

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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TWO JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO BE PRESENTED WITH \$1,250 FELLOWSHIP GRANTS AT THE 2024 BAR & RESTAURANT EXPO

LAS VEGAS – At the [2024 Bar & Restaurant Expo](#), two students pursuing a career in the beverage & culinary field at **Johnson & Wales University** will receive a **\$1,250 fellowship grant** on behalf of the event organizers. The two winning students, **John Owen** and **Karina Rodriguez Casas**, will be presented the grants on the expo’s red carpet on Tuesday, March 19. Owen and Casas will each also receive a Full Conference Pass to this year’s Bar & Restaurant Expo.

“We are thrilled to present John and Karina with these grants to further support their studies, in addition to contributing to their real-world experiences,” said Tim McLucas, Vice President of Bar & Restaurant Group. “We’re confident Bar & Restaurant Expo will give them numerous opportunities to learn, network and interact with the latest and most innovative products and services in the hospitality industry.”

Owen is a culinary arts major in his senior year at Johnson & Wales University. Owen and a group of his peers recently won the university’s Future Food All-Stars Challenge, an annual competition where student teams spend the semester developing their business or product ideas into full-fledged concepts. Owen plans to start his own beverage company in his hometown of Ponte Vedra, Florida after graduation.

“At the Expo, I’m looking forward to meeting all the innovators in the beverage field and to see what work they’re doing to push the industry towards greater things,” said Owen.

Casas is a Mexican American descendant from an immigrant family. She is studying at Johnson & Wales University for a culinary art associate degree and a bachelor’s in food & beverage entrepreneurship. She moved from her home state of California to Rhode Island with hopes to grow her passion and knowledge for the culinary industry. Casas is an honors student who has had the opportunity to work and learn as a bar back at Providence Performing Arts Center, learn barista skills at the local Starbucks and work under Wolfgang Puck as a culinary intern. She also had studied abroad last spring in Asia for four months.

“I am excited to network with people who have the same passions as me at the Bar & Restaurant Expo,” said Casas. “I hope to find people I can learn from and discover tools that will help me further grow my skills and knowledge.”

“Our curriculum provides students with a strong foundation in beverage innovation and operations,” said Brian Warren, Associate Professor & Director of the Center for Beverage Education & Innovation at Johnson & Wales University. “We take pride in enhancing classroom experiences by connecting students to the industry and appreciate the expo’s on-going partnership and support. On behalf of my department, I would like to thank Bar & Restaurant organizers for providing this incredible opportunity to our scholarship recipients.”

The 2024 Bar & Restaurant Expo returns to the Las Vegas Convention Center **March 18 – 20, 2024**. Those interested in attending or exhibiting can visit www.barandrestaurantexpo.com for more information, and press can register [here](#). Bar & Restaurant Expo is a trade event and not open to the general public.

Headshots for Owen and Casas can be downloaded [here](#).

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About Bar & Restaurant Expo

Bar & Restaurant Expo has continued to evolve and mirror the fast-paced, trend-setting nature of the hospitality industry. The event has been providing the specific tools that bar and restaurant owners, operators, and managers need to grow their businesses, compete, and succeed in this hyper-competitive and dynamic industry. The Bar & Restaurant Group is a division of the Questex Hospitality Group which also produces [Vibe Conference](#), [World Tea Expo](#), and daily content on barandrestaurant.com and worldteanews.com.

About Questex

Questex helps people live better and longer. Questex brings people together in the markets that help people **live better**: travel, hospitality and wellness; the industries that help people **live longer**: life science and healthcare; and the technologies that enable and fuel these **new experiences**. We live in **the experience economy** – connecting our ecosystem through live events, surrounded by data insights and digital communities. We deliver experience and real results. **It happens here.**

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