

# Graduate Spotlight

## Jay Leslie, Natural Chef



*"My education at Bauman College gave me the knowledge, confidence, and ability to take on a project of magnitude. The Chef Instructors are experienced, knowledgeable, and adept at passing that knowledge on to their students. The class size was perfect for learning and provided me with invaluable hands-on experience."*

Chef Jay Leslie graduated from the Penngrove, CA Natural Chef Program in September 2010.

Prior to attending Bauman College, Jay began her career as a certified Ayurvedic Specialist owning and operating a small private practice and herbal business. She then moved into the fields of Engineering and Business Consulting. After thirty years in the manufacturing sector, she decided to pursue a new career path.

Based on her love of culinary arts and a passion for healthy, delicious meals made with whole, natural ingredients, she decided to enroll in the Natural Chef Program at Bauman College. Upon her first day in class, Jay knew she wanted to create change and was inspired to bring therapeutic and nutritional foods to an institutional setting that was accustomed to processed, canned, and frozen foods.

Three months prior to her graduation, Jay eagerly responded to an employment ad looking for an individual willing to accept the

task of converting a facility from "awful hospital food to delicious, healthy food." She was hired by Crestwood Behavioral Health Inc. as the Director of Dietary Services and is now responsible for all kitchen activities including meals, recipes, staff, schedules, purchasing, inventory, and budgeting. She prepares breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, and dessert for fifty-two patients and staff daily. In addition to all these responsibilities, she works hands-on with a staff of chefs, to whom she introduces new recipes and techniques learned at Bauman College.

"I love my job. We have completely changed the meals from frozen lasagna, canned soups, and meat by-products to fresh meals made from scratch. We make all our own salad dressings and sauces. We now make the lasagna fresh, we serve spinach salad, and the potatoes are no longer instant. I could go on and on."

Her kitchen now offers a menu featuring healthful spins on old favorites like fajitas, tofu burgers, vegetarian frittatas, beef and butternut squash tangine, pizza with fresh toppings, salmon burgers with cilantro lime sauce and chicken pesto, to name just a few. Jay was able to make all of these changes with no increase to the food or labor budget. The most rewarding part is the positive feedback Jay receives to the change in the food program. Patients and staff have repeatedly expressed their appreciation of Jay's accomplishments. In addition to the menu change, they have begun to track client's weight, cholesterol readings, and hemoglobin A1C readings, and are beginning to see some significant improvements.

Jay is happy to be using her Bauman College education to change the lives of all those she works with.

### Find out more about Bauman College graduates

Check out what our graduates have to say about their educational experience and what they are doing with their certifications. You can also shop products created by our grads, link to their blogs and read current news about what our grads are doing. Go to [baumancollege.org](http://baumancollege.org) and click the *Our Graduates* tab to find the following:

- Graduate Testimonials
- Meet our Graduates
- Graduate Blogs
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