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Carolina Inn Names Reale as New Executive Chef

CHAPEL HILL – James Reale, a former sous chef at The Carolina Inn, has been named the Inn’s new executive chef.

He succeeds award-winning chef Brian Stapleton, who was promoted in February to the new position of director of culinary standards for the company that manages the Inn.

Reale has been executive chef and food and beverage manager at the Paul J. Rizzo Conference Center at UNC for the past seven years. Prior to that, he worked under Stapleton at The Carolina Inn and managed the Inn’s restaurant, Carolina Crossroads.

The Inn had nearly 200 applicants for the executive chef position.

“Jimmy Reale was definitely the most impressive,” said Creston Woods, the Inn’s general manager. “He has a good balance between technical and leadership skills as well as personal likeability. People enjoy working with him and having worked here in the past, he knows the high expectations of our guests.”

As executive chef, Reale will have overall responsibility for the food served at the hundreds of banquets, parties, meetings and wedding events that the Inn hosts each year, as well as for the Carolina Crossroads restaurant. One of only two restaurants in North Carolina with a Mobil Guide Four Star rating, the Crossroads will continue to specialize in “new American cuisine with a Southern accent.”

Stapleton was involved in the selection of Reale and will continue be available to offer advice and assistance in his role as director of culinary standards for ARAMARK Harrison Lodging, which manages the Inn and other resorts and conference centers around the country. Stapleton is still based in Chapel Hill.

“The Inn’s restaurant and other food service operations couldn’t be in more capable hands,” Stapleton said. “Jimmy has the perfect combination of culinary talent, enthusiasm and management experience for the job. I’m personally very happy for Jimmy and the inn – it’s a perfect fit”

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