

PEOPLE

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Sarasota, Fla. He earned his bachelor's degree in public relations from the University of Florida.

Monin Gourmet Flavorings, a producer and marketer of flavored syrups, announces the appointment of Mark Reinheimer to the newly created position of vice president, Strategic Marketing and Partner Alliances. Mark Reinheimer is a longtime beverage industry veteran, having held key sales and marketing management positions with Jim Beam Brands, Daily's Cocktail Mix and Robert Mondavi Wines. From 1995-96, Reinheimer served as director of marketing at Monin.

Johnson & Wales University Chef Instructors Sadruddin Abdullah and Ciril Hitz won the 2004 National Bread & Pastry Team Championship, held during the Atlantic City Bakery Expo on Oct. 4-5. Not only did they take home Best of Show, but they also won three of the other five categories: Best Bread, Best Viennoiserie, and Best Bread Showpiece.

Working on the theme of "American History," the team created a bread showpiece, a pastry showpiece incorporating sugar and chocolate, two different types of bread, an entremet (cake), a plated dessert and three Viennoiserie (baked goods made out of "laminated" dough, like croissants). They decided to focus on symbols related to the American Indian and put in countless hours throughout the summer and early fall practicing.

Dan Mesches, president of Star Restaurant Group LLC, has announced two new appointments at **Zola**, Penn Quarter's award-winning landmark restaurant: **Jeff Ragonese** has been named general manager, and **Jennifer Burlew** is the new director of private dining and catering sales.

Jeff Ragonese is responsible for overseeing the entire restaurant operations of Spy City Café and Zola, including the restaurant's expansive private events facilities. Ragonese's impressive hospitality experience includes tenure from 1992-96 with The Ritz Carlton Hotel Co., serving on the opening team of the Ritz Carlton in Hong Kong. **Jennifer Burlew**, a graduate of Georgetown University, was promoted to the director of private dining and catering sales after working as a private dining manager at Zola over the last year. Prior to her move to Washington, Burlew worked in New York as an event marketing manager at Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia.

Executive Chef **Ris Lacoste** has announced the appointment of two new pastry chefs at historic 1789 Restaurant in Georgetown. Pastry Chef **Zoe Trillium Behrens** and Assistant Pastry Chef **Donna Divittorio** create all the fresh breads, pastry and seasonal desserts for the restaurant in the sun-filled pastry shop overlooking Prospect Street.

Zoe Behrens began her career in her teens at her family's restaurant and winery, Behrens-Hitchcock in Arcata, Calif. She came to Washington, D.C., to pursue additional culinary education at L'Academie de Cuisine in Gaithersburg, Md. During this

time she joined 1789 Restaurant as kitchen staff.

Donna Divittorio, also an alumna from L'Academie de Cuisine, joins 1789 Restaurant as assistant pastry chef with extensive pastry experience earned at Pastries by Randolph, the Grand Hyatt Hotel, and the French Embassy. She has also assisted Executive Pastry Chef Roland Mesnier on multiple occasions at the White House during both the Clinton and Bush administrations.

Firefly chef John Wabeck is listed as a "Rising Star to Watch in 2005" in the November 2004 issue of *Razor* magazine. The list recognized only 19 artists nationwide, with Wabeck the sole chef. This notable recognition follows numerous awards and accolades for his cuisine and wine list that include "Culinary Rising Star" by the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington and "Rising Star" by Starchefs.com, in 2003.

A native of Maryland's Eastern Shore, Chef Wabeck received his classic training at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY. He began his culinary career in 1992 at Red Sage in Washington, D.C., and moved on to the kitchen of the venerable 1789. By 1996, Chef Wabeck headed to Asia Nora, and by 1997, he became chef de cuisine at Restaurant Nora. In 2000, Wabeck was lured to California's wine country as executive chef at Brix in Yountville. There he further honed his skills, melding French and Asian cuisines while studying Napa Valley wines. Wabeck returned to Washington in late 2001 to open the Rouge and Topaz lounges and, in 2002, Firefly. Now 36, Wabeck has created "a neighborhood place for people to enjoy great food and wine every day." Firefly is located at 1310 New Hampshire Ave. N.W. and open Monday through Friday for lunch, dinner nightly, and Sunday brunch. Valet parking is available Tuesday through Sunday for dinner. For reservations, dial 202-861-1310 or log onto <http://www.opentable.com/>. The Web site is firefly-dc.com.

Glory Days Grill, a regionally owned and operated restaurant company, named **Tony Cochones** as district manager for six of its 12 corporate-owned stores in Maryland and Northern Virginia. A 24-year veteran in the restaurant industry — having worked in the capacity of a general manager and national training manager for casual and fine dining concepts such as Palomino, Olives and The Perry Restaurant Group of Burlington, Vt. — Cochones will work in the capacity of district manager for Glory Days Grill in the short term. He will also be in charge of menu development, and his role with Glory Days Grill will eventually evolve into that of full-time executive chef. Glory Days Grill operates full-service restaurants in Florida, Maryland, Nevada and Virginia and has announced plans to open four new restaurants next year. The company had sales growth of 70 percent during 2003 and was ranked by the Washington Business Journal as fifth-largest locally owned restaurant chain and 14th fastest growing private company in the Washington, D.C., metro area.

IT'S THE LAW

PERM, at last

BY BECKI YOUNG
RESTAURANT DIGEST



Becki Young

On Dec. 27, 2004, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) issued the long-awaited PERM (expedited labor certification) regulation. Labor certification is the first of three steps in an employer-sponsored requested for permanent resident (green card) status. Most significantly, the new regulation aims to reduce to less than two months a process that now takes more than one year in Virginia, more than two years in Maryland, and more than three years in Washington, D.C.

Other changes include the following:

Prevailing Wages. Prevailing wages are the average wages paid to similarly employed workers in the requested occupation in the area of intended employment, as determined by the State Workforce Agency (SWA). Sponsoring employers must agree to pay 100 percent of the prevailing wage at the time the foreign national becomes a permanent resident (as opposed to 95 percent under the current system). Also, employers must now obtain a prevailing wage determination from the SWA before proceeding with a labor certification application.

Nonprofessional recruitment. Employers filing for nonprofessional occupations (occupations that do not require a bachelor's degree) must take three recruitment steps:

1. Two Sunday ads (can run on consecutive Sundays) in the newspaper of general circulation in the area of intended employment (must list the name of the employer, but contrary to the proposed regulation, do not need to contain the offered wage),

2. Internal posting at the job site (in addition to a hard-copy posting, must be placed in any and all in-house media in accordance with the normal procedure used for the recruitment of other similar positions), and

3. Job order placed with the SWA.

Most hospitality industry occupations, including chefs and hotel managers, are considered nonprofessional occupations for labor certification purposes.

Professional recruitment. Employers filing for professional occupations (occupations that require a bachelor's degree) must take the above steps, plus three additional steps (such as job fairs, employer's Web site, job search Web site, on-campus recruiting, trade or professional organizations, private employment firms, employee referral program, campus placement office, local or ethnic newspaper, radio/television advertisements). Relevant professional occupations for hospitality employers include certain managers (general/operations, marketing, sales, financial, human resources), as well as certain specialist employees (marketing specialists, employment specialists, meeting and convention planners, food scientists, nutritionists).

Recruitment Report. Employers must complete and sign a recruitment report detailing the recruitment steps taken and the results.

Filing. Once employers have completed the

required recruitment steps, they can file the labor certification application using the new Form ETA9089 online at www.plc.doleta.gov (currently not on display), or by mail. The ETA9089 must be signed by the employer immediately after filing. The employer will not file supporting documents with the application but must retain these documents for five years from the date of filing, as DOL may request them in the case of an audit.

Filing Fees. There are no filing fees for the new process, contrary to the proposed regulation.

Processing Times. DOL estimates that processing times under the new system will be approximately 45-60 days for cases not selected for an audit.

Currently Pending Cases. Employers with pending applications can choose to continue processing under the current system (no action is required). Alternatively, they can withdraw the pending cases (instructions will be published at <http://workforsecurity.doleta.gov/foreign>) and refile under the new system. In that case, they will be allowed to retain the initial priority date IF the new application is for an "identical job opportunity," meaning the SAME employer, foreign national, job title, job location, job description and minimum requirements. Applications not for an "identical job opportunity" will be treated as new applications (with consequent loss of priority date).

Audits. Certain applications will be selected for audit by DOL, either for cause or randomly. Employers subject to an audit must submit all requested supporting documents (i.e., advertisements and other evidence of recruitment, prevailing wage determination, and recruitment report). Approximately 5 percent of employers will be required to submit to supervised recruitment (like the current non-RIR labor certification process).

Effective Date. The PERM process will be mandatory for all labor certification applications filed on or after March 28, 2005.

For new applications, PERM promises a significant improvement over the existing system. For currently pending applications, the decision as to whether to refile under PERM involves many factors and should be made on a case-by-case basis.

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