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FOOD NETWORK'S *ALL-STAR ACADEMY* IS BACK IN SESSION ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH AT 10PM ET/PT

Robert Irvine and Andrew Zimmern Join Veteran *Academy* Mentors Alex Guarnaschelli and Curtis Stone in Battle for Best Home Cook and \$50,000 Grand Prize

NEW YORK – January 8, 2016 – The culinary classroom opens for nine talented home cooks with season two of primetime competition series *All-Star Academy*, where returning mentors **Alex Guarnaschelli** and **Curtis Stone** are joined by newcomers **Robert Irvine** and **Andrew Zimmern** to guide these competitors through intense kitchen challenges and teach them to cook like pros. During the eight-episode season, each star chef leads a team of students in amped up, school-themed food lessons to elevate their cooking skills. Dishes are judged by a rotating cast of expert “guest professors,” including **Richard Blais, Scott Conant, Haylie Duff, Duff Goldman, Carla Hall, Katie Lee, Jeff Mauro, Debi Mazar, Adam Richman, Aarón Sánchez** and **Geoffrey Zakarian**. Each week a student is eliminated, leaving only the grand-prize winner standing with a \$50,000 grand prize and bragging rights for their mentor. Following the season two premiere on Sunday, February 14th at 10pm (all times ET/PT), *All-Star Academy* will air in its regular timeslot on Sundays at 9pm.

“*All-Star Academy* takes accomplished home cooks out of their own kitchens and into a fierce culinary battle,” said Bob Tuschman, General Manager and Senior Vice President, Food Network. “With renowned chefs Robert and Andrew joining Alex and Curtis as mentors, the *Academy* contestants are in for a once-in-a-lifetime master class that takes their cooking skills to heights they never imagined.”

The competitors are: **Lee Abbott** (Santa Barbara, California), **Natasha Clement** (La Place, Louisiana), **Anna Cooper** (Houston, Texas), **Lynn Duffy** (Cold Spring, New York), **Monica Folken** (Las Vegas, Nevada), **Zoe Kelly** (Miami, Florida), **Dain Lee** (New York, New York), **Lisa Washington** (Atlanta, Georgia) and **Jermaine Wright** (Queens, New York).

In the premiere episode, the first day of school kicks off with nine home cooks entering the *Academy* kitchen where they meet their mentors: Alex Guarnaschelli, Robert Irvine, Curtis Stone and Andrew Zimmern. For their first test, the competitors must prepare a dish using the contents of a lunchbox - ham slices, an apple, American cheese and milk. After the mentors judge the dishes, the cook ranking last is eliminated and the remaining eight get to choose their mentors based on their ranking. The mentors then face off to win a Save Card, which they can use in the future to save a member of their team from elimination and guest professor Carla Hall judges the cook-off using a new set of lunchbox ingredients. Upcoming episodes include an art-themed challenge creating structural desserts and a science-inspired test to incorporate the classical elements earth, air, fire and water into food. The *All-Star Academy* valedictorian will be awarded a \$50,000 grand prize in the season finale on Sunday, April 3rd at 9pm.

Viewers wanting more can visit FoodNetwork.com/AllStarAcademy to meet the home cooks, get competitive strategies from the mentors and relive all the action from each episode with photos and videos. In exclusive interviews, the mentors reveal who taught them the most about cooking. Plus, take a new quiz to find out if you are an all-star cook. Be sure to join the conversation on Twitter with #AllStarAcademy.

All-Star Academy is produced by Relativity Lifestyle Television, a division of Relativity Television.

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