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Metro Café's Food Service Manager Debbie Castro and Executive Chef Nam Pham are preparing for Cinco de Mayo by creating a menu filled with Mexican specialties.

Photo by Laura Kloth

Metro Café's New Crew Preps for Cinco de Mayo

By LAURA KLOTH
Staff Writer

(April 30, 2009) With barely a month on the job under her belt, Debbie Castro, Metro Café's new Food Service Manager is maintaining a busy schedule.

With 17 employees to manage, 12-hour days to complete, and a dozen or more catering requests daily, Castro is rolling with the challenges.

And, so far, Metro Café's new manager says she's really enjoying it.

Castro and Executive Chef Nam Pham this week are busy preparing for their latest venture – planning the menu for Cinco de Mayo to be celebrated at the café on Tuesday, May 5.

The café will mark the event with a variety of Mexican entrees -- enchiladas, tacos, burritos, tortas, quesadillas and Mexican pan dulce or sweet bread for breakfast.

Metro's own Blue Liners will perform native Mexican melodies from noon to 1 p.m.

"People are going to be wearing sombreros and we're going to have balloons everywhere. We're going to have the homemade tortillas made here. We're going to do tamales that day and it's going to be a big celebration," Castro said.

Castro and Pham both started working at Metro Café on April 1. Castro, who grew up in the San Fernando Valley and Ventura County, says she has worked in food service for more than eight years, and has worked for Aramark for about six months.

Her daily challenges, she said, are to make sure the guests and staff are happy and receiving the service they would like. "Overall it seems like people are happy with the healthy choices available," Castro said.

Pham, a native of San Diego, attended culinary school in New York and says his specialty is American French, but he's learned to experiment with a variety of healthy recipes at the request of café patrons.

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