

JAMES SAMFORD | 214.726.5552

EXECUTIVE PROFILE OVERVIEW

Award-winning culinary professional with over 15 years of senior leadership experience in world class casino, hotel, country club and restaurant industries with additional experience in corporate and sales management. Advanced product knowledge and well-versed in farm to table processes via agricultural training. A solid background in staff management of multi-unit kitchen operations serving a wide range of cuisines. Highly skilled at performing financial analysis, trouble shooting operations and recommending effective cost controls. Advanced knowledge of industrial compliance in health, food safety, and sanitation processes. Successful at managing kitchen staff with an amicable management style that has resulted in long term relationships. Specialized in high-volume culinary operations and overall planning.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Awarded #2 NFL Stadium Food Power Rankings-recognized by Esquire Magazine
- Waterford Wine Rendezvous Grand Tasting and Texas Chef First Place Award
- Innovating creator of recipes which have been published in Southern Living, Food and Wine, The Dallas Morning News and the Ft. Worth Star Telegram.
- Television and Public Relations Experience: Serves as a regular guest on WFAA-TV Channel 8's television show "Good Morning Texas" for cooking segments.
- On-Air accolades from the late Julia Child for a cooking segment on PBS.
- Had the honor of cooking for President George W. Bush, Mrs. Laura Bush, Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and events for Jerry Jones (public and private), Ross Perot, the late former Texas Governor Ann Richards, and several entertainment industry celebrities.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

WINSTAR WORLD CASINO AND RESORT by Traditions Spirits, Thackerville, Oklahoma 201~~7~~⁶-2018
Hotel Resort and Casino

- **Executive Chef** –Oversaw 7 restaurant outlets and managed culinary operations for the Winstar Convention Center. Managed a staff of over 50. Created and implemented a new food safety program. Implemented a monthly and daily outlet inspection report to insure food safety, sanitation and cleanliness.

CLUBCORP/ STONEBRIDGE RANCH COUNTRY CLUBS, McKinney, Texas 2012 – 2016
Private Golf and Country Club

- **Executive Chef** - Managed staff of 18. Oversaw all components of multi-kitchen operations; cooking methods, food safety, inventory, sanitation, menu planning, procurement of food supplies and kitchen equipment, including kitchen renovation in 2016. Managed catering of large scale events. Conducted weekly staff meetings.
 - Earned Rising Star Award in 2013
 - Designed and wrote content for monthly newsletter, "Meat of the Matter".
 - Met budgeted food and labor costs resulting in exceeded annual profit goals.
 - Achieved highest overall food service satisfaction score and 2nd highest food quality score for North Texas region.

ZANATA RESTAURANT, Plano, Texas 2011
Farm to Table Mediterranean Restaurant

- **Founding Executive Chef**- Hands-on daily management of a locally sourced restaurant including kitchen staff, menu development and restaurant operations.
 - Instrumental in launching a cornerstone restaurant concept which quantifiably benefitted the downtown Plano dining scene.
 - Featured and earned favorable reviews in local publications.
 - Leveled food cost expenses while preserving quality and service.

LEGENDS HOSPITALITY AT DALLAS COWBOYS STADIUM, Arlington, Texas

2010

80000 seat NFL Stadium

- **Executive Chef-** Managed 10 kitchens, served 365 suites with revenues of up to \$40 million a year.
 - Estimated food consumption and requisition of food inventory while meeting budgets to maintain revenue.
 - Responsible for overall quality kitchen standards, presentation, training and general executive level administrative tasks, managing up to a staff of 200 on game day.
 - Established safety and sanitation practices, as well as standardized maintenance of proper kitchen operations.

BEN E. KEITH FOODS/WINN MEAT COMPANY, Dallas, Texas

2006 - 2010

Wholesale distributor of food service products and proteins

- **Corporate Chef/ Vice President of Sales & Marketing -** Company-wide national spokesman Executed sales and marketing efforts which resulted in revenue growth of 15%.
 - Research & Brand Development
 - Performed strategic marketing initiatives with leading trade associations, including Texas Chef's Association and Texas Beef Council.
 - Managed sales teams in Texas.
 - Managed and grew ongoing relationships with top clients.
 - Develop new business growth with local chefs
 - Organized and participated in trade shows, seminars and industry related events.

CENTRAL MARKET/H-E-B, Dallas, Texas

2002 - 2006

Gourmet grocery store chain

- **Executive Chef-** Charter member who led an advanced team which opened the fresh market concept for HEB Grocery Company.
 - Managed high volume kitchen with a full time staff of 80 for catering, chef's case, cold pack kitchen, rotisserie and prepless/juice departments, which produced 5 million dollars in annual sales.
 - Cooking School Instructor for "Shop the Market" cooking classes.
 - Ambassador for store events.

LOLA, THE RESTAURANT, Dallas, Texas

2000 – 2002

Fine Dining Cottage Restaurant

- **Founding Executive Chef -**Designed menu and managed staff for a fine dining establishment which earned a 3-star rating, and national recognition.
 - Chosen as #3 Best New Restaurant in 2000 by the Dallas Morning News.
 - Recognized in the "Top Ten New Restaurants" for Lola by The Dallas Morning News, Texas Monthly, Ft. Worth Star-Telegram and the Dallas Observer.

 CHEF WORK HISTORY

Hotel Crescent Court-Rosewood Hotels, Executive Sous Chef assisted Executive Chef- James Rowland by supervising banquet, and legendary Beau Nash operations. Harvey Hotel/Bristol Hotels & Resorts-F&B Director, Executive Chef, Banquet Chef. Promoted from PM Sous Chef to F&B Director. Prep Cook under the tutelage of Executive Chef and Southwest cuisine pioneer, Dean Fearing. Baby Routh- Line Cook, supervised by Stephen Pyles, founder of Southwestern Cuisine & Iron Chef America winner Kevin Rathbun.

 EDUCATION AND SKILLS

El Centro College Apprenticeship Program
 Associate Degree in Culinary Program with top honors
 Certified Cook by American Culinary Federation
 Whole Hog Charcuterie Farm to Table Certification- El Centro Food and Hospitality Institute

 VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Volunteer chef for North Texas Food Bank, Taste of the Nation, Share our Strength, March of Dimes
 Texas State Fair Competition Kitchen Judge