Sharing Success Stories
Greetings from Johnson and Wales University

Student’s Name: Joseph Castellano
OCVTS Program: Culinary Arts II
Instructors: Chef Dennis Melia and Chef Gary Lesniak

Class of: 2018
Center: Brick
High School: Brick Memorial

In Joseph’s own words: As a recent graduate of the Culinary Arts program, I would like to thank everyone at OCVTS along with all of the chefs and the staff for really preparing me for the workforce and post-secondary school. People say school is what you make of it and that is true. If I had to sum up OCVTS in one word, it would be opportunities. They provide you with so many opportunities to improve your skills, participate in activities, be active in the community and lastly, get a chance to challenge yourself. Participating in Feed the Need where the culinary classes prepared 1000+ Thanksgiving meals or baking hundreds of culinary treats for Chef’s Night Out or entering the OCVTS’ SkillsUSA competition, it all was a lot of work and a lot of fun!

To any student reading this that may not be sure what to do, may I suggest getting into a trade at OCVTS. The entire staff in any of the trade fields will give you an insight into that career. Now, I am moving onto to Johnson & Wales University, and thanks to OCVTS, I am ready to continue my journey. I got my feet wet with many things. In the next four years, I hope to hone those skills and dominate every task. I am ready!

Bakery Instructor, Chef Dennis Melia gladly submitted Joseph Castellano as an OCVTS success story. “Joe was a pleasure to have in my baking class, as well as an excellent employee who worked with me at Klein’s Restaurant in Belmar. He competed in the SkillsUSA competition earning a gold medal in state’s job demo, and he won a silver medal in the National Competition in Louisville, Kentucky. Joe is a focused and dedicated student who learned a great deal of skills in both pastry and cooking. He has always assisted me with community service projects and as well as special wine dinners at Klein’s Restaurant. He considered it an extra opportunity to learn. He will do very well at Johnson and Wales. I am happy to report Joe is following in his brother’s Christopher’s footsteps.”

(left to right) Joe poses for a photo on Graduation Day with Lynn Sauer, Principal of the Brick Center. Klein’s Restaurant in Belmar, where Joe has worked and practiced his culinary skills. Excited about continuing his education, Joe meets the mascot at the Johnson and Wales orientation. Let the fun begin!