

# CHEF WARS 2023

## Competing Chefs



**CHEF**  
RON BROWN



**CHEF**  
MIKE BRANTLEY



**CHEF**  
THOMAS KERNS



**CHEF**  
VIRGINIA WRIGHT



ALDRSGATE



**CHEF**  
SHAWN MACDONALD



**CHEF**  
CYNTHIA SCHICK



**CHEFS FOR SENIORS**



**CHEF**  
JAKE RUMFELT



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**CHEF  
RON BROWN**

Originally from Glassboro NJ, **Chef Ron Brown** attended Johnson & Wales University, Providence from 1985-1989 receiving A.S. Hotel Food & Beverage Management and a B.S. Hotel Restaurant Institutional Management. After graduating from JWU, Ron started his career in Los Angeles CA with California Pizza Kitchen, where Ron lead the Beverly Center Commissary. After spending two years with CPK, Ron moved to Tucson AZ in 1992, where he opened Ovens Bistro as the Chef de Cuisine. The restaurant's popularity and culinary acclaim projected Ron's career and created bountiful opportunities. In the years following, Ron joined Sam Fox to create what would become some of the most iconic restaurant concepts in the Mid-West. Ron co-developed City Grill, Metropolitan Grill and Firecracker as Metropolitan Restaurant Group. After transition of ownership, Fox Restaurant Concepts was developed where Ron helped create Wildflower, Sauce and North restaurant concepts. In 2001, Ron relocated to Charlotte NC where he lead Red Rocks Café restaurants for seven years then brought Encore Bistro to Blakeney in Ballantyne. Currently, Ron leads a team of talented culinarians at **Acts Retirement Life Community, Matthews Glen**.



**CHEF  
MIKE BRANTLEY**

**Chef Mike Brantley** has worked in kitchens for just over 22 years. He started out as a dishwasher at Providence Country club in 1997. It was there that he fell in love with the culture and camaraderie of the kitchen. It was also where he met his mentor David Dearstyne, who he would go on to work with off and on for the next 15 years across three states. A year after he started at Providence Country Club, Chef Dearstyne left to open up his own restaurant, Dearstyne's Bistro in Waxhaw, NC, and he was soon to follow. He worked his way up from dishwasher to working the pantry and then to the hot line. By the time he was twenty, Chef Dearstyne had opened a second location in Matthews and Chef Mike was placed in charge of his Waxhaw location. During his time there he decided to go to culinary school and Johnson & Wales was just finishing construction on the Charlotte campus. He was part of the first class through and graduated in 2007. He did his internship at Reynolds Plantation in Greensboro, Georgia and decided to stay on afterwards. He spent the next three years there working his way up to Chef de Cuisine. He left Georgia to take an Executive sous chef position in Dallas, Texas at Royal Oaks Country Club where he spent several years rounding out his culinary skills from banquets to fine dining and private dinners. He moved back to Charlotte in 2012, working briefly with Chef Ryan Jones at Osso before going on to be the sous chef at New South Kitchen and Bar. After his time at New South, he found a new home for the next three years as the sous chef at Halcyon in uptown Charlotte. It was there that he really began to develop his own style and finesse with food. All of this has led up to him finding a future here at **Matthews Glen** where he enjoys showing off the many talents he has acquired over the years.



**Matthews Glen**

*Where Loving-Kindness Lives*

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**CHEF**  
**THOMAS KERNS**

**Executive Chef Thomas Kerns** was born and raised in Charlotte NC until middle school. He moved to Durham, NC and went to college at Wake Technical Community College in Raleigh NC then moved back to Charlotte. He is currently an Executive Chef at **Aldersgate UMRC**. He has worked as an Executive Chef for numerous restaurants including The Palm Restaurant and Morton's of Chicago. He has also worked in hotels, and even the largest hospital in Charlotte. He is very passionate about food and life. When he was a teenager, he worked at The Forrest at Duke which is a retirement community in Durham, NC while going to high school. He told himself that one day he would return to a setting really similar to The Forrest at Duke after he has taken his tour in "restaurants". He has had luckily two experiences with Aldersgate and consider this to be one of the best jobs he has ever had. He loves to share all that he has learned and seen with his staff and residents. It really makes him proud when someone in their latter stages of life continues to keep trying new menu items and things they have never tried before. He believes it keeps them passionate about food and life itself.



**CHEF**  
**VIRGINIA WRIGHT**

**Chef Virginia Wright** is the Pastry Chef at **Aldersgate**. She is a 2017 graduate of Johnson & Wales University in Charlotte and has 6 years of experience working at various restaurants and resorts, including the Forbes 5-star and AAA Five Diamond Williamsburg Inn in Williamsburg, VA, 7 Springs Mountain Resort in Seven Springs, PA, and Morrison Healthcare in Charlotte, NC. After 5 years as a middle and high school French teacher and one year teaching English as a second language in primary schools in France, she decided it was time for a career change. While living in France, Virginia had fallen in love with French food; pastries in particular. Her love of French food and culture, as well as other experiences, cemented her decision to pursue her degree in baking and pastry arts. She has been a member of the American Culinary Federation since 2018.

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Chef Shawn MacDonald grew up just south of Buffalo, NY, in a town called Allegany. He attended SUNY Brockport and Monroe Community College in Rochester NY where he studied Restaurant and Hotel Management. Early in his career, Shawn was accepted into the Sodexo Marriott Training Cruise Academy at Maine Maritime Academy and was fortunate enough to travel all over Europe and South America. He moved to North Carolina in 2007 and has worked as the Executive Chef for a variety of retirement communities. Chef Shawn joined the **Arbor Ridge at Huntersville** family in March of 2022, and brings his passion for food from his adventures to every dish he creates.

**CHEF**  
**SHAWN MACDONALD**



Chef Cynthia Schick believes that food is medicine. Good food gives you more energy and can allow you to age gracefully in your home. Following all dietary restrictions as needed, our highly skilled Chefs at Chefs for Seniors will prepare meals that you want to eat or bring new recipe ideas for you to try. You will look forward to each and every meal.

**CHEF**  
**CYNTHIA SCHICK**



Executive Chef Jake Rumpfelt has been at **The Cypress** for 5 years, cooking up magic for our members. Chef Jake came by his talent from the ground up. He was working as a dishwasher when The Executive Chef saw something special in Jake and mentored him, demonstrating various cooking methods, plating and presentation, proper food temperatures and this fueled his passion for cooking. Chef Jake's favorite ingredient to cook with are truffles because they are versatile and have different applications. Chef Jake's hunger and desire to hone his craft is at the benchmark of his creations. For example, at a recent wine dinner, Chef Jake served Beef bone marrow with -herbed crostini as an appetizer and our members were thrilled to see such creativity. On a personal note, Chef Jake is an avid fisherman, he visits Ocean Isle frequently and loves spending time there. Chef Jake also loves the Atlanta Braves. He can quote baseball stats faster than you can say risotto! Chef Jake is a little shy and stays out of the spotlight; you will see he lets his dishes speak for him.

**CHEF**  
**JAKE RUMFELT**

