

pickup trucks, not semi-trucks.” In addition to a willingness to try everything in the spice rack, Penn brings another unusual quality to his work: He remains calm, even during the most hectic dinner rush.

“He cares so much about patiently teaching the cooks underneath him,” says Amanda Newsom, his partner and marketing and communications manager at The Giving Kitchen. “He wants to be a positive role model.” – CD

Tyler Sherrer

General Manager
Schlotzsky's Austin Eatery
Duluth

Tyler Sherrer was destined to work in the restaurant industry. At age 15, he joined his brother at Redneck Gourmet in Newnan. “I went, and I never left,” he says.

Since then he’s worked at several other restaurants including Sage, Southern Group and Taco Mac. Now the 27 year old is the general manager at Schlotzsky’s Austin Eatery, a new concept that opened in Duluth at the end of 2016. The restaurant repositions the Schlotzsky’s sandwich chain brand – which opened its original location in Austin – with an updated interior and a menu featuring beer and wine along with food truck inspired items like sliders, tacos and flatbreads.

For Brian Farris, VP of Operations for FOCUS Brands, which owns the Schlotzsky’s concept, naming Tyler a Rising Star was a no-brainer. “With so much competition in the restaurant industry, Tyler is always taking ownership to lead Austin Eatery to No. 1,” he says. “Whatever it takes, he does it without hesitation.” This includes a two-hour commute to work.

Already a 10-year veteran of the restaurant industry, Tyler wouldn’t have it any other way. He loves the challenges that come with working in a job that changes daily. “It’s an unknown and different every day,” he says of his favorite aspect of the job.

He also has a strong sense of community and brings that to the restaurant, welcoming fundraisers monthly like the Spectrum Austin Group.

“He embraces going above and beyond his call of duty,” Farris says.

Sherrer thinks that if the popularity of Schlotzsky’s Austin Eatery is any indication, then Atlanta’s restaurant industry is moving in the right direction.

“New styles of restaurants and revamped atmospheres move the industry in a good direction and will make them last a lot longer,” he says. Which is good news for him, as he hopes to one day open his own restaurant. “I already have the name and the plans drawn up for it.” Now it’s just a matter of time. – LP ■

