



# EVELYN FIGUEROA

## EVELYN'S BACKGROUND

Evelyn Figueroa is originally from El Salvador and has always enjoyed working with people. That is why she liked her job at the front desk of the Hyatt Regency Hotel. "It's where I learned to love this industry, to love hospitality." During her five years there, she became a confident supervisor. When Evelyn's husband, the owner of a popular El Salvadoran pupusa restaurant in the Mission called Balompie, asked her to manage the restaurant, she stepped up to the job.

## WHAT BROUGHT EVELYN TO CCSF

Evelyn's first day at the restaurant was harder than she expected. "I was really good at the front of house, but when I would go inside the kitchen, I was out of my comfort zone." A lot of the staff had been there for over a decade, and they did not like her coming in and giving directions. "An employee asked me what I was doing in the kitchen if I didn't know how to cook, and I couldn't answer that question." It made her uncomfortable, but she thought the point was valid. "I was not secure about myself as a manager. I was not prepared. I didn't know how to tell them to do their job, and if I wanted to manage, I needed to educate myself." She had heard about CCSF and decided to sign up for Introduction to Supervision and Management.

## EVELYN'S CCSF EXPERIENCE

Evelyn noticed a lot of students wearing white chef uniforms on the first day of class. They told her they were in the culinary arts management program, and Evelyn was intrigued. "When we had to close down the restaurant for [earthquake] retro-fitting, I said, 'You know what? I can go full time. This is my opportunity.'" Evelyn loved the culinary arts courses, especially the lessons on creating sauces, salsas, and stocks. "The confidence I'm getting in [the CCSF] program ... it's very good. The chefs and the instructors are always available. Any question you have, they'll help. It's a welcoming environment."

## WHY CCSF WAS A GOOD CHOICE FOR EVELYN

Evelyn says she's surprised by how much she has learned and how much she enjoys cooking now. "When I got married, I thought I would never have to cook again, because we have a restaurant. But then I found out it was the opposite. Now I need to cook, because I have a restaurant. I'm so glad I'm in this program, and I'm looking forward to helping the restaurant and keeping it alive. I know I can go there and feel just as comfortable in the back of the house as the front. I practice, I cook for my family every night, and my eight year-old son actually gets excited about the food I make. I think that's the best reward."



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RETAIL, HOSPITALITY  
& TOURISM

Degree

Culinary Arts Management AS