



Name: John

Apprenticeship: Certificate III Commercial Cookery Completed Citi New Recruits Program Phase II

An athlete who had represented the State in basketball, John once thought he would pursue a career in competitive sports. When he was unable to follow that dream due to injuries, John discovered a new passion for cooking.

"I was inspired by Jamie Oliver's YouTube shows and cookbooks," John said. "I started being interested in different ingredients and the ways they could be used. He really motivated me to discover cooking."

After finishing high school, John went straight into the Citi New Recruits program, which led to his apprenticeship at Italian restaurant Fratelli Paradiso in Potts Point, NSW. Now in his second year, the 20-year-old is working towards a Certificate III in Commercial Cookery.

John is learning new skills every day and developing his knowledge of the industry. He arrives in the afternoon to start prep for dinner service, which includes a wide variety of tasks like rolling pasta, prepping

desserts, taking deliveries, making sure everything has arrived, and following up with suppliers if it hasn't.

John credits the Citi New Recruits program with helping him find his way into a career he is passionate about. "I am so grateful for the help of CNR and my mentor. Without them, I wouldn't have known how to go about it all and get this great job that I love."

"When I first started, it was very tough and hard work. 'What have I got myself into?' was my first thought. But I kept remembering the Jamie Oliver videos and he was my inspiration to keep going."

Hard work was not a new experience for the 20-year-old. Born in the Philippines, at age nine John came to live in Australia with his mother and younger brother.

"We had a pretty tough time and I had to help support mum too," John recalled. "I worked in Pizza Hut, then went to my cleaning job at the hospital a couple of nights a week and on the weekend. I

would finish at 1 am, and then I was off to school the next day. I knew I had to learn to stand on my own two feet and not rely on anyone else."

John's favourite role is running the pasta section during service. The restaurant, well-known for its pasta, typically has between 140-200 covers a night. "I love getting smashed with dockets and getting into the rhythm. It is very challenging and stressful at the same time," John said.

John would encourage anyone starting a career to consider an apprenticeship. "An apprenticeship is a great way to get into a job where you learn hands on and develop new skills in something that you are passionate about. Get started so you can start earning an income. It's a great way to meet new people too."

"Be happy and grateful," is John's advice. "Don't take life for granted. Whatever opportunities you get, take them."

For further information please contact:
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