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Virginia Tech Event Named Best National Catered Dinner of 2005

Virginia Tech has been named by the National Association of College and University Food Services (NACUFS) as the grand prize winner for the best catered event in the United States in 2005. The award was bestowed for the Hollywood Night dinner hosted last February by Student Programs' Housing and Dining Services. NACUFS presented the 32nd annual Loyal E. Horton Dining Contest awards at the association's 47th National Conference in New Orleans, La.

Rick Johnson, director of Housing and Dining Services, said, "The commitment of the Student Programs' staff allows us to provide the very best services in the country to our students. This is our third NACUFS grand prize award in the past four years; every year we strive to exceed our students' expectations and we couldn't do it without their enthusiastic participation."

Students who attended Hollywood Night were treated like stars at this elegant reception and four-course dinner featuring gourmet dishes prepared by Virginia Tech's award-winning culinary team. The reception featured non-alcoholic appetizers, razzini and pink flamingo beverages; sushi; and assorted canapés. The dinner menu included a tataki of shrimp and scallops with ginger sauce and fresh cantaloupe, purple plum and pomegranate coulis, tamarind-glazed lamb loin chop with a dried apricot relish, grilled Kobe New York strip steak and broiled lobster tail (both of which were also enjoyed at the Academy Awards dinner in Hollywood that same evening) served with lobster mashed potatoes, thin beans and a natural pan glaze, and fresh raspberries served in a chocolate tulip shell with white chocolate mousse and a strawberry balsamic sauce. The vegetarian entrée option was grilled portabella mushroom lasagna with fresh tomatoes and basil served with thin beans and potato gnocchi.

Three lucky students were randomly selected to win door prizes—a digital video recorder, a 20 gig iPod, and a DVD-R.

All students are invited to vote online for the Hokademy Awards—Virginia Tech's picks for this year's best picture, best director, best actor and actress and best supporting actor and actress. One voter was randomly selected to win the Big Shot Prize: two tickets to the Hollywood Night dinner, a limousine ride to and from the dinner, and a gift certificate for spa services.

Open to all institutional members of NACUFS, the Horton Award contest is a highly competitive and prestigious peer recognition program. The competition was designed to recognize exemplary menu, presentations, special event planning, and new dining concepts, and to provide an avenue for sharing ideas and creative presentations in collegiate dining services. The event is named for Loyal E. Horton, a former NACUFS president and a founder of the association. Judging of the record-high 182 entries in seven categories was conducted at the NACUFS office.