



Name: **Memuna J**

Apprenticeship: **Certificate III Commercial Cookery**

Completed CITI New Recruits Program In: **2013**

Memuna has travelled across the world to land her dream job as an apprentice chef, after escaping war-torn Sierra Leone as a toddler. The 23-year-old from Regents Park, NSW, developed her love of cooking at her grandmother's side before migrating to Australia and overcoming language problems to get a secondary school and TAFE education.

But that was not enough. It took her completion of the Citi New Recruits Program for her to win an apprenticeship in a busy Sydney restaurant kitchen. Memuna says:

"I am so excited to have a (culinary) apprenticeship at Mexico Food and Liquor in Surry Hills (Sydney) where the chilli and spices like coriander, remind me of my grandmother cooking for our big family. The Citi New Recruits Program put me right on track after I did a Marketing Diploma and Certificate IV in

Business and found it wasn't for me. I remembered enjoying work experience as a high school student at the Bankstown Sports Club.

The chef there asked me to whip cream - which was a first for me - and as it turned from liquid to a fluffy substance I stood back in amazement at what I had created. I knew then I wanted to be a chef.

The Citi New Recruits Program helped me get an apprenticeship in the industry I love and has me looking forward to travelling the world, tasting new things and experiencing new environments where familiar ingredients are used in different ways.

Things haven't always been easy. I was born in Sierra Leone but when war broke out, my parents took me as a two-year-old to my grandmother in Guinea. At her side, I learned the joys of cooking. You could taste the love and passion in her dishes. My father brought me to Australia in 2008,

but I only knew my mother tongue and the French I had learnt in school, so it was hard at first. I spent a year in an intensive

English language program at Holroyd High School, before completing Year 11 and 12 at Granville South High School and then did TAFE courses. But something was missing. I really wanted to cook. Now, I am following my passion - and loving it. My favourite dish at Mexico Food and Liquor is the chicken quesadillas - the aroma of the oregano, Portobello mushrooms, salsa and more with the juicy chicken, takes me back to being with my grandmother and appreciating how food brings people together."

For further information please contact:
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