

# PMG CHEFS

Home of America's Favorite Chefs!

## Joe Bonnano Jr.



Joseph T. Bonanno Jr. is a 21 year veteran of The New York City Fire Department. He was raised in The Bronx and comes from a family of firefighters, both his father, Joseph T. Bonanno, Engine 88 FDNY and his brother Michael Bonanno, Ladder 7 FDNY were firefighters. While a firefighter, Joe became graduated from New York University with a degree in Fitness and Nutrition and holds several other national certifications including The American Council on Exercise, The Aerobics and Fitness Association of America and The International Sports Medicine Association.

Firefighters, while known for bravery, also have a reputation as excellent cooks, preparing and sharing meals while on duty. With his fitness and nutrition background, Joe prepared healthy and delicious meals for the firefighters he worked with. After attending a cookbook class at The New School in Manhattan, a New York editor from Hearst Publishing approached him about doing a "healthy" firehouse cookbook. Another NYC firefighter, John Sineno had published a New York Times best selling cookbook in 1984. Joe sent a proposal and sample recipes to the editor and The Healthy Firehouse Cookbook was published along with a 13 city promotional and media tour.

To establish himself in the culinary field, Joe entered and won many regional and national "firehouse" cooking contests including "Americas Greatest Firehouse Chef", The FDNY Bake Off, McIlleheny Tabasco Sauce Cook and Ladder Contest, The International Firefighter Olympics Culinary Division and recently, outside the fire service and against some of Florida's top chefs, First Place in The Florida State Iron Chef Competition.

Joe has appeared several times on "Live With Regis", Martha Stewart, The Today Show, Good Morning America, Fox N.Y. and many others. He has been featured in The New York Times, The Daily News, Newsday as well as Eating Well, Bon Apetit and Muscle and Fitness magazines. The success of the first book led to publishing a second cookbook, to rave reviews, The Firehouse Grilling Cookbook with more media appearances to follow.

Upon leaving the fire service, Joe attended and graduated with honors with his Culinary/Chefs degree from the Culinary Academy of Long Island, doing internships at two of Long Islands' top restaurants. The morning of September 11, 2001, Joe was doing a live television segment for WB 11 in Manhattan at Ladder 3. He left only moments before they responded to the World Trade Center. He returned as quickly as possible with his brother and discovered the 12 firefighters he had just been with were killed. Both Joe and his brother worked at Ground Zero in the rescue and recovery efforts and working with several national corporations raised over \$70,000 for widows and children of firefighters lost on 9/11.

Currently, Joe teaches recreational cooking classes at A La Carte in Lynbrook, NY and travels around the country doing Health and Fitness Seminars and cooking demonstrations for the fire service. He has also been a spokesperson for such companies as Ronzoni, Sorrento Cheese, Butterball Turkey, Johnson and Johnson and others.

Joe is currently working towards his own Firehouse cooking show featuring unique recipes and stories from firefighters and cooks around the world. The show will feature a unique, classic NYC Firehouse set and a signature entrance available to no other television chef, sliding a real fire pole.

