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PSU dining hall goes global

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PLYMOUTH - When you think of dining hall food, exotic is usually not the word first thought of. However, beginning February 14, Executive Chef John Deane will be coming from Australia to serve authentic international dishes to the students and staff of Plymouth State University as part of the Global Chef Program.

"This is a great chance for students to experience a culinary experience from parts of the world they may not experience otherwise," said Sodexho's PSU General Manager Chris Mongeon. "I think it is a great benefit for the people of PSU to get involved with this."

Sodexho is PSU's dining provider. They provide meal plans for 2400 PSU students per semester. The company is hosting Chef Deane as part of the Global Chef Program. This is a monthlong international chef residency that provides an opportunity for Sodexho's top chefs to travel to different countries and share authentic international cuisine with local college students, faculty and staff.

According to Chris Mongeon, Deane will be arriving in Plymouth on Feb. 14. There will be an opening session at 4:30 p.m. in honor of his stay in Plymouth. He will be serving his cuisine on Feb. 15 and 16. Mongeon said that he is excited for the opportunity that is being presented to the students to eat something that is a little different than the norm.

Deane has been the Sodexho Executive Chef at Telstra Stadium in Sydney, Australia since 2002. He has 16 years of experience in the hospitality industry, which has taken him to all parts of the world. He had his formal training in his native country of Ireland. He also worked in the Dorchester Hotel in London, England, the Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten in Munich, Germany, and Australia, where he has been since 1994.

During his time with a variety of management companies, he has overseen several prestigious venues, which include the Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney Town Hall, Fox Studio Australia and the iconic Sydney Opera House. In 2000, Deane was the Executive Chef for the Athletes' Village, during the Sydney Olympic and Paralympic Games, and in 2003 for the Rugby World Cup Tournament.

During Deane's stay in Plymouth, he will be serving up a variety of dishes. PSU officials reported that the meals will include octopus and barramundi. Dessert dishes will also be prepared by Deane, which includes a traditional Australian dessert called steamed lemon pudding.

"This is a good thing for students," said Mongeon. "It's a way for them to become more ethnically educated and to try something new. I think it is a terrific program for anyone involved. I am really looking forward to it."