

History

Throughout its history, The Culinary Institute of America has played a pivotal role in shaping the future of foodservice and hospitality. Widely recognized as the world's premier culinary college, the CIA has an industry-wide reputation for excellence and accomplished alumni whose leadership, influence, and professionalism are a testament to the quality of a CIA education.

Such success could only happen through the inspired leadership of some very talented and dedicated people. In the mid-1940s, faced with a shortage of back-of-the-house (kitchen) professionals, members of the New Haven Restaurant Association in Connecticut had the idea of creating a school to train World War II veterans in the culinary arts. In 1945, they approached attorney Frances Roth with their idea and asked her to be the school's administrative director. Mrs. Roth had never worked in a restaurant, but she became determined to establish a school that would become "the culinary center of the nation." With financial, social, and political support from Katharine Angell—who was married to Yale University President Emeritus James Rowland Angell and who would later become chair of the board of the cooking school—Mrs. Roth set about achieving her vision.

On May 22, 1946, the New Haven Restaurant Institute opened its doors in downtown New Haven, CT as the first and only school of its kind in the United States. The Institute enrolled 16 students in its first class and employed a faculty consisting of a chef, a baker, and a dietitian.

As the foodservice industry grew, so did enrollment, necessitating a move in 1947 to larger quarters: a 40-room mansion adjacent to Yale University. The school's name was changed to the Restaurant Institute of Connecticut and, in 1951, it became known as The Culinary Institute of America, reflecting its national scope and the diversity of its students. The college expanded its educational program to two years and introduced continuing education courses for industry professionals. By the time of Mrs. Roth's retirement in 1965, the CIA had increased its enrollment to 400 students and operated a \$2 million facility. Double-class sessions were initiated in 1969 to accommodate a backlog of applications, and an auxiliary campus was leased, but with more than 1,000 students and facilities strained to the maximum, the CIA's administrators launched a nationwide search for a new home. They found it in St. Andrew-on-Hudson, a former Jesuit novitiate in Hyde Park, NY. The new campus opened two years later, with its main building renamed Roth Hall.

In 1971, the Board of Regents of the State of New York granted the CIA a charter to confer the Associate in Occupational Studies (AOS) degree in culinary arts, making it the first culinary college to be so authorized. Other leading-edge associate and bachelor's degree programs, majors, and concentrations were added over the years, cementing the CIA's status as the world's premier culinary college. In 2016, the CIA extended its offerings into post-baccalaureate education with its Wine and Beverage Graduate Certificate Program.

In 1995, the college expanded its global reach by opening its first branch campus, The Culinary Institute of America at Greystone, located in the heart of California's Napa Valley. The CIA's expansion continued in 2008, when The Culinary Institute of America, San Antonio opened its doors in Texas. In 2010, the college opened its first international location, in Singapore. In partnership with the Singapore Institute of Technology, the CIA offers its bachelor's degree program from its location on the Temasek Polytechnic campus.

In 2015, the CIA launched The Food Business School (FBS), its center for executive education. That same year, the college expanded its California campus operations to include Copia, the former center for food, wine, and the arts in downtown Napa. The CIA at Copia offers food and wine education programs, as well as industry leadership conferences and initiatives.

The college introduced its first graduate degree program—and its first primarily online degree offering—in 2018, with the Master of Professional Studies in Food Business. The program also includes three short residencies, at the New York campus and the CIA at Copia in Napa, CA.

From its humble beginnings in a single building in New Haven, CT, today the CIA continues to influence the future of food through its commitment to advancing knowledge, leading our industry, and making a difference in the lives of people all over the world.