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NEWS STAFF WRITER

STURBRIDGE – Tim Quinn, an Executive Chef from Old Sturbridge Village’s Oliver Wight Tavern, can flat out cook. Who knows, he might even be good enough to please Gordon Ramsay from Hell’s Kitchen...if that is even possible.

Last Sunday, Quinn was selected as the Overall Iron Chef Winner at Worcester’s Best Chef Competition held inside Mechanics Hall. The event lasted nearly 12 hours, as 24 chefs from establishments throughout central Massachusetts arrived early in the morning, prepared their signature dishes for the better part of the afternoon, and competed well into the evening.

“Our guests really enjoyed themselves at this year’s event, and everyone was thrilled with the food and the atmosphere,” said Domenic Mercurio, a member of the Worcester’s Best Chef Committee who organized the competition.

Each competitor’s dish was evaluated by a panel of celebrity chef judges, including Stanley Nicas, of the Culinary Institute of America, Barry Sexton from the Food Network, and Christina Adrianopoulos, of Dining Out MetroWest. The judges spent several hours attempting to narrow down the field to three competitors who would proceed onto the stage to participate in the Iron Chef Competition.

After some difficult decisions the judges chose Quinn, Wilson Wang, of Worcester’s Baba Sushi, and Jared Calderone, of Feng Asian Bistro in Millbury. There was also a People’s Choice segment during which hundreds of guests voted for their favorite dishes. The People’s Choice selections included Wang, Mark Hawley, of Worcester’s Flying Rhino Bistro, and Brian Treitman, the Executive Chef at Sturbridge’s BT’s Smokehouse.

During the Iron Chef Competition, the event’s finale, Quinn sealed his victory with a scrumptious scallop dish that delighted the judges. The dish also included Brussels sprouts and parsnips.

In addition to the preparation of great food, the event featured live music, a wine sampling setup, and acting performances. Billy Costa, of the New England Cable Network’s TV Diner, served as the competition’s Master of Ceremonies, and guests also spent an hour interacting with the chefs who’d wowed them with delectable dishes.

“It is always nice to see people having a good time and enjoying the event,” Mercurio added. “So many people work hard to put it together each year.”

Proceeds from the competition will assist a Worcester Technical High School culinary student who wins the school’s annual scholarship. For more information about the event, visit, [www.worcestersbestchef.com](http://www.worcestersbestchef.com). If you would like to experience the award-winning cooking of Quinn, visit the Oliver Wight Tavern inside Old Sturbridge Village, located at 1 Old Sturbridge Village Road. The tavern is capable of seating more than 300

guests in its four dining rooms, and you can find it just outside the Visitor Center entrance. The tavern will host a Valentine's Rib Room event on Feb. 11 and a Valentine's Brunch on Feb. 13.

Meanwhile, for those interested in watching future chefs in action, be sure to check out the TRHS Culinary Committee's Team Chef Competition on Mar. 6 at the Sturbridge Host Hotel. The event will feature teams of students and professional chefs preparing an entrée and a dessert, and the entry cost will be \$10 for adults and \$5 for children.

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