

Chef Josh Watkins:

Link to 7-29-09 article in Austin American Statesman:

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In June 2008, Josh Watkins' desire for creative culinary expression and for greater fine dining challenges led him to The University of Texas at Austin's AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center. As executive chef, Watkins oversees and directs all of the hotel and conference center's culinary programs including The Carillon signature restaurant, the Tejas (conference dining), Gabriel's Café, the OneTwenty5 Café, all banquet and catering functions, and the university's Blanton Café at the Blanton Museum of Art.

With four kitchens and 50 staff, Watkins delivers the kind of exquisite menus that have made him one of Austin's most celebrated chefs. The mouth-watering cuisine offered throughout the hotel is inspired by his love of fresh produce, visits to local and sustainable farmers, and uncompromising selection of quality ingredients. Watkins makes every meal at the center a destination dining experience.

As Addie Broyles of the *Austin American Statesman* put it, "Only a chef with Josh Watkins energy and excitement could pull off in a short time the opening of multiple dining facilities at the new AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center on the south edge of the University of Texas campus."

Watkins' culinary journey began at a young age when he enrolled for classical training at the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco. With the skills he acquired at the academy, Watkins fostered a library of culinary possibilities built on his diverse cultural experiences, expertise in fine food, and knowledge of exemplary wines.

His tutelage alongside such great and famed chefs as Reed Heron and Scott Warner (*Chef Reed Heron's Black Cat* restaurant in San Francisco), and William Koval (*French Room* in Dallas, Texas) garnered him the Chef de Cuisine position on the *Driskill Grill* culinary team at the age of 23 and an appearance on The Food Network's, "Iron Chef America." When the *Driskill Grill's* nationally acclaimed Executive Chef David Bull departed in 2007, Watkins was named executive chef and again earned the restaurant a five-star rating.

In less than a year at the university's hotel and conference center, Watkins has already achieved recognition for his culinary vision. *Texas Monthly's* February 2009 issue recognized *The Carillon* as an honorable mention in its "Where to Eat Now: 2009" coverage of best restaurants in Texas.