

Tawanakoro prepares to compete in International Young Chef Olympiad

Twenty-three-year-old Ana Tawanakoro has been working tirelessly at the Fiji National University (FNU) Nasese Campus kitchen perfecting her culinary art as she prepares to compete in the 5th International Young Chef Olympiad in India at the end of this month.

Tawanakoro, originally from Sasa village in Ba, is amongst 51 global participants who will compete for top honours and with less than three weeks away from the international meet, the FNU student without revealing too much stated preparation was on-track.

“The preparation is ongoing, there’s still a lot of things for me to learn. I know I have a lot on my plate but I have to put in my preeminent effort to this. I also have to learn to manage stress because I don’t want to destabilize myself during the competition,” said Tawanakoro with great excitement.

Tawanakoro will be accompanied to India by her mentor, Anish Lal an Assistant Instructor Food and Beverages Department at FNU’s College of Business, Hospitality and Tourism Studies.

According to Lal the organisers have provided an outline for Round One and Two competition and they are preparing dishes as per the guidelines.

“Round One is about following a recipe. It will test the student’s ability to follow basic instructions so they have given us the outline and we are working alongside that. For Round Two we have to create a vegetarian dish and a prawn dish that’s suitable for a café style dining with limited number of ingredients. So right now, we are in the process of creating these dishes,” said Lal.

While Lal is aware competition will be tough, he said this is a great



FNU Trade Diploma in Culinary Art student Ana Tawanakoro with her mentor Anish Lal.

learning opportunity for the team.

“We are getting there, there’s still a lot of work to be done. We are working everyday even in the weekends, building up to the competition as we have only three weeks left. This is indeed a great opportunity for Ana, FNU and Fiji as a whole. We have got our visas and airline tickets ready and the University is organising other logistics,” the mentor said.

While Tawanakoro is working hard to make Fiji proud on the international platform, she acknowledged her mother Litia Sili for being her inspiration.

“Growing up watching my mom cook gave me the desire to pursue a career as a chef,” said Tawanakoro.

The week long competition will be held from January 28th – February 2nd, 2019 in various parts of India including Delhi, Pune, Bangalore, and Kolkata where the winner of Young Chef Olympiad 2018 will be announced.