

# NZ CHEFS NEWSLETTER

**NOVEMBER 2024**

**NZ CHEFS PRESIDENT  
SHANNON FRYER**

**REPRESENTING NZ ON  
THE WORLD STAGE  
MARK SYCAMORE**

**THE BILL GALLAGHER  
YOUNG CHEFS FORUM  
GEOFF SCOTT**

**CAMPYLOBACTER  
ACTION PLAN  
KRYSTLE CHESTER**

**WORLDCHefs ASSN  
NEW BOARD &  
PRESIDENTS LETTER**

**2015 COMPETITION  
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# Welcome to the November Newsletter

Dear Colleagues,

**Congratulations** to Cam Davies and his commis Quinn Ojala for their great success in the Global Chef Challenge 2024 held in Singapore. Coming 8th was an excellent achievement.

*Well done!*

Thanks and congrats also to NZ Chefs Mentor for Senior Competitions Mark Sycamore for all his work and assistance with the team.

For chefs interested in the next Global Chef Challenge cycle, the semi-finals are in early 2025 and winners will travel to Wales in 2026 for the World Finals. Application forms for Chef, Young Chef and Pastry Chef are available from NZ Chefs website [here](#)

Huge thanks to **Southern Hospitality** and **Moffat** for hosting the launch of NZ Chefs Championships 2025, it was an informative, fun and enjoyable event with great hospitality. We all learn't about the latest in Induction Cooking and suitable equipment.

Events being held at **Fine Food NZ** next year.

- June 29 NZ Chefs Championships – including NZ Pastry Chef of the Year 2025
- June 30 NZ Chefs Championships – including NZ Chef of the Year 2025
- July 1st NZ Chefs Championships – NZ Emerging Chef of the Year 2025

Applications for these events will be launched in the December Newsletter and from the NZ Chefs website.

**On Saturday 28 June NZ Chefs are hosting a Worldchefs Judging Seminar** presented by Worldchefs Vice President Rick Stephen. We are also applying for the NZ Chefs Championships to be Endorsement by Worldchefs. This provides our candidates who attended the 2023 Seminar, and who attend the Seminar on the 28 June, the opportunity to proceed along the pathway to become Worldchefs Certified Judges.

**Congratulations** to NZ Chefs member **Maclean Fraser** who is now an International Judge. Maclean has Judged in New Zealand, Sri Lanka and The Maldives.

We were delighted to receive acknowledgement from the New Zealand Companies Office that our latest Constitution has been received and accepted for registration. Thanks very much for the team lead co-ordinated by Pip Duncan for building, consulting and seeking legal review. The Board is currently reviewing and preparing Policies and procedures associated with the constitution.

Thanks very much member Cheryl Cordier for her columns in the NZ Chefs newsletter, and to Kim for her great designs.

Happy Cooking



**For content enquiries and  
book advertising, contact  
[info@nzchefs.org.nz](mailto:info@nzchefs.org.nz)**

*Shannon Fryer*

President  
NZ Chefs Association





# Representing NZ on the World Stage

Mark Sycamore



Auckland June 25th 2023 - Cameron Davies had just been announced the winner of the Global Chefs Challenge Pacific Rim Semi-final at Fine Foods NZ. This was his first competition since the Nestlé Toque d'Or some 20 years earlier when studying at Ara Institute of Canterbury and he had surpassed all expectation by beating Andrew Ballard, a seasoned competitor with Olympic and Bocuse d'Or experience.

You would think that would be the opportunity to kick back, relax and enjoy the success, but it was just the beginning of 15 months of hard graft and a determination to succeed that involved hundreds of hours training, thousands of kilometres travelling between home in Te Anau and the training base at Ara Institute of Canterbury, and countless hours away from his family and business all in pursuit of success at the Global Chef World Final in Singapore.

A training plan was hatched involving SIT in Invercargill, Ara in Canterbury, Jason McKenzie a mental skills coach more used to working with Olympians than a chef, numerous late night phone conversations, Zoom calls analysing dishes and even a snowy middle of winter trek to Te Anau for commis chef, Quinn Ojala.

Ultimately the dedication, self-sacrifice and willingness to learn new techniques, refine old skills and mentor a commis who was only 6 months out of polytech has culminated in Cam gaining a Silver Medal and 8th place finish out of the 16 finalists from all around the world. This success should be celebrated, the challenge was immense, the budget was small (comparatively speaking) the competition was fierce, the judge's world class (think 3 michelin stars!) and the hurdles to overcome were numerous.

To give you a little insight into the challenge, ask yourself how do you design, practice and taste dishes when most of the main compulsory ingredients are unavailable in NZ? Think an entrée featuring 2 Koppert Cress herbs from Holland and Boiron Acai puree – all unavailable in NZ; the fish course of Sterling Norwegian Halibut, also unavailable in NZ; and the main course with 3 cuts of Van Drie Veal from Holland, again all unavailable in NZ. Thank goodness for the dessert featuring Dilmah tea, Valrhona chocolate and two other Boiron purees that were in NZ ready to practice with.

Until you experience one of these journeys it would be easy to underestimate the commitment involved, but after seven whirlwind days in Singapore, for me anyway, it has been a journey well and truly worth it. I sat with pride, and a few nerves watching the boys compete and hold their own in the face of some adversity. Think blast freezers not working properly, flexible rule interpretations, kitchen design changes, even a very tight-fitting chef jacket 😊 - sorry Cam!! and still every course was served on time, looking great and with a smile on their faces!

I am quite often asked why I competed myself in so many competitions. For me it was truly about the journey, with any success being a happy bonus. Competing forces you to develop skills, push boundaries, ride emotional roller coasters and ultimately learn. The learnings are massive and varied and set you up for success, not only in your career but in general life. For Cameron Davies and Quinn Ojala, the learnings were vast and steep. Cam, whose daily life involves the running of a successful gastro pub in Te Anau and Quinn, a level 4 culinary student until late last year who only recently made the step up from kitchen hand at Inati would need to rub shoulders and hold their own with chefs from multi-Michelin starred restaurants around the world.

Continued...

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Until you experience one of these journeys it would be easy to underestimate the commitment. I am grateful to have been part of the journey, to provide feedback, lend advice, critique dishes, format recipes, manage budgets, organise products, provide insight on the competition and judges, wash dishes, and even try to look good on TV. Finding the right balance when coaching can be difficult but when you have 2 people who take everything on board it is an absolute pleasure!

This journey would not have been possible without the support of many others. We would like to say a huge thank you to

- NZ Chefs for providing the funds to train and travel
- Ara Institute of Canterbury for the training facilities
- Nanyang Polytechnic in Singapore, for their incredible tutors, students and support whilst in Singapore
- Ikana Greenshell Mussels Ltd for ensuring we had wonderful fresh mussels in Singapore
- Nestlé Professional for their ongoing commitment to the NZ Chefs Association
- Moffat NZ for their ongoing support to the NZ Chefs Association
- House of Knives for the fancy jackets and tea towels (lovingly washed by Pip!), plus their continued support for NZ Chefs
- Pip Duncan for carrying a big heavy box to Singapore to save excess baggage charges
- Geoff Scott for the moral support in Singapore
- Glenn and the crew at SIT, Invercargill for the use of their training kitchen and some students
- Akaroa Salmon for arranging fresh product in Singapore so I could host a masterclass for the Polytech students
- The many others who helped critique dishes, lend equipment and upskill the guys
- And finally, to our families for not complaining about all the weekends spent training

For those of you inspired or even just a little bit curious by this journey, look out for the next round of competitions which will feature a Pacific Rim Semi Final for young chefs, senior chefs, pastry chefs and a Vegan chef next year followed, hopefully, by qualifying for the World final to be held in Wales, May 2026





# The Bill Gallagher Young Chefs Forum Singapore October 2024

It was an honour to represent New Zealand chefs by attending the Bill Gallagher Young Chefs Forum held at The Worldchefs Congress in Singapore.

Over fifty young chefs from across the globe took part in the initial three day forum and then stayed on to either compete or support their fellow chefs in the Global Chefs Challenge Finals. There was also a very warm welcome extended from the Chairman, Alan Orreal, and several other committee members who were very pleased to see New Zealand present again in the crucial area of educating, guiding and nurturing our young culinarians into leaders. Meeting up with other Young Chef mentors that support and guide the various clubs in their regions was a privilege.

Vicky Leung (photographed with Geoff below) from Hong Kong and Rosalyn Ediger from Canada both had great ideas and an enthusiastic willingness to see our Kiwi Young Chefs Club grow and develop.

Some of the forum highlights from the many excellent presentations included celebrity British chef Martin Blunos. He shared an overview of his career and gave insights to some of the strategies to navigate success and become resilient in the culinary world.

We need not worry too much about robots making beurre blanc in the kitchen just yet! A top class panel of specialists discussed what the 'digital revolution' in the kitchen is likely to look like. Technology having an immediate impact on procurement, one order, made easy. With AI there will be improved productivity, more efficiency and this will lead to less employees. One expert, Belinda Moore, explained that ChatGPT is and will be used by young chefs and they will set the course of the future.

It wasn't all work for the young chefs as they got to enjoy superb cuisine each night, firstly at the 'Market Hall' at Southside Sentosa. This superbly designed event outlet, with magnificent views back to the city had numerous very smart 'street stalls' serving high quality 'cheffy' bites. The following evening it was a much more casual environment enjoying outdoor dining with charcoal grilled satays along as a signature of Singapore's famous Hawker cuisine.

I am super excited to be helping establish a Young Chefs Club here in New Zealand. I can report there is a real interest, and we are in our very very early days. If you or anyone you know (both young or experienced) would like to get involved please do make contact directly with me email [Geoff.scott@aut.ac.nz](mailto:Geoff.scott@aut.ac.nz)

The Global Chef challenge and Expo followed the forum. The four days of top-level international competition saw chefs showcasing their technical expertise, creativity, and precision.... more about that in the next newsletter!

Geoff





**NEXT YEAR IS THE 60TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF THIS CAREER  
DEFINING COMPETITION.  
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**Nestlé  
Golden  
Chef's Hat  
Award.**



# Worldchefs Welcomes New Leadership with Andy Cuthbert as President

Paris, France, 4 November 2024 – The World Association of Chefs' Societies (Worldchefs) is proud to announce the election of Chef Andy Cuthbert as its new President. Chef Andy was elected by the Presidents of Worldchefs' 100+ Member National Associations, a testament to his dedication, leadership, and commitment to culinary professionals worldwide. Taking the helm from outgoing President Thomas Gugler, Chef Andy's leadership marks a new chapter for Worldchefs as it continues its mission of uniting chefs globally and advancing culinary excellence.

Alongside Chef Cuthbert, a newly appointed Executive Committee and Board of Directors brings together a dynamic group of industry leaders dedicated to serving the international chef community.

President Andy Cuthbert:

"As President, I aim to be open, honest, and transparent, ensuring that we address the real challenges facing our industry. From supporting young chefs to enhancing educational outreach and championing sustainable practices, I am committed to elevating Worldchefs as the global voice of chefs. We have an incredible foundation built over 96 years, and together, with our diverse network, we'll work to advance our industry for a brighter future."

Chef Andy Cuthbert, Worldchefs President

With over three decades in the industry, Chef Andy Cuthbert brings a wealth of experience, having shaped culinary standards in both fine dining and large-scale hotel operations worldwide. His career, which started humbly in Melbourne, Australia, saw him rise through the ranks at prestigious establishments, including Dubai's Emirates Towers Hotel, where he managed 19 restaurants, helping establish the city as an international culinary destination. A central figure in the Emirates Culinary Guild and Worldchefs, including President of the Emirates Culinary Guild, Worldchefs Continental Director for the Africa Middle East region, and Chairman of the Worldchefs Congress Committee, Chef Andy has long been known for his commitment to the professional development of young chefs, culinary competitions, and the values of unity and excellence within the organization.

His vision for Worldchefs is rooted in a commitment to inclusivity, knowledge-sharing, and sustainable practices, which have earned him respect and admiration throughout the culinary world.

Reflecting on his new role, Chef Andy expressed his dedication to Worldchefs' values and future growth: "I am honored to lead Worldchefs and build on the foundation of excellence, inclusivity, and camaraderie that defines our organization. Collaborating with member associations across countries presents an incredible opportunity to shape meaningful programs that serve our industry and the chefs who define it. I look forward to inspiring the next generation of culinary leaders through innovation, sustainability, and community."



# New Board of Directors: Leaders for a Borderless Vision

The newly elected Worldchefs Board is composed of accomplished culinary professionals representing regions of the globe. Each member brings invaluable expertise and a shared commitment to advancing the culinary arts.

Worldchefs Executive Committee and Board of Directors:

- **Andy Cuthbert** – President
- **Rick Stephen** – Vice President
- **Alain Hostert** – Secretary General
- **Kristine Hartviksen** – Assistant Vice President
- **Uwe Michael** – Assistant Vice President
- **Thomas Gugler** – Past President
- **Martin Kobald** – Continental Director, Africa & Middle East
- **Harry Linzmayer** – Continental Director, Americas
- **Willment Leong** – Continental Director, Asia
- **Neil Thomson** – Continental Director, Europe North
- **Mike Pansi** – Continental Director, Europe Central
- **George Damianou** – Continental Director, Europe South
- **Peter Wright** – Continental Director, Pacific Rim



Expressing his enthusiasm, Mike Pansi, Continental Director for Central Europe, shared:

"I'm excited to take on my new role and join the newly formed Worldchefs Board. During our first meeting, President Andy and his team demonstrated the potential of fresh perspectives and innovative ideas. I'm eager to work alongside my fantastic colleagues to serve as an advocate for our industry and the national associations in Europe."

Mike Pansi, Continental Director for Central Europe

With this leadership team, Worldchefs remains committed to fostering professional growth, culinary development, and education across its global network. The new board, alongside Chef Cuthbert, will champion initiatives that will continue its legacy of promoting international standards and creating opportunities for chefs of all levels to thrive.

For more information on Worldchefs, visit [www.worldchefs.org](http://www.worldchefs.org)

[#ThisIsWorldchefs](https://www.instagram.com/thisisworldchefs)







Dear Presidents, ladies and gentlemen and friends,

It has been two weeks now since I returned home from what will be for me one of the most memorable congress's I have been at for so many reasons, from the food, the content, and of course the camaraderie amongst chefs of the World Association of chefs Societies.

I would like to thank you all for put the trust in myself and the newly elected Presidium and the continued support to our Continental directors and for the support to our two newest Cds, Martin Kobald and Mike Pansi. The work that has been done for the past 8 years is important and relevant for today, and now we, with you, will move the association forward in the direction you want.

During the time before the election, we made a lot of statements to you our members and we will now stand by those statements and ensure we put in place the actions required, in a structured and transparent way ensuring you are informed and involved with your members especially in your region and country. We have started on the 23rd of October with our first board meeting and the CDs are now preparing documents for circulation to you all on establishing our committees which is the priority at the moment and also focusing on the topics discussed in the open forum at the Congress. We will not make snap decisions on the establishment of the committees as we must have the right people on each committee that have the passion and drive and also the desire and time to be on a voluntary committee. We aim to have this established before end of 2024 with you all involved in the process.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all again for your decision for Worldchefs and with the team we are excited with what lays ahead for all of us,

With warm regards from Dubai

Andy Cuthbert

**President**

**World Association of Chefs Societies Worldchefs**

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Kia ora,

My name is Krystle and I work for New Zealand Food Safety, a business unit within the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). As part of the Campylobacter Action Plan, my team and I recently revised the web page on cooking livers safely for chefs with the help of food safety experts, verifiers, chefs and cookery students.

The web page covers:

- What is the issue?
- How can I tell if food is contaminated?
- Examples of what can go wrong and how to prevent it
- Ways to cook liver safely
- Ways to prevent cross-contamination

The page also includes a downloadable PDF version of the web page and a poster on ways to keep customers safe.

You can view the web page [here](#)

We would really appreciate it if you can share the web page and PDFs with your network.

Ngā mihi nui / kind regards

Krystle Chester ([she/her](#)) | [Service Designer](#)

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