

Career College students work alongside Kenny Atkinson

Students from Hugh Baird College's Visitor Economy and Hospitality Career College this week got yet another opportunity to learn from one of the hospitality industry's most recognisable faces, Kenny Atkinson.

The Geordie chef, who has twice held a Michelin star and has twice won through to the final of the prestigious Great British Menu TV Show, worked with students for an entire day as they prepared a dinner for 60 guests at the College's L20 Restaurant.

However, it was not only in the kitchen where Kenny passed on his skills and experiences, he also spent time in the classroom with the College's 14 year old students who study the hospitality pathway as part of their full time college course.

During the session, Kenny talked to the youngsters about how he got started in the industry and spoke about the key traits and attitudes he looks for when recruiting new chefs and service staff at his recently opened House of Tides in Newcastle.

In the kitchen, Kenny worked with the post 16 learners to create a breath-taking four course menu that consisted of pressed terrine of pink fir potatoes & goat's cheese, beetroot salad, smoked eel that was followed by scorched cods cheek, honey glazed chicken wing, pickled celeriac, shimeji mushrooms, hazelnuts, nasturtiums. Diners were treated to a main course of rump of lamb, ragout of shoulder, new season vegetables, wild garlic before the meal was finished off with a breath-taking dessert of dark chocolate pave, toffee popcorn, popcorn ice cream, salted caramel.

Speaking during the preparation for the evening, Kenny said: "There's a big lack of chefs in the industry so we need to be fixing the problem at an early age and I'm delighted to have been asked back here to Hugh Baird College's Career College for the third time in eighteen months."

"What the staff here at the College are doing is providing their students with introductions to leading figures in the industry and giving them the best possible opportunity to make contacts and learn from people with a passion for the industry."

Kenny is just the latest in a long list of leading chefs who have spent time with the students at the Visitor Economy and Hospitality Career College at Hugh Baird College. Others include Michelin starred Northcote chefs Nigel Haworth and Lisa Allen, TV regular Simon Rimmer, Matt Gillan, of The Pass, West Sussex, Mary Ellen McTague of Aumbry, Manchester, Chris Holland of Alderley Edge Hotel and Paul Foster of Tuddenham Mill and Mark Greenway of Restaurant Mark Greenway. Students also got the opportunity to work at Northcote's Obsession festival in January this year, giving them the chance to work with leading chefs from across the globe, some of whom could boast three Michelin stars.

Student, Jamie Pryce, said: "Working at the Career College at Hugh Baird College has provided me with so many opportunities. I've worked with some of the best and I never thought that would be possible. It's really got me excited about the industry and I now know what I want to do as a career. Kenny was great today, really relaxed and approachable. He said that if we want to go up to Newcastle to get work experience with him at House of Tides, we should get in touch. I will definitely be giving him a call."

Hugh Baird College Assistant Principal, Mike Mounfield said: "I would like to thank Kenny for taking time away from his own business to pass on his knowledge to our chefs here at the Career College.

The students have learnt so much and have made the most of their time with Kenny by asking him questions and watching how he works.”

Stephen Roberts General Manager at Crowne Plaza Liverpool and Vice Chair of the Liverpool City Region Learning and Skills Board said: “This is an exciting time for the Liverpool City Region’s Visitor Economy. Visitor numbers to the city are growing each year along with new places to visit and stay and opportunities for people to forge successful careers in this exciting and vibrant sector are plentiful. Nationally, there is a shortage of qualified and skilled chefs to join the sector at all levels. The work that Mike Mounfield and his team at Hugh Baird College is undertaking to address the issue includes creating opportunities for the students to work alongside the country’s top chefs such as Nigel Haworth, Lisa Allen, Kenny Atkinson and others. The work of the College also ensures that students get exposure to working at food and beverage outlets, this includes the College’s own L20 Restaurant, conferencing facilities and cafes.”

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Notes to Editors

- Images show Kenny Atkinson with the students of the Career College before service. Other images can be found on facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.826340097441089.1073741835.728243393917427>
- Video content of the event is also available at https://youtu.be/k9hqY_oaHg and can be used by news outlets at request.
- For more information, please contact Owain Roberts on 0151 353 4549
- **Kenny Atkinson**, is an English chef, who has twice won Michelin stars. He is also a familiar face on BBC show *Great British Menu*, where he has twice been selected as a chef at the show’s final banquet. In 2014, Kenny opened his latest venture, House of Tides. Located on the historic Newcastle quayside and just a stones throw away from the iconic Tyne Bridge, House of Tides is set within the recently restored Grade 1 listed 16th Century former merchant’s town house and is already receiving rave reviews. www.houseoftides.co.uk