

# Sharing His Passion for Food

**Chef Ronald Boucher sees Paul College Excellence in Teaching award as 'culmination' of his career**

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CHEF RONALD BOUCHER HELPS A STUDENT DURING A 2019 HOSPITALITY LAB IN PAUL COLLEGE.

Pan fried smelt. Blood sausage. Liver and onions. Dishes not usually found on the kids' menu—but for Hospitality Management Lecturer Ron Boucher, they are recipes that define a childhood of interesting foods served up by a loving grandmother. Recipes that expanded his palette and became the launching point in the career of the man many Paul students lovingly refer to as “Chef Ron.”

“I look back fondly,” Boucher said. “With that and the huge garden my parents had, all seven of us gathered around the dinner table for a weekly vegetarian night... I think that’s where it all started.”

Boucher was only four years old when his grandmother started plying him with liver, and only 14 when he started washing dishes at his first restaurant job. Within six months he had worked his way into the kitchen and from that day forward never left. He was only 20 years old when he took up a head chef position at a gourmet French restaurant in Newburyport, Mass. Twenty-eight years old when he opened the first of three restaurants. At 31 he became the NH Restaurant Association’s Restauranter of the Year.

After more than 40 years in the restaurant industry, Ron Boucher is no stranger to success. Yet receiving this year’s Paul College Excellence in Teaching award for non-tenure track faculty is something he describes as the “culmination” of his career.

“I feel privileged to be a faculty member at Paul College, and I am thankful that my career unfolded in a way that allows me to be here,” Boucher said. “I’m ecstatic. I can’t even put it into words. I’m very proud of this achievement.”

Each year, Paul College recognizes faculty members who motivate, challenge, and inspire students to succeed both in and out of the classroom through awards for teaching, research, and overall excellence. Winners are selected from a pool of nominees put forward through letters of recommendation from both their peers and their students.

“His courses are extremely sought after by students and fill immediately—with outstanding evaluations,” said hotel and hospitality administrative assistant Theresa Cherouvis in her nomination letter. “It is clear he has a special connection with the students. They leave his classes ready to take on the world.”

Teaching was always the endgame for Boucher. A self-described “lifetime goal setter,” he figured it was the perfect way to share his experience and passion with the next generation in his industry. He works with hospitality students throughout their four years at Paul, starting with introduction to food and service management and culminating in the advanced food and beverage operational management course—better known to many as Gourmet Dinner. Boucher said he’s received letters from students about how the dinner was one of the best things they did in college, their first real taste of how their careers might operate outside the walls of Paul.

He feels he is not just teaching hospitality management but “basic life skills.” Preparing meals for yourself, kitchen sanitation, and handling of food, as well as some of the softer skills that come with kitchen work: organization, efficiency, and time

management, to name a few. Over the years he's even converted a few of them into the kitchen.

"When I think of the hospitality program I think of community, unity, and perseverance. One person who has always believed in me, and has never stopped supporting me, is Chef Ron Boucher," Hotel and Hospitality Management graduate Lauren Wilson '21 said. "He has guided and encouraged us to be our best selves since the start of freshman year in HMGT 405 [Introductory Food and Beverage Management]. I cannot think of anyone else that has earned this award more than he has."

Boucher is honored by the opportunity to be their mentor, especially since he didn't follow a traditional path through academia to his job at UNH.

"Teaching has been so rewarding to me. I get as much out of teaching the classes as the students hopefully get out of my courses," he said. "It's always been a labor of love for me. I still, to this day, go to school with a little dance in my step. For me to teach on this level, in this arena, is my dream job."

**PETER T. PAUL COLLEGE OF BUSINESS & ECONOMICS**



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