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Cathedral City woman takes manners, etiquette seriously

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Venturini says she acquired her etiquette expertise not only from her parents but from her experience hosting large formal corporate dinners. / Tamara H. Sone/MyDesert

Written by **Tamara H. Sone**
The Desert Sun

Cathedral City — In the world of formal etiquette, not all forks are created equal.

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Through her new workshop, Charm School for the College-Bound, Elizabeth Venturini is helping teenagers learn the difference between a fish fork and a salad fork — along with many other manners necessary in today's society.

"The ability to show poise, have good manners and know basic etiquette are vital," Venturini, a Cathedral City resident, said.

"Not knowing the social graces and how to properly engage with people can keep students from prime academic and future career opportunities."

During two, two-hour sessions, students will learn a variety of skills such as how to dress

At a glance



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Charm School for the College-Bound

For information on Elizabeth Venturini's Charm School for the college-bound workshop, visit www.scholasticus.net or email Venturini at elizabeth@scholasticus.net

properly for a function, how to socialize before, during and after a meal and how to be a good host or guest. The workshop costs \$200.

With a table set up in the courtyard of her Cathedral City Cove home, Venturini will school students on every piece of silverware, glass and plate in the setting and when to use

it.

"If you see a spoon at the top of the plate, then it's a good sign that you may be having something soft like ice cream or pudding for dessert," Venturini said.

Venturini's place settings are one glass short of what guests would see at a state dinner, ensuring students will be prepared for any type of formal meal.

She also will work with students on the proper way to introduce someone, network and address dignitaries.

Venturini said. many children today are only learning the basics of etiquette — no elbows on the table, chew with the mouth closed, use a fork and not fingers. A few are learning even less than the basics, she added.

Naomi Torre, a certified etiquette consultant with The Etiquette School of Monarch Beach, said she agrees with Venturini that bad manners are becoming more of the norm.

"Our culture is experiencing a downward direction toward crudeness and rudeness," she said. "Like learning how to swim, humans have to be taught how to think of others first. Parenting is not about showering one's offspring with objects of instant gratification but rather giving a standard of what is and what is not appealing when dealing with others."

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