



MEET A CITI NEW RECRUIT

Name: Christopher K

Apprenticeship: Certificate III in Hospitality (Patisserie)

Completed CITI New Recruits Program In: 2013

When I received the phone call that a Scholarship Program had been developed thanks to the efforts of Citi staff during Global Community Month and that the Skilling Australia Foundation (SAF) was awarding me as a recipient, I was speechless.

The Scholarship Program is for graduates of the Citi New Recruits Program that are excelling in their apprenticeship and as a recipient I have proven that during my Pastry Chef Apprenticeship with Delaware North Companies at Etihad Stadium.

When my SAF Mentor told me that part of my Scholarship was a one week work placement trip to Sydney my first reaction was immense surprise and I was certainly lost for words. I was overwhelmed and extremely grateful to everyone that had given me such a wonderful opportunity to express my passion and live my dream. I got home that night, told my parents and I don't know who was more excited, me or my parents!

The opportunity to represent a very well respected and extremely dedicated company like Citi and an organisation that believe in young people such as Skilling Australia Foundation was more than my heart could ever express to everyone

around me during this amazing time in my life. These amazing people not only believed in me, but they also allowed me to follow my dreams by giving me a wonderful opportunity, providing me with guidance and pushing me towards achieving my dream of becoming a Pastry Chef.

I arrived in Sydney and was met by New South Wales based SAF Mentor, Lisa Lee, who was amazing, extremely helpful and experienced in dealing with young people. She showed me understanding and respect and always made me feel that my input was valued. Lisa took me under her wing and showed me around some of the nicest cafes in Sydney and Bondi where we discussed the different textures, recipes and flavours of sweets. We had morning tea at a café specialising in desserts called 'The Sweet Spot Patisserie'. I was blown away by the wow factor attached to each dessert. They were simply amazing and breathtaking to look at and in all reality way too beautiful to be eaten! What a wonderful and magical sight it was to see all the colours and pretty designs, to smell the sweet smell of sugar and spices in the café, and to be able to taste the different sweets.

After our morning tea Lisa took me to where I was going to have my work placement for the week, Ananas Bar & Brasserie. We were greeted by an amazing young Pastry Chef named Yves Scherrer who was in charge of the pastry kitchen and had a wealth of knowledge on different pastries as well as an amazing recipe collection. I accepted the Scholarship with very little expectations of where I would have my work placement, but after some research on Ananas Bar & Brasserie, I was lost for words.

Ananas is not only impressive by the talent they have hired (such as Chef Yves Scherrer), the size of the complex, or the reviews by patrons. The most impressive of all is that this French Restaurant takes the time to invest in young people's future and careers, including mine. Ananas Bar & Brasserie is situated in Sydney's high-end restaurant region - right next to Circular Quay, the Opera House and the ever famous Sydney Harbour Bridge. I am amazed, blessed and appreciative for such an amazing opportunity to be able to be part of such a great team, to work in one of the best restaurants in Sydney, and to be taught by an award winning chef like Chef Yves Scherrer.

For further information please contact:
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I quickly understood and realised while working at Ananas the amount of preparation work that is needed. Not so much in baking or plating the desserts, but the finer detail in perfecting the presentation of every single dessert. Everything that was served looked picture-perfect. The smallest detail was looked at and corrected if needed. I even found that the chocolate work I did with Chef Yves had to be spot on perfection! There was no room for error.

I was given the task of creating the famous French Éclair and if one was bigger than the other there was only one thing to do, start again! I spent 4 hours moulding and melting chocolate until it was sheer perfection and let me tell you, I got a lot of experience out of it! I quickly realised I was in a restaurant kitchen when I asked Chef Yves what the final number of required Éclairs was for that evening and the answer I got was "I'm not sure".

It may have been just a small glimpse, but I walked away with a bit of experience on the preparation that is required in a kitchen like Ananas.

The flavours and various fillings of the Éclairs were to die for – French vanilla and chocolate, caramel and Earl Grey. Every dessert was a wonderful explosion of flavours and each looked a million dollars. Chef Yves, being an experienced, well-travelled, knowledgeable and a great teacher was amazed that I could produce such beauty. This made me realise that having a drive, a dream and surrounding myself with people that understand and believe in me will help me go a long, long way.

My time spent in Sydney was one of the most wonderful and greatest experiences I will forever remember. Working with my SAF Mentor has helped me to believe in myself and to pursue my apprenticeship with Etihad Stadium as an Apprentice Pastry Chef. Receiving this Scholarship has been a life changing experience and has allowed me to push myself in ways that I never thought I could.

Prior to commencing the Citi New Recruits Program I always put a limit on what I could and couldn't achieve, but after completing I quickly realised that I can achieve anything I want in life.

Having guidance and mentorship behind me I understand clearly that hospitality is my passport to the world and the world is all mine to enjoy. My apprenticeship at Etihad and my Scholarship to Sydney

has allowed me to broaden my field in being a Pastry Chef and I now see the potential that everyone at SAF saw in me, not to mention my mother believing in me always.

Without the help of the Skilling Australia Foundation I would not have ever had this life changing experience in Sydney. My mother would always say, "The memory is the treasure house of the mind" - I fully understand what she means as my memories will last a lifetime as will my gratitude to the Citi staff, Skilling Australia Foundation and of course my Mentors Greg Payne and Lisa Lee.

Thank you for this wonderful opportunity. I will always treasure the privilege, memories and humbly