



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Winning Chefs Announced for 2009 Cookin' for Kids Celebrity Chef Cook-Off

FORT WORTH, TX – March 9, 2009 – Kids Who Care, a non-profit international musical theatre company based in Fort Worth, announces the winners of the Twelfth Annual Cookin' for Kids Celebrity Chef Cook-Off, a benefit event that some refer to as “The Iron Chef of Fort Worth.”

The benefit event was held Sunday, March 1 at River Ranch in Fort Worth, where ten professional chefs, each with a notable Texan as an assistant, competed in a race against the clock to create the evening's winning plates. Each pair was provided with a cooler full of surprise ingredients, two bunsen burners and 45 minutes to create two plates. One plate was delivered and divided among the evening's judges, and the other was auctioned off to the evening's highest bidders. Simultaneously, four amateur chef teams competed in the amateur chef category.

In the Professional Chef category, the following teams won:

- First place – Chef Gabe Ochoa of Ridglea Country Club, assisted by Jody Ulich, president of the Arts Council of Fort Worth and Tarrant County
- Second place – Chef Denise Shavandy of Central Market Southlake, assisted by Jim Austin from the Austin Company
- Third place – Chef Deb Cantrell of Cuisine for Healing, assisted by Mark Lowry from Theatre Jones

In the Amateur Chef category, the following teams won:

- First place - Joseph Vincelli with Lisa Vincelli
- Second place - Jim Ogden with Bubba Stucker

"We're delighted and grateful for the growth this event has seen each year in support of these amazing kids," said Deborah Jung, founder and executive director of Kids Who Care. "With the help of this caring community, we are able to cultivate and create Fort Worth's next leaders."

Cookin' for Kids is Fort Worth's original celebrity chef cook-off benefit. It's held the first Sunday in March each year and is the single largest fundraising event for Kids Who Care. All proceeds benefit Kids Who Care and help provide scholarships, youth leadership training and other support that makes Kids Who Care arts education an affordable family entertainment available in our community.

Serving on the 2009 judging panel were Jon Bonnell, Bonnell's Fine Texas Cuisine; Jon Albright, "2008 You Be The Judge" winner; Amy Culbertson, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* food editor; Laurie James,

freelance writer for *Fort Worth Weekly*; Mary Rogers, author and society writer; and Crystal Willars, editor of *Fort Worth Foodie* magazine.

As the chefs competed, guests enjoyed food and beverages provided by: Boomer Jacks, Central Market Fort Worth, Cuisine for Healing, El Paseo, Gallery Art Café, Grand Cru Wines and Gifts, Hoffbrau Steaks, Latte Da Dairy, Ovations, Sandy's Cake Balls, Simply Fondue, The Ginger Man and Z's Café.

About Kids Who Care

Celebrating its 20th anniversary, Kids Who Care is a non-profit international theatre company based in Fort Worth, Texas that seeks to produce confident and creative kids through leadership, musical theatre education and performance. Kids Who Care offers professional musical theatre classes, leadership training, summer musical theatre camps, international cultural exchanges, a touring Resident Company, public performances and more. The Kids Who Care Resident Company has performed Off-Broadway at the Lamb's Theatre, at both Disney's, at The Kennedy Center, at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, at 30,000 feet aboard an airplane for the Make-A-Wish Foundation and at many other locations across the U.S. and overseas. The core values of the organization include: excellence in artistic development, artistic integrity of kids, leadership roles for kids, financial and cultural diversity and ensemble production. For more information, please visit www.kidswhocare.org.

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High-res photos are available.