Student’s Name: Steven Glassoff  
OCVTS Program: Culinary Arts  
Instructors: Chef Kevin Musto, Chef Gary Lesniak, Chef Dennis Melia  
Employer: JBJ Soul Kitchen, Toms River, NJ  
Class of: 2017  
Center: Brick  
High School: Toms River North

In Steven’s own words: I wanted to start my culinary arts education as soon as possible. OCVTS was my pathway to do it. While enrolled in their culinary program, I learned the fundamentals of cooking, along with basic knife skills, and how to work in a fast-pace culinary environment. I started volunteering in the kitchen at JBJ Soul Kitchen. The executive chef saw my desire and willingness to learn. He hired me as an assistant and today, I have worked my way up to sous chef. Each day, I am in a position where I get to work with volunteers and provide meals for those who are in need in our community. Since we operate on a two-week menu cycle, I can create new dishes and experiment with new techniques. It is awesome!

Chef Kevin Musto, Steven’s first culinary instructor at OCVTS, touted, “Steven was a student in my Culinary Essentials class for one year before moving on to the mainstream Culinary Arts Program. While he was in my class, Steven was a leader, role model, and all around great student. He took initiative on a daily basis to learn and master as many skills as he could while in my class. After quickly seeing the potential in Steven, I began to challenge him with more diverse dishes and tasks. He passed the test time, and time again with his preparedness and natural culinary skills. Steven went on to the Culinary Arts class for the next two years and continued his success. Steven is now the Sous Chef at the JBJ Soul Kitchen in Toms River. As long as Steven continues to approach his career with the same intensity that he did with his schooling, I see a ton of success in his future.

Wendy Arnold, recently retired teacher at Toms River High School North, nominated Steven as a culinary success story. “At the young age of 14, he wanted to pursue a career in the culinary industry. I remember how excited Steven was upon hearing the news that he was accepted into the culinary program at OCVTS. His determination, hard work, and desire to learn has served him well. Steven is living the dream! Congratulations to Steven and the Culinary Essentials program where it all began!”

(Photos counter clockwise) Steven posing for a picture at work at The JBJ Soul Kitchen. Steven cooking up a flambé dish, and photo of one of his prepared dishes. He encourages everyone to come the JBJ Soul Kitchen and taste the culinary delights for yourself.