USS Shiloh Sailors learn from executive chef

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An executive chef came on board the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser *USS Shiloh* (CG 67) March 3-16, in support of the Naval Supply Systems Command's "Adopt-a-Chef" program.

Chef Darryl R. Espinoza, who runs several private culinary companies, worked and mentored Sailors in the *Shiloh*'s kitchen. Espinoza provided training on how to prepare the best possible meals for the crew.

"Adopt-A-Chef" was created in 1998 as an opportunity to send professional chefs and cooks to ships and shore commands to provide culinary specialists with industry-level training. Top chefs from all over the nation volunteer to teach skills ranging from service and presentation to knife techniques, using their experience and knowledge to enhance Navy culinary training.

"The 'Adopt-a-Chef' program is about bringing chefs from the outside world into the Navy's galleys," said Espinoza. "It's about working with the Navy cooks on quality food preparation and preservation."

Espinoza first learned about the program in 2003, and has been volunteering his time to the Navy ever since. During his longest assignment through the program, he spent 60 days underway on the aircraft carrier *USS Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76), teaching and mentoring the culinary specialist on board.

"The biggest factor for morale on the ship is the food," said Espinoza. "These Sailors are working hard around the clock, and I want them to be able to relax and enjoy a delicious meal."

Espinoza's experience and mentoring has had a large impact on the culinary specialists and sailors in the *Shiloh*'s galley.

"Chef Espinoza has taught me the acronym 'OHIO,' meaning 'Only handle it once'," said Culinary Specialist Seaman Antonio Grant, *Shiloh* watch captain. "He taught me to minimize the work needed in order to be the most effective chef I can be."

"The crew's reaction to the Adopt-a-Chef program is phenomenal," said Chief Culinary Specialist Cruz Ayala, galley manager. "They can't wait to learn what the chef has to teach them every day."

Espinoza said working on board Navy ships one of the most rewarding aspects of his culinary career.

"This is a great group of sailors aboard this ship," said Espinoza. "My time on the *Shiloh* has been fantastic, and I consider myself very fortunate to come out here."

Executive Chef Darryl R. Espinoza observes CSSN Antonio Grant, galley watch captain, and CS1 Richard Guiterrez, create an Adobo chicken dish for the crew on board the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser *USS Shiloh* (CG 67) March 12. Espinoza's visit to the *Shiloh* was made possible through the Navy's "Adopt-a-Chef" program, which sends top chefs from around the nation to Navy sea and shore commands as an opportunity for them to mentor and teach culinary specialists.