

BUSINESS

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Chef puts students through their paces

Jack Vincent

hertsad@archant.co.uk

Future chefs at Oaklands College have been treated to a taste of the working kitchen environment by a city centre restaurant owner.

Phil Thompson, who learned his trade at Michelin Star restaurants such as The Picasso Room, took over the former Darcy's Restaurant towards the end of 2013 as his first venture as a restaurateur.

He recently invited 10 level 3 BTEC Hospitality students from Oaklands College to experience the reality of a career as a chef at the renamed THOMPSON@Darcy's.

Oaklands hospitality lecturer George Mercer commended Phil for his support of their students: "Phil very kindly offered to show the students around the kitchen and let them observe the lunch service.

"The restaurant manager then showed them around and finally Phil prepared a starter, main course and dessert for the students to taste, share and discuss.

"He then answered any ques-



■ Phil Thompson instructs Oaklands College students on the way to run a successful restaurant

tions and explained the restaurant accolade system which is part of their first assignments."

Phil has also employed one of the college's former students, Lauren Hart, as trainee sous chef, after George recommended Lauren for her skills, attitude and potential.

Lauren, 18, says she cried after being offered the job: "I've worked hard to pursue my goal of a long term career as a chef, so when

Phil offered me the position at his restaurant I jumped at the chance.

"It's completely different to anything I've done before, it's a really high level of food and completely knacker, but it's absolutely brilliant and I love it."

Phil asserts that hospitality "is a hard, competitive industry to be in and I am happy to help potentially good future chefs get on the career ladder when I can."

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