS Degree in Culinary Arts, Western Culinary Institute, Portland, OR*

Chef Melinda Casady began her culinary career 13 years ago as assistant pastry chef at Pazzo Ristorante in Portland. She's also worked at Fiddleheads, as chef de partie at the Multnomah Athletic Club, as sous chef at Willamette Athletic Club and Oritalia in Portland, and as food and beverage director at Courtyard by Marriott. Her areas of expertise include baking and pâtisserie, wine appreciation, and butchery and charcuterie. She was most recently at Western Culinary Institute where at different times she taught Butchery and Charcuterie, Introduction to Garde Manger, Advanced A La Carte, Baking and Pâtisserie, and Professional Communication. Her professional associations include ACF and Chef de Cuisine.

RANDALL CRONWELL, Chef Instructor

AOS Degree in Culinary Arts, Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, NY

With over 35 years experience in the hospitality, restaurant, and retail grocery industry, Chef Randall Cronwell began his career in California working for Chef Jeremiah Towers at the Santa Fe Bar & Grill and Stars restaurant in San Francisco. In Portland at the Riverplace Alexis Hotel, he was promoted to sous chef shortly after starting. After several years he began his teaching career as a chef instructor at Western Culinary Institute, where he taught Introduction to Culinary Arts and A La Carte/Retail for their deli/diner operation. He worked next with Fred Carlo at Salumeria de Carlo, a wholesale/retail sausage business, then Viande Meats & Sausage Co., a business he owned and operated for many years. The managing chef at Armadillo Catering Company in Portland, and most recently the executive chef at Springwater Grill in Portland, Chef Cronwell has a wealth of experience.

CHRISTIAN HALDEMAN, Lead Chef Instructor

Diploma in Culinary Arts, Western Culinary Institute, Portland, OR

With over 20 years experience, Chef Christian Haldeman has held management positions in both large and small-scale kitchens with duties including cost and labor control, production, and sanitation and safety; for buffet, banquet, and fine dining settings. Graduating from Western Culinary Institute in 1998, he later became an associate instructor for the Garde Manger Kitchen. Most recently at the University Club of Portland, he managed the A La Carte Kitchen and production before being promoted to sous chef. Chef Haldeman's professional honors and designations include Associate Instructor of the Month at Western Culinary Institute, Coach to Junior Culinary Team resulting in Third in State and ACF Bronze Medals, and two bronze and four silver medals in NICA international ice carving events.

SALVATORE HALL, Chef Instructor

Diploma in Culinary Arts, Western Culinary Institute, Portland, OR

Chef Salvatore Hall's passion for producing great food, along with an abiding dedication to the craft, began with his education at culinary school. He graduated at the top of his class with a 4.0 GPA from Western Culinary Institute's Le Cordon Bleu Program, spending his externship at the famed restaurant Higgins, a Portland institution. He quickly moved from line cook to pastry chef, head baker at Florio Bakery and Pâtisserie Lili, then kitchen manager at the prestigious Crema Bakery & Café in Portland. Most recently executive chef at Ladybug Organic Coffee Company, Chef Hall brings a diverse background and wide-ranging experience in culinary arts and baking and pastry. He is a member of the Chefs Collaborative.

“(The instructors are) extremely knowledgeable, willing to help students with specific needs, but they maintain their high expectations.” – Mike Murray, OCI Graduate Culinary Arts, and Co-Owner Hash, Portland, OR

MELANIE HAMMERICKSEN, Chef Instructor

AOS Degree in Culinary Arts, with High Honors, Western Culinary Institute, Portland, OR

Chef Melanie Hammericksen began her career after school as a prep cook and server for Soup to Nuts Catering in Medford, Oregon, then two years later became the manager at C.K. Tiffins, a popular natural foods fine-dining restaurant in Medford as well. After six years she moved to Portland where she became the lead server and head trainer at the Multnomah Athletic Club's fine dining restaurant. Most recently, prior to joining Oregon Culinary Institute, Chef Hammericksen was pastry chef for ¡Oba! Restaurante, in Portland, where she created the pastry menus, prepared desserts, and trained new staff.

JOSH HOBSON, Chef Instructor

AOS Degree in Culinary Arts, Western Culinary Institute, Portland, OR

Chef Josh Hobson, a graduate of Western Culinary Institute, specializes in international cooking and cuisines of the world. With travels throughout Asia, Europe, Middle East, North America and the Caribbean, Chef Hobson has studied with chefs and attended cooking classes in places such as Thailand, Japan, Hong Kong and Nepal. This experience prepared Chef Hobson for teaching the International Cuisine Class at Western Culinary Institute for over five years, and teaching cooking classes at Sur La Table for over four years. Before accepting the teaching positions, Chef Hobson worked in many locations, from breakfast cook to roundsman, culminating in accepting a position as executive sous chef for the historic Multnomah Hotel where he oversaw banquet facilities and focused on fusing Asian flavors and techniques with the freshness and subtle flavors of the Pacific Northwest.

“Really the passion here, that's one thing about this school, is that every chef is extremely passionate about what they are doing, and that makes for a positive and encouraging learning environment. If you have that inspiration in yourself, it really gives you the tools to succeed.” – Mindy Keith, OCI Graduate Baking and Pastry

ROBERT PARKS, CEPC, Lead Chef Instructor

Le Cordon Bleu Diplôme, Le Cordon Bleu, Paris, France

Chef Robert Parks is a graduate of Le Cordon Bleu, Paris, and has over 35 years experience in professional baking and pastry including 11 years of service as executive pastry chef at the Fairmont Hotel and the Pan Pacific Hotel, both in San Francisco. He was chef instructor and department chair for over 14 years at the California Culinary Academy, where he designed and implemented the program, authored the accompanying textbook, and was selected as CCA Instructor of the Year in 2001. In 2003 he joined Western Culinary Institute where he was responsible for the development and implementation of the Baking and Pastry programs. Chef Parks' professional honors and designations include Certification in Safety, Sanitation, and Nutrition, as well as Certified Executive Pastry Chef by the ACF.

ROY PEREZ, Chef Instructor

Diploma in Culinary Arts, with Honors, Western Culinary Institute, Portland, OR

With over 18 years culinary experience, Chef Roy Perez graduated with honors from Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Arts program at Western Culinary Institute. He spent three years at Paley's Place in Portland, a top-ranked French bistro nominated for the James Beard Award in 2002 and 2003 leaving the position of lead line cook to move to Austin, Texas. There, at the Texas Culinary Academy, he taught beginning cuisine and most recently Garde Manger.

GEORGE THOMPSON, Lead Chef Instructor

Diploma in Culinary Arts, with Honors, Western Culinary Institute, Portland, OR

Chef George Thompson has over nine years experience in the restaurant industry, including banquet chef for Atwater's in Portland, with over 20 years teaching experience, most recently of Advanced Garde Manger for Western Culinary Institute's Professional Diploma Program. Chef Thompson's professional honors and designations include graduation with honors, Western Regional Culinary Olympic Team Member in 1988, ACF Member of the Chefs de Cuisine Society of Oregon since 1988, and Western Culinary Institute Instructor of the Year 2000. Chef Thompson's culinary artwork has won Gold, Silver and Bronze medals in American Culinary Federation and Olympic competition.

"We each got to work one-on-one with our chefs a lot and get a lot of personal feedback. We all came from different backgrounds, so our skill level was all different when we first started, and you can definitely see that people who had no idea what they were doing now have the skills to go out and get a job in the industry. Going out and getting a job – it's not overwhelming, it's not intimidating now. I'm very confident with my skill level."
– Morgan Jacobson, OCI Graduate Culinary Arts

BIKRAM VAIDYA, CC, Chef Instructor

AOS Degree in Culinary Arts, with Honors, Western Culinary Institute, Portland, OR

Chef Bikram Vaidya has over 20 years experience in the restaurant and hospitality industry. It all started in Nepal where he created and managed a successful bar and restaurant, and taught cooking classes. Chef Vaidya has trained under renowned chefs in North America, Greece, Thailand, Peru, Hong Kong and India, and has worked in Reno, Nevada at Hotel El Dorado and in San Francisco at Farallon. Chef Vaidya's most recent experience is at Western Culinary Institute where he taught International Cuisine courses, and his professional honors and designations include Certification by the Hilton Hotel Bartending School and Guest Satisfaction Training, along with completion of His Majesty's Government Hotel Management and Tourism Training in Nepal. He is a member of the ACF and the Nepali Association of Oregon.

RAMONA WHITE, Chef Instructor

Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, State University of New York at New Paltz, NY

AAS Degree in Culinary Arts, Johnson and Wales University, Vail, CO

Chef Ramona White began her career in a high-school apprenticeship for Chef John Massey in Maine, then worked her way through college for Chef Nabil Attie in New York. After college she moved to New Orleans, where she was chef at Lucy's, then to Colorado to pursue her degree in Culinary Arts. While there she worked at the famed Radisson Hotel and for Vail Associates. After graduation, she became catering chef for Oregon Electric Station, then dining room manager for Compass Café. She was most recently at Western Culinary Institute where she taught Kitchen Management and Hospitality & Restaurant Management. Chef White is chef/owner of Nourishment, which she founded in 1999, and her professional affiliations include WCR, ACF, the Chef's Collaborative, and Hollywood Farmer's Market.

WEDNESDAY WILD-WILSON, Chef Instructor

Diploma in Culinary Arts, with High Honors, Western Culinary Institute, Portland, OR

Chef Wednesday Wild-Wilson graduated from Western Culinary Institute's Le Cordon Bleu Program, while beginning her culinary arts career at the Multnomah Athletic Club as prep cook and tournant. Her externship with school was spent at Portland's famed Paley's Place where she ended up spending over six years working all stations, managing purveyor connections, contributing to International Pinot Noir Celebrations and local fundraisers such as Taste of the Nation, and designing and creating a nine-item dessert menu. One of Chef Wild-Wilson's claims to fame is having assisted Chef Paley with the 2006 James Beard Dinner in New York City. She is also published, having contributed to the popular *The Paley's Place Cookbook* and Sara Perry's *Deep Dark Chocolate*.

"All the chefs are really knowledgeable. They have no problem with one-on-one help. They'll stay with you after or even before class." – Brittany Schoenborn, OCI Graduate Culinary Arts, and also Baking and Pastry