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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Les Dames d'Escoffier International Names Nine Winners for
Prestigious
M.F.K. Fisher Awards Recognizing Excellence in Culinary Writing**

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY (June 10, 2015)—Receiving more than 75 entries for the highly regarded and competitive **M.F.K. Fisher Awards**, Les Dames d'Escoffier International (LDEI) has named its 2015 winners and will award \$2,900 to nine women food writers for excellence in culinary writing.

Named for lauded culinary writer Mary Frances Kennedy Fisher, considered one of America's greatest foodwriters, the awards are reflective of the organization's mission in which its 1,900 women leaders in the culinary industry create a supportive culture in their communities to achieve excellence in the food, beverage and hospitality professions.

The grand-prize winner is **Erin Byers Murray** of Nashville, Tennessee, managing editor at *Nashville Lifestyles* magazine, who will receive a trip to Charleston, South Carolina, and \$1000 at the awards presentation on Saturday, October 31, at the Marriott Charleston at the LDEI's annual conference. Murray won the Internet Category for "Sense of Self," an entry detailing her mother's loss of taste resulting from a concussion.

Dr. Ava Chin of New York City, Associate Professor, English, CUNY-College of Staten Island, won first prize in the Book Category for "The Search for a Wild Weed," an excerpt about hunting for savory lambsquarters in a Brooklyn park, from her book *Eating Wildly: Foraging for Life, Love, and the Perfect Meal*. She will receive a \$500 cash award.

Janice Cook Knight of Santa Barbara, California, a book author and cooking teacher, was the winner of the Print Category and will receive a \$500 cash prize for "Hurray for the Orange, Red and Gold: The Season for Persimmons," published in *Edible Santa Barbara*. Her story encompasses personal anecdotes and historical information about this fruit that originated in China.

Other prize winners are:

Book Category

Second Prize (\$100): **Jen Karetnick** of Miami Shores, Florida, Dining Critic, *MIAMI Magazine*, for the introduction from her book *Mango*.

Third Prize (\$50): **Leah Eskin** of Baltimore, Maryland, for "Let Rise" from her book *Slices of Life*

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Internet Category

Second Prize (\$100): **Micki McClelland** of Pipe Creek, Texas, for “Thanks, Dad” from *My Table Magazine/SideDish* online.

Third Prize (\$50): **Julia della Croce** of Nyack, New York, for “Fancy Food Show: The Good, Bad and Ridiculous.”

Print Category

Second Prize (\$100): **Kim Ode**, staff writer, for “The Baron of Brats,” from the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*.

Third Prize (\$50): **Lee Dean**, Food Editor, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, for “The Long Winter.”

“We’re thrilled to honor these outstanding food writers,” said CiCi Williamson, M.F.K. Fisher Awards chair. “The work from these women reflects creativity and extraordinary writing talent that highlights the prominent role food has in defining our culture. We are delighted to recognize these achievements by these well-deserving writers.”

Ten prominent magazine food editors, newspaper food editors, and book publishers judged the contest entries. The judges scored the entries on writing style, mastery of subject, topic and creative approach that shows author’s voice, and relevance to the reader.

Entries must have been nonfiction published in 2014 and could include analytical pieces, autobiographical explorations, and forays into culinary history.

Through the M.F.K. Fisher Awards, LDEI strives to highlight women writers whose work reflects creativity and insight; illuminates the pivotal roles of food, beverages and the arts of the table; and/or contributes to our knowledge of those who grow, produce or prepare nourishment. The writing awards are presented yearly and must be nonfiction analytical pieces, autobiographical explorations, or forays into culinary history.

LDEI is an invitational organization of women leaders in the United States, Canada and the UK in food, fine beverage and hospitality whose mission is education, advocacy and philanthropy. For more information and to read the winning entries, go to ldei.org.

The deadline to enter the LDEI’s 2016 **M.F.K. Fisher Awards is March 31, 2016.**

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LDEI is an international organization of women leaders who create a supportive culture in their communities to achieve excellence in the food, fine beverage, and hospitality professions. To do this, over 1,900 members in 30 chapters worldwide provide leadership, educational opportunities and host philanthropic events within their communities. For more information, visit LDEI.org or on [Facebook at Les Dames d'Escoffier Int'l.](#)

