

Master Chef eat your heart out!

NØW hosted a fantastic night on 7th February in the Maureen Sheehan Centre. As part of the IFEX Catering Awards we hosted our own Cook Off to determine which one of NØW's super chef would represent the organisation in the main competition to be held in May 2008.

The event was described by Mairitrn O Muilleoir, Managing Director of Belfast Media Group and one of the judging panel as "humbling, inspiring and mouth-watering – and all in one sitting too".

Six chefs with the NØW cooked up a storm for myself and fellow judges, Sara Cooper (a hospitality industry veteran) and Head chef at Deane's Banbridge, Raymond Murray.

Serving up their delicious creations were Donna Sheehan, Kathryn Tracey, Sean Barclay, Noel Finn, Ian Clifford and Brendan Higgins (pictured). It was a nerve wrecking, hectic experience in a bustling kitchen for our six finalists but their ability to detail all the ingredients of every course (which included dishes such as Atlantic salmon in a pink peppercorn and dill cream sauce, breast of Barbary duckling in a black cherry sauce and cream of cauliflower soup), the presentation of the dish and, of course, the taste was awesome.

Although it sounds very corny every one of the competitors was a winner in the eyes of those who attended the event. It certainly showed the high standard of catering skills our students have and all the stops were pulled out over the past four weeks to agree menus and practice the dishes. After much deliberation, Noel Finn (pictured) was crowned the winner and will wear the NØW colours in the final in May. Awards were presented by Bernie McNally – Deputy Lord Mayor of Belfast.

Sincere thanks must go out to all staff of NØW and Loaf Catering who mentored the contestants and to the Maureen Sheehan Centre for opening their premises for the evening event.

