

Behind the Scenes

READ ON TO LEARN ABOUT THE NEWEST ADDITIONS TO THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE DEPARTMENT'S BACK-OF-HOUSE TEAM AT NEWPORT BEACH COUNTRY CLUB.

BY ASHLEY RYAN

Last month, we introduced you to the newest front-of-house staff that are helping to create bespoke dining experiences here at the club, and this month, we'd like you to meet some recent additions that have joined us behind-the-scenes. These are the people making all of the delicious meals, bites and treats our members are able to enjoy here on the Newport Beach Country Club property. Keep reading to learn more about David Garcia, Markus Hagan, Aric Mattson and Ashley Manzo.



From left: Markus Hagan, Aric Mattson, Graeme Blair, Gio Bolivar, David Garcia, Ashley Manzo and Jesse Gonzales.

WELCOMING THE NEW ADDITIONS TO OUR CULINARY MANAGEMENT TEAM



ARIC MATTSON
EXECUTIVE SOUS CHEF

Just over two years ago, Aric Mattson considered taking a job at NBCC, but he and his wife were expecting a child so they decided he should stick to his position as executive sous chef at Old Ranch Country Club in Seal Beach. Now, after three years there, he has found his way to Newport, working in the same role here at the club. Though he's still learning, some of his tasks include ensuring proper cooking and sanitation techniques, developing new menus, checking on dining areas, organizing the kitchen, procuring new equipment and tools, assisting with events and more. "I enjoy the team we are forming. The workday does not generally feel like work," he explains. "The clubhouse is amazing and the members are awesome. It has been a pleasure to join the team." Mattson earned an advanced culinary arts degree from Orange Coast College before working at places like the now-defunct restaurants Lou's Brews & BBQ and Charlie Palmer, as well as Big Canyon Country Club and Old Ranch. He looks forward to meeting more of the members and, outside of work, enjoys spending time with his wife and two sons, Luka and Mateo, as well as cheering for Los Angeles sports teams like the Kings hockey team and Dodgers baseball team.



MARKUS HAGAN
CHEF DE CUISINE

Markus Hagan may seem like a new face, but this is his second stint at NBCC, having served as a sous chef at the club roughly five years ago. He returned in a new role—chef de cuisine—over the summer, and is now working with the team to create all-new menus for the Seahorse Grille as well as both the men's and ladies' grills. "I enjoy working with a team of talented and hard-working chefs—[plus] interacting with the members," Hagan says. "They're so appreciative of our hard work." He loves the collaborative and creative nature of working in the restaurant industry as well as the state-of-the-art kitchen at NBCC, though he jokes that his biggest challenge is "seeing that beautiful golf course all day and not being able to play." Before coming to the club, Hagan worked as executive chef at locales such as the Balboa Bay Club, The Cannery and Louie's by the Bay. Outside of work, you'll find him surfing, cycling, fishing, camping or snowboarding.



GIO BOLIVAR
CHEF DE CUISINE

In mid-September, Gio Bolivar joined the food and beverage team, brand-new to NBCC and already eager to get started. As he is just stepping into the role, he is still getting a feel for what his daily tasks will be and getting to know the rest of the team, but he is especially looking forward to working with the other chefs and providing quality dining experiences for the members. Bolivar holds an associate's degree in culinary arts and has worked as a sous chef at a number of other restaurants before coming to NBCC. Here, he is moving up to chef de cuisine, and is excited for the great work environment he knows awaits him. Outside of work, he enjoys skiing and cycling, and looks forward to bringing his twin daughters to the club and growing as he navigates this new season in life.



ASHLEY MANZO
SOUS CHEF

It's been nearly three years since Ashley Manzo arrived at NBCC, working her way up from cook 1 to lead cook to, now, sous chef. "My role as sous chef is very busy," she notes. "I am still in charge of the broiler station and doing the prep, but I also help with the produce orders, coffee, gelato, menu ideas, setting up the Burger Bash prep on Wednesdays and the pasta station on Sundays." She also says that her co-workers are "very helpful and just fun to be around in general," noting that they are like a second family. Manzo also says that she loves how much room for growth and learning she has been afforded at NBCC, and how she has had the opportunity to get to know members on a personal level. She has a degree and a certificate, in liberal science and culinary arts respectively, both from Orange Coast College, and worked at the Old Spaghetti Factory and Balboa Bay Club before coming to NBCC. When not on the property, she enjoys going to Disneyland, going out to eat with her boyfriend (who's also a cook), hiking and going to the beach.



DAVID GARCIA
LEAD LINE COOK

It's been about four months since David Garcia became a lead line cook at NBCC, working as a rounds cook to assist wherever needed while also making all of the pastries and desserts for the club. The thing he loves the most about his job is the chance to be creative in the kitchen, he says—"I'm truly an artist at heart." This is true both at the club and in his personal life, where Garcia enjoys painting and has a woodworking business on the side where he makes custom cutting boards. Eventually, he hopes to retire to expand those hobbies while also spending time with his loved ones. Before landing at NBCC, Garcia was a long-time employee for Disneyland, working both in the parks as well as at Club 33, a private dining club within the main theme park. He earned a baking and pastry arts degree from Johnson & Wales University in Rhode Island before returning to Southern California.