

## Media and Mentoring

*The food industry needs people who inform and support others in the field.*

As the general public expresses more interest in foods and cooking, the roles of foodservice professionals in the media expand. Food photographers, writers, and stylists all help spark public interest in good food. Consultants help foodservice businesses become more professional and successful.

To succeed in media and mentoring positions, you may need a culinary degree. Excellent communication skills and creativity will help you advance.

### Alejandro Luna, Executive Pastry Chef and Consultant

**Q Describe your job.**

**A** I am a self-employed pastry chef and consultant. I have created a database of companies and colleagues who contact me to help them improve their operations.

**Q Describe a typical work day.**

**A** I keep long hours and am always on my feet. I prepare for the day's events and plan for upcoming events throughout the week. I spend a lot of time on the telephone and the computer doing research about my clients.

**Q Why did you choose your career?**

**A** I love the thrill of the day-to-day execution of my job and the satisfaction of instant reward. From the moment you cook or prepare a dish for a person, it is only a matter of minutes before you get a reaction from that person.

**Q How did your career path lead to your current job?**

**A** I worked really hard for years to get the knowledge I needed to take on different jobs. As a chef, you must be honest with yourself when



you accept challenges. I felt I was at a point where I was in charge of my knowledge and could present my experience so that companies would realize I could help them.

**Q Who or what has been your biggest career influence?**

**A** Traveling has been my greatest influence. Every place has different customs and different ways of cooking food. Exposure to different cultures has taught me about new ingredients and new techniques. The mentors who have influenced me shared their time and knowledge to teach me not only about the field, but also how to be a better professional and person.

**Q What skills are most important?**

**A** The basic skills for becoming a pastry chef are learned with years of school and work. However, the patience, respect, and humility that you need come only with realizing that no one is below you. Your experience does not make you better as a person than anyone else.