

Gene Fritz; Ed.M. – CEO and Founder



Fritz holds over twenty years of experience specific to culinary and hospitality education at a diversity of public and private institutions as a faculty member, administrator and executive chef. His blended work experience serves as an asset in consulting to a diversity of education industry segments. Unique to culinary education leaders, Fritz values the “business sense” of the proprietary education sector, while he also understands the need to focus on quality educational delivery in the classroom and industry related research – sourced from his background working at both four-year R-1 universities and a community college. Fritz has also had the privilege of opening two culinary education facilities in his career, which supports his background in program start-up and facility design / renovation. Fritz also holds extensive curriculum development experience specific to the disciplines of culinary arts, baking and pastry arts, sustainable food systems, nutrition and dietary management and hospitality / restaurant management. Fritz serves on the American Culinary Federation Educational Foundation Accrediting Commission (ACFEFAC) as a commission member and as a lead evaluator during institutional site visits. Fritz also currently serves as the Board Chair of the Oregon

Restaurant and Lodging Association Educational Foundation. He now serves as the CEO of CulinaryEd Consulting, LLC; which provides facility and curricular design for post-secondary and secondary culinary arts and hospitality management programs at a national level. Fritz has completed consulting for a diversity of colleges for culinary arts and hospitality management programs including curriculum and course design with LMS integration, facility design and executive / faculty personnel searches.

Most recently, Fritz served as the Director and Executive Chef of Cascade Culinary Institute (CCI) at Central Oregon Community College in Bend, OR. He was responsible for leading innovative curriculum and niche program development in sustainability and nutrition, while also leading CCI to a unique proposition as an independent and financially viable non-general fund program. Fritz led the transition into a new 15,600 sq. ft. facility while launching and sustaining an unprecedented brand growth strategy that supported a 146% increase of FTE at CCI in three years, while sustaining a 27% increase over the College during post-recession enrollment declines. Fritz was also responsible for reducing attrition at CCI an estimated 65% during his tenure and cultivating innovative assessment and instructional strategies in the classrooms that were nationally recognized. During Fritz's leadership, CCI was recognized at a national level for innovation in sustainability and received the *Green Award (2013)* from the Center of Advancement in Foodservice Education (CAFÉ) / Kendall College and the *Environmental Organization Award (2012)* from the Bend Environmental Center. Fritz was also responsible for gaining recognition for faculty, one of which received the *IACP Culinary Educator Award (2013)*. In 2014, Fritz provided leadership that resulted in an “exemplary standing” as an outcome of no-findings during a site visit from the American Culinary Federation Educational Foundation Accrediting Commission (ACFEFAC) for both the Culinary Arts and Baking & Pastry Arts certificate and degree programs. Fritz also holds a diversity of gold, silver and bronze medals from participation in American Culinary Federation sanctioned competitions.

Fritz previously served on the campus opening team as the Director of Education at the Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Seattle, WA; where he provided academic, operational and career services leadership for the institution since it opened in 2008. Fritz provided leadership and supported the recruitment process that resulted in campus growth from zero to 400+ students in two years. During his tenure at Le Cordon Bleu, he also instituted operational and procurement systems that resulted in extraordinary financial success. Upon Fritz's departure from Le Cordon Bleu, he was responsible for providing leadership, engaged instruction and an institutional culture that resulted in an 87% retention rate and that supported a no-findings site visit from the institutional accreditor, the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS).

Previously, while working on his PhD, Fritz served as a Culinary Instructor in the Colorado State University Restaurant and Resort Management Program and Executive Chef at the Aspen Grille student-operated restaurant. Fritz enhanced food quality and provided leadership that supported a financial turnaround of the student operated restaurant, while enhancing the overall quality of educational delivery. He also served as the Director of Culinary Operations over the College of Culinary Arts at the Johnson and Wales University - Denver, CO campus. Fritz's also served for over eight years as the Culinary Educator and Executive Chef at the Washington State University (WSU) School of Hospitality Business Management where he developed a student operated restaurant called Café Curricula and provided critical culinary leadership to Hospitality Catering Services and the launching of the annual *Feast of the Arts* event during Cougar football weekends.

He is a 1994 graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and earned his Bachelor's degree in Hospitality Business Management and Master's degree in Education, both from WSU. He is currently pursuing his PhD at Capella University in Business Management with an emphasis in Strategy and Innovation. Fritz has been a passionate and engaged member of the restaurant industry and culinary education for more than thirty years. His foundation of experience ranges from full-service restaurants, cooking in the U.S. Army, and fine dining restaurants; such as the Salish Lodge in Snoqualmie, WA. and St. Andrew's Café at the CIA campus in Hyde Park, NY. He has also worked under the tutelage of two ACF Certified Master Chef's. He has participated in numerous regional culinary competitions in the Pacific Northwest, and a Ft. Lee, VA., U.S. Armed Forces competition. He has won numerous gold, silver and bronze medals in ACF sanctioned Hot Food and Mystery Basket Culinary Competitions. He has provided annual support as a judge and consultant for the NRAEF ProStart Program and state/regional culinary competitions, and also played a key role in creating a Basic Knife Skills instructional video that will be distributed to all national high school ProStart programs. During multiple years he served as the lead judge for both the Oregon and Washington State ProStart Competitions, and has regularly facilitated ProStart teacher training through NRAEF Summer Institutes and other WRAEF / ORLAEF regional training initiatives. Relative to industry service, he is a past Vice President of the American Culinary Federation (ACF) Chef's de Cuisine of the Inland Northwest Chapter, and was a board member for the Eastern Washington Chapter of Chef's Collaborative. He has served as an active board member of the Washington State Restaurant Association Educational Foundation Board, and currently serves as the Chair of the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association Educational Foundation Board of Trustees. He has also conducted annual cooking demonstrations at events such as Savor the Flavor, Spokane Food Expo and the Taste Washington events throughout Washington State and the greater Pacific Northwest; and has served as Show Chair for multiple ACF sanctioned culinary competitions. Fritz most recently served as an event emcee at the Oregon Governors Conference on Tourism and spoke in a panel discussion at the Oregon Association of Career Technical Education. Fritz resides in Bend, Oregon with his wife Abbie and their three children. He enjoys the outdoors – hiking and snowshoeing; and cooking meals that feature locally sourced ingredients – and Bend produced beer ☺ – for his family and friends.

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