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SE section

8 Thursday, December 29, 2011 SE

## BATAVIA

# Rehab center hires head chef

David Fulciniti has been named executive chef for The Ridge, a residential drug and alcohol treatment center in Batavia. Because treatment centers are usually focused on the clinical side of care they don't emphasize the benefits the patients receive from the dining experience. Socialization and proper nutrition can play an important role during the recovery process.

The Ridge keeps its census small to provide individualized treatment. In a non institutionalized setting, Fulciniti and his team plate close to 20 homemade meals a week and take into account patient's preferences. "Often times, substance abusers suffer from poor nutrition so we give our patients a meal that is not only healthy but also something they will enjoy," Fulciniti said. Fresh fish and meat is purchased several times a week and great consideration is taken for a whole foods approach, with only fresh ingredients used and the lack of processed foods. Fruits and vegetables are offered daily, starches are in moderation.

Recognizing that there is a whole body approach to treatment includes exercise, spiritual activities and nutrition. "Chef David Fulciniti brings a solid background of culinary excellence to The Ridge," said Chief Medical Officer Dr. Jeffrey Stuckert. "He and his team provide high nutritional standards often at a time when patients are starved of nourishment." Meals also tend to be a good time for socialization and getting to know

the staff and other patients. He further adds, "Chef David likes to interact with patients either by sharing a few culinary tips or informing them about something new they might not have experienced before."

While The Ridge strongly supports the 12 Step approach, they understand that addiction affects family which is why family participation is encouraged whether it is for educational sessions or visits. Each Saturday there is a family celebration, where families join their loved ones. It is also a time when special occasions such as birthdays are celebrated, either at The Ridge or offsite, and all in attendance can share in the celebration.

At the end of The Ridge's treatment program patients have a deep understanding of the disease, are given the tools to maintain recovery and the resources that help sustain lifelong sobriety. Fulciniti celebrates the success and lets the departing patient pick their own "send off supper." At the end of the 28-day stay, the patients choose the entire menu while everyone joins in the congratulations and pledges eternal support. Past send off suppers have featured filet mignon and crab legs with a couple versions of potatoes, steamed veggies and fresh apple strudel.

Fulciniti has previously worked as a chef at the Ritz Carlton and with famed restaurateur Jeff Ruby.

For more information on The Ridge, visit [www.theridgeohio.com](http://www.theridgeohio.com).