

Les Dames d'Escoffier International

Quarterly

WINTER



2023



NEW YORK



Delivering the World on a Plate

NEW YORK CONFERENCE ISSUE

Cover: New York Chapter Dames. Right: Mexico Dame Olga Cabrera, from Oaxaca, holds Lady Liberty's torch; an iconic NYC hot dog cart; Conference Co-Chairs Joan Brower and Marsha Palanci assemble swag bags; Empire State Building. Photos: Lisa Stewart.



2022 LDEI ANNUAL CONFERENCE ISSUE | NEW YORK

Les Dames d'Escoffier International Quarterly WINTER 2023

IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURES

- 4 New Board Bios
- 7 Woman of Purpose Award
- 10 Preconference Tours
- 16 Chapter Leadership Forum
- 18 Opening Reception
- 20 Keynote: Dr. Jessica Harris, Ph.D.
- 22 Partner's Lunch and M.F.K. Fisher Awards
- 28 Concurrent Sessions
- 33 Keynote: Pushcarts and Peddlers
- 34 Pier Sixty Reception and Dinner
- 36 Legacy Awards Luncheon
- 38 Grande Dame Reception and Dinner

DEPARTMENTS

- 42 Chapter Programs
- 45 Member Milestones
- 49 Global Culinary Postcard

© Les Dames d' Escoffier, 2023.

FROM THE EDITOR

"New York is a work of art...a masterpiece that shouldn't make sense, yet somehow, it does."

Jacqueline E. Smith

The sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and vibes of New York City's edible environment reflect its history, culture, and identity. Immigrants that come to "The Big Apple" to begin a new life bring their food cultures and traditions with them. Indeed, they are Delivering the World on a Plate, which was the theme for the 2022 LDEI New York Conference. Co-Chairs **Joan Brower** and **Marsha Palanci** served up a menu of ethnic tours, stellar keynote speeches, educational sessions, and gala events that provided an irresistible taste and better understanding of New York's diverse culinary scene. All of the highlights are included in this *Quarterly* issue, from cover to cover. As a leadership Conference, the focus was on helping Dames grow and develop their leadership skills. Members networked and exchanged ideas on industry trends. The Partner's Showcase Luncheon was an opportunity to learn more about our Partners and to enjoy their products, so let's give them our support in return for theirs.



Another highlight was the Grande Dame Award Dinner. Two Dames—**Paula Lambert** and **Bev Shaffer**—were honored for their commitment to making a positive impact upon their chapters and communities through service. **Ann Yonkers** (D.C.) introduced Paula during the Grande Dame dinner and shared her "wonderfully impractical" business plan for success. After studying in Perugia during her junior year, she later returned to Italy and began a "love affair" with *Insalata Caprese* (mozzarella, tomato, and basil). Unavailable to find fresh mozzarella in Dallas, Paula founded the award-winning Mozzarella Cheese Company in 1987. Introducer **Beth Davis-Noragon's** vision of Bev Shaffer is to think of her "as a recipe, tried and true that you can return to over and over...definitely something chocolate...not too sweet, but somewhere in the Goldilocks range of sweet—just right. And definitely salty...tender to her family and friends, but most importantly reliable—sturdy enough to take a dunking and come up fighting for more."

Gracious thanks to the Dame writers, Second VP **Anita Lau**, Milestones Editor **Dottie Koteski**, Chapter Programs Editor **Nichole Bendele**, the LDEI Board, and Greg Jewell. And to designer Joni Keith and Dallas Dame **Lisa Stewart** (see page 52) who took the fabulous photos in this issue, except as noted. The Conference has left us all in a New York state of mind!

—Susan Fuller Slack, Editor, Winter *Quarterly*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A Commitment to Excellence

Dear Dames,

It is an honor to be writing my first President's letter for the *Quarterly*. We have already begun to get to know each other a bit since October, but I thought I would tell you a little about my experience as a Dame.

Over the past 12 years I've been fortunate to be a member of three chapters, each unique but very much the same. I was inducted into the Charleston Chapter in 2010, and the local women I had long respected and admired immediately became my colleagues, brain trust, co-conspirators, and dearest friends. Our chapter worked hard to produce fundraisers, provide scholarships and donations to other local nonprofits, and we supported each other through life's celebrations and hardships. We drank wine on **Susan Wigley's** dock and planned the 2015 LDEI Conference and sat on **Nathalie Dupree's** sofa for counsel on what more we should do with our lives. We became a family and accomplished so much—I carry these women in my heart every day.

When my husband, son and I moved to San Antonio I was welcomed with open arms into a larger, more established chapter. This is a group of women who gets things done and in a big way. It's Texas, after all! When my husband passed away suddenly, it was **Blanca Aldaco** and the Dames who were at my house every day to pick me up and help me breathe. Shortly thereafter, I moved my son and myself to Pennsylvania to be near family, and one of the first things I did was contact my closest chapter, which is Cleveland. This close-knit group of hard-working women is committed to making a difference and again welcomed me as if I'd been there all along. Despite our small number, the Cleveland Chapter provides grants and scholarships that make a significant impact on the region, and I am proud to be a member.

From the start, I was excited to be a member and participate as much as I could, but it was after I attended an LDEI Conference that I truly understood what it meant to be a Dame. The Atlanta Conference was my first; the most significant takeaway for me was a sense of the bigger picture of LDEI. What I found was a generous, supportive collective of hospitality leadership focused on using our networks to lift up our communities and the next generation of women leaders. It wasn't just happening in my chapter but on an international



level. LDEI has been my passion ever since.

Serving on the Board of Directors has been even more rewarding and brings a new level of appreciation for LDEI and the women who volunteer to lead it. This year I am blessed to work with an amazing Board committed to moving LDEI forward for the overall health of the organization, in support of our chapters and Partners, and in celebration of the 2400 Dames who do incredible work every day. In a post-COVID environment we have to re-examine how we do business in order to thrive in tomorrow's world. And we need to work together, to look at LDEI with fresh eyes in order to be stronger.

Thanks to the many hours of diligent work by Editor **Susan Slack**, Second Vice President **Anita Lau**, all of our contributing writers, and the beautiful photography of **Lisa Stewart**, you will read about and see the wonderful and inspiring experiences produced by the New York Chapter. These articles will also give you a taste of the networking and educational opportunities that will be offered in Louisville this fall. The attendee surveys are always full of valuable input on how we can keep improving and providing education that is relevant and engaging. The Kentucky Chapter has heard you, and we are excited to keep you informed as the plans progress.

It is my hope that every Dame will value her membership enough to step up, embrace our mission statement, be actively involved in her chapter and maybe even consider joining the Board. I am excited to be on this journey with each of you this year and only a phone call or email away until we see each other again.

With gratitude,
Jennifer

2023 LDEI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The mission of the LDEI Board is to support the development of new chapters and the success of the existing chapters through guidance, education, connectivity, and effective communication. The Board also fosters and encourages the career development and growth of its members through diverse programs and philanthropic initiatives.

President
JENNIFER GOLDMAN
(Cleveland/Northeast Ohio)
Founder, BalCore Business Advisors
jennifer.LDEIBoard@gmail.com
(843) 224-0198

First Vice President
KATHY GOLD
(Philadelphia)
In The Kitchen Cooking School
chefkage@gmail.com
(609) 206-4511

Second Vice President
ANITA LAU
(LA/OC)
MHW Strategies
madhungrywoman@gmail.com
(650)-996-7300

Third Vice President
KERSTEN RETTIG
(Dallas)
Pret Marketing
kersten@pretmarketing.com
(214) 912-3154

Secretary
BARB PIRES
(Atlanta)
Henri's Bakery & Deli
piresb@bellsouth.net
(404) 432-5541

Treasurer
STEPHANIE JAEGER
(British Columbia)
PearTree Provisions
ssjaeger@shaw.ca
(604) 299-2772

Chapter Board Liaisons
ERIN BYERS MURRAY
(Nashville)
The Local Palate
murray.erinb@gmail.com
(617) 571-8173

MARILYN FREUNDLICH
(St. Louis)
Owner, Inclusively Yours Ceremonies
marilynfreundlich@gmail.com
(314) 374-5881

IRENE MOORE
(South Florida)
Freelance Wine & Food Writer
irenemoore305@gmail.com
(786) 942-6448

Immediate Past President
DEBORAH MINTCHEFF
(New York)
TheArtfulPen
dsmintcheff@gmail.com
(917) 923-6348

Executive Director
GREG JEWELL
President, AEC Management Resources
Louisville, KY 40204
info@ldei.org
(502) 456-1851 x1



Jennifer Goldman
(Cleveland)
PRESIDENT

Board President **Jennifer Goldman** earned her degree from Johnson and Wales University and began her career as a pastry chef before co-founding Patrick Properties Hospitality Group (PPHG), which is a hospitality company based in Charleston, South Carolina. As Chief Operating Officer, she built and led the teams in both the front and back of the house to produce and exclusively provide all food and beverage for as many as six hundred events per year. She served as brand ambassador representing PPHG as well as the City of Charleston hosting events, festivals, fundraisers, international conferences, and national media companies such as The Food Network and The

James Beard Foundation. During her tenure she also created company internships for the College of Charleston's Hospitality Department.

Jennifer brought her tourism skills to San Antonio where she became a Certified Tourism Ambassador and consulted for the San Antonio Cocktail Conference as well as a boutique hotel group before returning to her roots in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where she resides and is an associate for HelmsBriscoe.

Jennifer is a member of the Cleveland Chapter and former president of the Charleston Chapter, a member of The James Beard Foundation, the Court of Master Sommeliers, and is a stem cell donor for Be The Match.



Kathy Gold
(Philadelphia)
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Kathy Gold left the world of investment banking and portfolio management for a soul-satisfying career in professional cooking. She created her original business, The Cooking Company, 25 years ago.

Her background, including training at Le Cordon Bleu and restaurant experience at Bistro Français in Washington, D.C., prompted her desire to share her love of cooking with others. She was a frequent guest chef at Williams-Sonoma, and was the lead chef at Sur La Table before founding **In the Kitchen Cooking School** in 2005.

Located in New Jersey, her classes quickly became the area's top destination for serious chefs, corporate team building events, and those who just wanted to have fun in the kitchen, learn new

skills, and meet new friends. The site of quite a few marriage proposals (!), the classes were featured on The Knot, and are on many bridal registries.

Kathy has twice appeared as a featured guest on National Public Radio's *Radio Times* with Marty Moss-Coane, and she was a frequent guest chef on NBC's *The 10! Show*. Chef Gold starred in an episode of CNBC's *Escaping the Cube*, and in 2019 she was featured on Lifetime TV's *Married at First Sight*.

Kathy is a past president and a 13-year member of the Philadelphia Chapter. She is a five-term member of the LDEI Board, now serving as First Vice President.



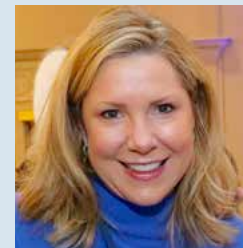
Anita Lau
(LA/OC)
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Anita Lau is an internationally published cookbook author and the creator of *diary of a Mad Hungry Woman*, a food blog focusing on restaurant dining both locally and beyond. Anita has appeared on Gordon Ramsey's *Hell's Kitchen* as a guest judge, as well as episodes of the Cooking Channel's *Eat Street*. She started a catering business while at university in Australia, and upon graduation, moved back to her birthplace, Hong Kong, and spent almost 10 years as editor for numerous lifestyles and entertainment magazines, while continuing to write about food.

She moved to the U.S. in 1998 and authored a cookbook, *Asian Greens*. She started her blog in

2008, and won the (now defunct) OC Weekly's Reader's Choice Award for Best Blog in 2014. In 2019, she was featured on *OprahDaily.com* as an over-50 influencer. Anita was also an International Casting Producer on Netflix's *The Final Table*.

As a member of LDEI, Anita was LA/OC chapter president for three years, co-chaired the 2017 Conference, and has also served on the GCI committee. In 2020, she was a featured panelist for LDEI's virtual brunch and served on the 2021 LDEI Nominating Committee. She is a dual member of the Los Angeles/Orange County and San Diego Chapters.



Kersten Rettig
(Dallas)
THIRD VICE PRESIDENT

Kersten Rettig is a food writer and marketing and public relations professional with more than 30 years of experience working for food and hospitality companies including Rosewood Hotels & Resorts. Currently, Kersten owns Prêt Marketing and PR and writes about food and travel for two Dallas-based newspapers.

Kersten became a member of Les Dames d'Escoffier in 2009 while working as global communications director for Rosewood. Her mentor was Rosewood founder and Grande Dame **Caroline Rose Hunt** who generously shared her wit and wisdom with Kersten and eventually sponsored her for membership. Kersten is a member of LDEI's Dallas Chapter and served as

scholarship recipient liaison, philanthropy chair, and president in 2019-2020.

Throughout her career, Kersten has created marketing and PR programs for brands ranging from Taco Bell to ultra-luxury hospitality and retail, including serving as Chief Marketing Officer for Highland Park Village in Dallas. Her passion is food, travel, and telling stories about people and places.

Kersten and her husband Clark live in Dallas and have three children. She also has a Cavachon named Henrietta. Kersten serves as a trustee for VNA Texas, a nonprofit provider of community-based healthcare including hospice care and Meals on Wheels delivery.



Barb Pires
(Atlanta)
SECRETARY

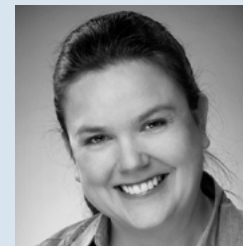
Barb Pires has been involved in the food industry since she was 16 years old working in an Italian restaurant in Connecticut. During her career she has managed, owned and/or operated restaurants and a catering company. She has also managed an instrumentation and process-control company in Lakeland, Florida, during the time she was raising her young daughter.

As Director of Sales at Atlanta's H&F Bread Company, she took the company from \$350,000 in sales to over \$4 million in just over three years, distributing artisan breads and pastries to Atlanta restaurants. Currently she is director of operations for Henri's Bakery & Deli in Atlanta.

Previously Barb has been director of operations

at Piece of Cake and a recipe tester for **Shirley Corriher's** cookbook, *BAKEWISE*. She was the managing partner/executive pastry chef and creator of Metrotainment Bakery, and a past owner and/or operator of Barlee's Catering and Chuck's Steak House in Atlanta.

Barb has attended every LDEI Conference except one since she became a member in 2004. Honored to be a member of an organization with so many accomplished women, she has served as secretary, treasurer (two terms), vice president, president, and immediate past president of the Atlanta Chapter. Barb looks forward to her term as LDEI Secretary 2022-2023.



Stephanie Jaeger
(British Columbia)
TREASURER

Canadian-born **Stephanie Jaeger** began her foray into the restaurant industry with one of Les Dames d'Escoffier BC founding members **Janet McGuire**. After working at local restaurants in Vancouver, Stephanie and her partner Scott opened the award-winning PearTree Restaurant in 1997 (which shut its doors in 2020). Throughout 20+ years, the PearTree maintained an intimate, high level of dining room service managed by Stephanie, receiving accolades that included Best New Restaurant, Best of the Suburbs, top three "Upscale" restaurants in Vancouver from *Vancouver Magazine*, multiple years on Canada's 100 Best Restaurants list, and a place in *1001 Restaurants You Must Experience Before You*

Die. In 2018 Stephanie was inducted into the BC Restaurant Hall of Fame and in 2020 was added to *Vancouver Magazine's* Premier Crew list for her experience in the "front-of-house."

An active member of her community, Stephanie has contributed to raising thousands of dollars for hungry children and youth in Burnaby and received a Mayoral Local Hero award for her efforts. As a past president of the LDEI BC Chapter, Stephanie continues to be an active member of her chapter.

Since 2018, Stephanie has had the honor of serving on the LDEI Board as Chapter Board Liaison and as Secretary. This year, she looks forward to serving the organization again as the Treasurer.



Erin Byers Murray
(Nashville)
CHAPTER BOARD LIAISON

Based in Nashville, Tennessee, **Erin Byers Murray** is the editor in chief at the *Local Palate* magazine, which celebrates the food culture of the South. She's also a food reporter, recipe tester, cookbook editor, and an author who has written four books. These include *Shucked: Life on a New England Oyster Farm*, the James Beard-nominated *The New England Kitchen*, and *Grits: A Cultural and Culinary Journey Through the South*. Her most recent project, *The Row 34 Cookbook*, was released in 2021.

Erin was the grand-prize winner of the 2015 Les Dames d'Escoffier International M.F.K. Fisher Award for Excellence in Culinary Writing and received the

New England Society Book Award. Her writing has been featured in publications including *Food & Wine*, the *Boston Globe*, *Huffington Post*, *Wine & Spirits*, and three editions of *Best Food Writing*. Along with sister Nashville Dames **Cindy Wall** and **Jennifer Justus**, Erin is a co-founder of Dirty Pages, a recipe and storytelling project that collects the stories behind well-loved recipe cards.

She has been a member of LDEI since 2015 and served as president of the Nashville Chapter from 2018 to 2019. Erin served the LDEI Board for two terms as Second Vice President, and she joined the Board this year as a Chapter Board Liaison (CBL).



Marilyn Freundlich
(St. Louis)
CHAPTER BOARD LIAISON

Always an entrepreneur at heart, **Marilyn Freundlich** has had the great fortune to experience and participate in entrepreneurship on three very different levels. In the late '90s, Marilyn was the first hire at Build-A-Bear Workshop and instrumental in developing a corporate culture that now spans 400 stores. After opening the first store in St. Louis, she implemented many key business initiatives and ultimately executed a multimillion-dollar corporate sales program.

In the early 2000s, Marilyn and her husband utilized their retail backgrounds and opened POPtions! Popcorn. Playing a pivotal role in new product and brand development, marketing, and advertising, she cultivated and managed their corporate sales

relationships as well as developing bridal and special events channels.

After joining LDEI St. Louis in 2013, Marilyn served as Fundraising Committee Chair for four years, became President in 2019, and finished up her stint as Past President in 2022. Marilyn is currently in her second year as a Chapter Board Liaison on LDEI's Board.

Marilyn is also the owner of Inclusively Yours Ceremonies. As a Life Cycle Celebrant(R) and Universal Life Minister, she creates as well as officiates at personalized wedding ceremonies that reflect the love, hopes, and dreams of the wonderful couples she works with.



Irene Moore
(South Florida)
CHAPTER BOARD LIAISON

Irene Moore is the co-founder and past president of Les Dames South Florida. Irene is a journalist, editor, content creator, and certified sommelier. She specializes in writing about culinary culture and wine regions around the world. She is serving in her second term as an LDEI Chapter Board Liaison. She has written for magazines, travel books, and websites, where she's interviewed top food and wine luminaries. Irene earned an MBA from Fordham University, Graduate School of Business at Lincoln Center, New York, NY, and a Mastery

of Wine/Advanced Sommelier Certification at Florida International University, Chaplain School of Hospitality in Miami. She earned a certification in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, and is a three-time Fellowship Recipient at the Symposium for Professional Wine Writers, at Meadowood Napa Valley, California, in 2017, 2021, and 2022.



Deborah Mintcheff
(New York)
IMMEDIATE LDEI PAST PRESIDENT

Deborah Mintcheff, a highly respected food editor and writer, took a deep breath and plunged herself into a new career 2 1/2 years ago—that of a calligrapher at TheArtfulPen. Deborah has always embraced change and opportunity. Her expertise as a cookbook editor was developed at the boutique book-packaging firm of Smallwood & Stewart in New York City, where beautifully crafted cookbooks were published. Formerly, Deborah was a top food stylist, sought after for her exceptional baking skills and creativity. Her clients ranged from large food companies to food and women's magazines. Her love of food styling evolved

while working in magazine test kitchens, but her professional start began as a *garde manger* at Tavern on the Green.

Deborah has been a Dame for over 20 years and served as the president of the New York Chapter, as well as its treasurer, director at large, and parliamentarian. She also chaired several important committees. Deborah was a charter member of The New York Women's Culinary Alliance, where she served as its president for five years.



Greg Jewell
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greg Jewell is the CEO/Partner of AEC Management Resources, a Louisville, Kentucky-based association management firm. Greg's company has been the management company for LDEI since November 2001, making LDEI one of AEC's first clients. His company manages a dozen not-for-profit organizations and foundations, including Foodservice Consultants Society International, North American Thermal Analysis Society, Kentucky Society of Health System Pharmacists, and the Kentucky chapter of Meeting Professionals International. (Greg's first job was staffing a mom & pop grocery and butcher shop.)



LDEI's Woman of Purpose Award in Partnership with YETI

BY GRANDE DAME BEV SHAFFER
(CLEVELAND) LDEI PAST PRESIDENT

It is both an honor and a privilege to introduce you, once again, to our LDEI Woman of Purpose Award in partnership with YETI.

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." - Anne Frank

In 2021, Les Dames d'Escoffier International in partnership with YETI introduced the LDEI Woman of Purpose Award, recognizing an exceptional Dame who has set herself apart by making a positive impact in a local or global community, incorporating the important and complex realms of global sustainability, food justice and public health—a visionary woman who has made strides towards improving our food system.

"YETI is proud to partner with Les Dames d'Escoffier International in support of the second biennial Woman of Purpose Award," said **LeighAnn Bakunas**, Director of Food & Beverage Community Marketing at YETI. "We are honored to recognize the amazing and impactful work these women are doing within their communities and continue to support their efforts in making a difference in food justice, public health, and global sustainability.

Although 2022 was an "off" year for the Woman of Purpose Award (it alternates every year with the Grande Dame Award), we continued to ensure recognition of the exceptional field of the 21 inaugural nominees by establishing the leadership/mentorship group *Inspire & Thrive: Women of Purpose Fostering the Future* <https://ldei.org/awards/woman-of-purpose/>

With the support of our partner, YETI, we were also able to provide four \$2,500 "Growth Grants" selected from written needs essays from the Woman of Purpose nominees of 2021 to enable them to continue their philanthropic work.

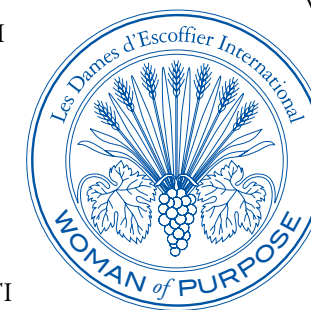
Steve Jobs once said, "If you are working on something exciting that you really care about, you don't have to be pushed. The vision pulls you." One of the many things I LOVE about our organization is it is filled with so many of these visionary women.

The nominee, an active member in good standing of Les Dames d'Escoffier International with a minimum of three years as a member, demonstrates and inspires others by her commitment to one or more of the following, with a local, national and/or international focus by sharing her time, talent and resources to improve others' quality of life:

- Global sustainability
- Food justice
- Public health
- Farming/agriculture
- Food waste systems
- Culinary education
- How we think about food

...and either an LDEI Chapter or another Dame may nominate the candidate.

Watch for details on the call for nominees coming soon!





WITH OUR GRATITUDE!

Dear Dames,
 This letter is a heartfelt thank you from the two of us, along with the New York Chapter (LDNY), for joining us at the 2022 LDEI Conference October 20-23. The Dames took Manhattan with a grin and a roar as almost 300 members arrived from all over the U.S. and abroad to make up for lost pandemic time. How grateful we are that you participated in all that we had planned for you to show the ways in which New York is “Delivering the World on a Plate.”

In the City That Never Sleeps, neither did many of you, as you participated, enthusiastically, in all that was offered: eight Preconference Tours (culinary/cultural tours within Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and Westchester County); “Welcome to the Big Apple Reception” (with greetings from Statue of Liberty and Chrysler Building “living statues;” “Dine Out Like New Yorkers” dinners on your own (using our customized digital restaurant map); Afterparty at the sultry Skylark Lounge; Letter of Welcome to LDEI from NYC Mayor Eric Adams at the Opening Breakfast; motivational speeches by Keynoters Dame **Jessica Harris**, Ph.D., Jeffrey Yoskowitz, and Niki Russ Federman (all of whom tracked America’s current population through the original immigrant diasporas, with many of our ancestors first arriving in NYC); nine Breakout Sessions (providing professional education and personal enrichment); Legacy Awards and Partner luncheons; a tribute to New York Chapter immigrant Dames at the Pier Sixty Reception followed by a glamorous “Club CB” NYC Speakeasy Dinner with Cabaret Entertainment by Dame **Pamela Morgan** and Victor Neufeld’s Jazz Band; the Grande Dame Reception, Gala Dinner, and DJ Party honoring **Bev Shaffer** and **Paula Lambert**; and the passing of the gavel from LDEI President **Deborah Mintcheff** to incoming LDEI President **Jennifer Goldman**.



Delivering the World on a Plate

Our gratitude to those who joined us uptown in Harlem for an ebullient send-off at the rousing Gospel Brunch at Ginny’s at Chef Marcus Samuelson’s iconic Red Rooster—a scholarship fundraiser for the New York Chapter. And thanks to all for supporting sales at our Boutique CB (featuring mementos from our late founder **Carol Brock**) and the Marketplace of New York Dames-produced products. We hope you also enjoyed our first-ever LDEI Conference “Green Swag Bag” filled with many environmentally sensitive items.

We hope you agree that New York’s unique sophistication, style, and swagger have never been more apparent than at our Conference. Applause goes to the hard work and many contributions of our approximately 60 New York Chapter volunteers, donors, speakers, moderators, and panelists, chefs, InterContinental Barclay Hotel and Pier Sixty staffs, LDEI President Deborah Mintcheff and the LDEI Board, Executive Director Greg Jewell and his hardworking team.

We co-chairs had the grandest of times, and have never been prouder of this outstanding organization that we all serve.

With fond appreciation,
 Joan Brower and Marsha Palanci
 New York Conference Co-Chairs



Photo: Susan Slack



INTRODUCING LDEI’S 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Turn to pages 4-6 to learn more about these dynamic Dames.

Front Row (L-R): Erin Byers Murray (Nashville); President Jennifer Goldman (Cleveland); Kathy Gold (Philadelphia); Deborah Mintcheff (New York); Back Row (L-R): Kersten Rettig (Dallas); Marilyn Freundlich (St. Louis); Irene Moore (South Florida); Barb Pires (Atlanta); Stephanie Jaeger (British Columbia); Anita Lau (LA/OC).

Mastering Macarons at the Institute of Culinary Education

BY SYLVIA GANIER (NASHVILLE)

Ask Chef **Kathryn Gordon** about how finicky macarons are and she will tell you forthright about the interesting, odd little “cookies” she has spent an entire career in itself studying. She should know: she literally wrote the book on them! In 2017, Katherine was named one of the Top Ten Pastry Chefs in the United States by Dessert Professional magazine. An enthusiastic bunch of Dames and guests converged on the Institute of Culinary Education (ICE) to learn firsthand from Kathryn and her amazing team including Chef **Jesse Riley** who was invaluable for hands-on instruction. Jesse is an adjunct professor in the Hospitality Department at NYC College of Technology.



From the fascinating history of this ever so delicate art form to a secret method developed after years of study, Kathryn led a fun and rousing course filled with informative and fun facts. Each attendee learned about elements of the French and Italian macaron methods plus experiential nuances. We made saffron macarons filled with saffron-marigold buttercream and pistachio macarons filled with chocolate-pistachio ganache. We were immersed in the art of the macaron, “foot to filling,” which included tasting the finished product. Participants were treated to a tour of the outstanding ICE facilities and enjoyed not only a lovely breakfast, but also a delicious Indian-inspired lunch prepared especially for the group in the ICE cuisine lab. A personalized, autographed copy of Kathryn’s book *Les Petits Macarons* as well as a special, attendees-only “cheat sheet” had us all eager to try our newfound skills upon the return home.



Chef Kathryn Gordon (L) and Chef Jesse Riley. Photos: Sylvia Ganier

A Taste of Culture and Camaraderie in Jackson Heights

BY CHEF HOLLY CHUTE (ATLANTA)

New York, New York—if you can make it there, you can make it anywhere, or so says the great Frank Sinatra! And, what a wonderful tribute to the city and to Les Dames for this year’s “World on a Plate” Conference. There were so many incredible presentations and food opportunities to choose from and participate in. This year, I was fortunate to have selected the chef’s tour and tasting in Jackson Heights in the Borough of Queens.

First, here’s a bit of history. Jackson Heights is made up of an ethnically diverse community, with half the population having been foreign-born since the 2000s. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the neighborhood has a population of over 108,000 people. Much of the neighborhood is part of a national historic district called the Jackson



Heights Historic District, which has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1999. The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation’s historic places worthy of preservation. Jackson Heights certainly fulfills the designation with both its diversity and colorful culture in its growing population.

The Chef’s Tour that I participated in included six different venues with flavors and atmospheres that were distinct and welcoming. Our guides throughout the event were Dame **Surbhi Sahni** (NY) and her associate Raju Ahmmed, whose enthusiasm and knowledge for the food and surrounding area was infectious.

The first stop was Patel Brothers grocery, which provided a great shopping opportunity for snacks, spices, and produce. We were graciously greeted with hot chai and chicken samosas as we entered. Many of us went home with items to incorporate into our next cooking experience. Next, we visited Kabab

continued ON NEXT PAGE

CULTURE

continued from page 10

King, a restaurant focused on Northern Indian cuisine, where we ate chicken curry, a masala omelet, chicken kababs, and a delicious flatbread known as *paratha*.

From there our tour led us to Dhaka Garden, a Bangladeshi-based restaurant. The prevalent flavors of Bangladeshi cuisine include green chilies, mustard seed, and ginger. We enjoyed the tastings of rohu fish (a species of carp), *dal bharta* (a cold mashed lentil and squash mixture), and a yellow dal that was soup-like and served over rice. In addition, potato bharta (similar to potato salad), chicken soup, and chili chicken were served along with *misti doi*—yogurt sweetened with jaggery, an unrefined natural sweetener made from sugar cane juice or palm sap.

Since our time was rapidly disappearing, the next two restaurants kindly brought their cuisine to us. The tasting from Maharaja Foods included the sweet, salty, tangy, crunchy vegetarian snack called *papri chat* and *pani puri*, or crispy, hollow dough puffs filled with potato filling, black chickpeas, tamarind chutney, and green water (*pani*), which was a flavorful blend of mint, rock salt, and black pepper).

Raja Foods, also a Northern Indian restaurant, delighted our palates with *kadhi pakora*. Fried, chickpea batter dumplings with mashed potato were served in a yogurt-based curry with rice providing our taste buds with both flavor and a touch of ethnic flare that was outstanding. We also ate *ras-malai*, sweet cheese dumplings in rose and cardamom milk. We learned a trick of the trade from our hosts regarding the removal of turmeric stains—vinegar and baking soda will get it done!

The afternoon was one that allowed the 14 of us to live within the history of Jackson Heights while enjoying a culinary experience that could only be called both excellent and unique.



Dames and their guests experience Blue Hill at Stone Barns. Chef Dan Barber and team. Bone char.

Dan Barber’s Extraordinary Blue Hill at Stone Barns

BY SUZANNE FELBER (DALLAS)

My first LDEI Conference was in Seattle. I wasn’t sure what to expect, but as soon as I arrived, I was greeted with a glass of delicious Chardonnay and a gracious welcome from Grande Dame **Delores Cakebread**. When she discovered I was new, she introduced me to people and told me all about her pride and joy in Napa—her garden. I promised her that the first stop when I visited Napa would be her gardens, and I kept that promise.

When we arrived at Stone Barns and wandered through their cutting gardens with artichokes, kale, stevia, and beautiful flowers, I couldn’t help but think about Delores and what a memorable trip this would be.

Many of us have heard about Blue Hill at Stone Barns—the restaurants run by Dan, David, and Lauren Barber. Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture was a place that I wasn’t aware of, and after a fantastic introduction upon our arrival, it all made sense. Stone Barns is a not-for-profit, four-season **farm** that is the patchwork where food is grown and harvested sustainably. Its mission is to “Create a consciousness about the effect of everyday food choices.” Blue Hill is a for-profit restaurant showcasing the produce and food grown and harvested at Stone Barns and the surrounding Hudson Valley.

Both are located on 80 acres formerly owned by the Rockefeller estate; 188 acres, part of the adjoining Rockefeller State Park Preserve, is now being used as grazing land by Stone Barns. We were given tours through the growing, livestock, and research labs that made me rethink sustainability. Sustainable living is about so much more than recycling or eating organic foods. It is about living well. So much thought goes into every aspect of the farms.

Where to source seeds, crop rotations, and feeding the livestock greens from the vegetables harvested that day are all discussions to make the best use of the materials available daily.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT, BUT WHAT THEY EAT MATTERS TOO

We were invited into a courtyard with a beautiful herb garden, and we were encouraged to sample the different herbs and use some to flavor a tea they had made for us. There was also a grill and pit area with a plate of charred bone in front of it. They have discovered that bone char has some interesting uses, including being added to cheeses for a unique flavor. They found that the lighter the bone color, the more flavor it has, and the microbes in the cheese interact with the bone char for a distinctive flavor. The resident ceramic artist uses bone char to make the bone china used in the restaurant and dining areas. When they didn’t have bones from their animals, they tried using the bones from commercially fed cows, but the bones from those cows fell apart and were like spider webs. It was a great example of how you live and what you eat truly does affect your health and wellness.

At lunch, we sampled the different items grown at Stone Barns and a perfectly paired Chardonnay from Oceano Wines. It was the perfect opportunity to get to know some of the other Dames on the tour and share our experiences. We also could walk through the Blue Hill restaurant and catch a glimpse of Chef Dan Barber and his team in the kitchen.

I need to remember what it tastes like to eat a carrot right from the soil. I am envious of the local community farm and livestock shares available to local residents who can enjoy the innovative items grown at the farm. Visiting Stone Barns got me excited about volunteering at my neighborhood community garden and revisiting what sustainability is all about.



Strolling Through History on the Lower East Side

BY CAROL HACKER (CLEVELAND)

We started our tour at the Essex Market, which has been around for over 100 years and was originally an indoor area for pushcarts. Our guides, Kevin and Jennifer had an amazing knowledge of the general and culinary history of the Lower East Side. Who knew that oysters were so plentiful in New York harbor that they were the #1 food for all social classes in New York until the 1920s!



With the persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe there was a mass influx of Jews to New York by the mid 1800s. By the end of the 19th century, the Lower East Side was the largest Jewish city and the most densely populated area in the world. Most tenements did not have kitchens, and you were lucky to get water somewhere in the building. Immigrants needed to make a living and people needed to eat and buy essentials, so pushcarts were the “stores.” Entry into the business world for most immigrants was getting a pushcart to sell your wares. Most businesses that eventually had a storefront started with a pushcart

(I want to know who produced all the pushcarts and how much money they made...)

The first eating stop for us was Kosar’s Bagels & Bialys. It has been in business for over 100 years, first as a pushcart and in the current storefront since 1936. Eating bagels with a hefty portion of smoked salmon spread and a big slice of chocolate babka had us already feeling full and glad we had some walking to do.

We passed what was one of the oldest synagogues; in 1900, it had the largest congregation in the country. It is now the Angel Orensanz Foundation, seemingly best known as where Sarah Jessica Parker and Matthew Broderick were married.

The Tenement Museum gave us a view into the daily life of an immigrant woman in the early 1900s. Families of six living in a two-room apartment without indoor plumbing would not have been easy, but it also fostered community among the women living there. When the meat monopolies raised the price of Kosher meat by one-third in 1902, it was the women who organized a boycott, and 20,000 women in the streets made a difference.

On our way to lunch we stopped in at Economy Candy, the oldest candy store in New York (yes, originally started as a pushcart). The huge



Dames tour the Lower East Side. The Tenement Museum was home to generations of immigrant families from the 1860s to the 1930s. Abandoned, it has now been lovingly restored. This area was once known as Kleindeutschland, or “Little-Germany,” an ethnic enclave that developed from an influx of German migration in the mid-19th-century. Prior to that, in the 17th century, the land where the museum sits was the first settlement in NYC where Black residents owned farms and homes. Bottom right: Inside Economy Candy. Photos: Carol Hacker.

assortment of candies—including contemporary varieties and favorites remembered from childhood—was overwhelming. Tootsie Rolls, Life Savers, and animal crackers were invented in New York and sold at Economy Candy.

When we got to Katz’s Deli, the oldest, still-functioning deli in America, the line was down the block but we had a table reserved. Our guide explained that the family had been approached to sell the

building for many millions. Instead of selling the building, they sold the air rights for millions, which is the space above the building that could then be developed. Only in New York, as I doubt that would work where most of us live! A feast of pickles, potato salad, coleslaw, knishes, fries, corned beef, pastrami, brisket, and turkey sandwiches awaited us, served family style. Totally stuffed, we headed back to the hotel for a food-induced nap.

DUMBO

continued from page 12

John Augustus Roebling was the mastermind behind the bridge and developed a method of weaving wire cables for support. Bridge construction began in 1869 and was completed in 1883. Unfortunately, he died of tetanus due to an accident during the construction of the bridge. John’s son, Washington Augustus Roebling, took over from his father, but he too was injured during the construction. Washington suffered decompression sickness and was confined to his apartment. His wife Emily, a socialite and engineer, became the supervisor and project manager and was the first person to cross the bridge. In advance of the official opening, she drove a carriage across at a trot to test the vibrations. She carried a rooster with her to symbolize victory.

Ribbon cuttings are always a circus. The opening of the Brooklyn Bridge was no exception. P.T. Barnum of Barnum and Bailey provided 21 elephants along with 17 camels to walk across the bridge and test its strength. The test was successful and on May 24th, 1883, the bridge opened to the public. For its time, it was the longest suspension bridge. The Brooklyn Bridge was a great achievement and has been lauded by poets, painters, and the public. According to current statistics, more than 100,000 cars, 4,000 cyclists, and 10,000 pedestrians cross the bridge daily.

At the opening ceremony, Congressman Abram Stevens Hewett who went onto become mayor stated “...the bridge was an everlasting monument to the sacrificing devotion of a woman and a tribute to her education and tenacity that had gone unnoticed and unrecognized.”

The first stop in DUMBO was La Bagel Delight. True to the tour name the Dames noshed on bagels and “schmear” under the arch of the Manhattan Bridge. A correct NY bagel must be Hand Rolled—crisp on the outside and soft on the inside. Locals love

their independent coffee shops so next on the agenda was Dawn’s ‘til Dusk, the re-imagined One Girl Cookies’ Shop for tea cookies. Favorites were the chai shortbread cookies and the lavender rosemary cookies. The Whoopie Pies were tempting and could not be missed. A must stop was the artisan bakery, Almondine, for delightfully, buttery croissants. Dames kept their eyes on the marvelous meringues in the bakery case, but did not succumb to the temptation.

While the intrepid guide from We-Ventures procured some savory delights, the Dames were able to take in the views of the Manhattan skyline, the East River, ferries and barges from the rooftop of the Time Out Market. Inside the Market, the Dames consumed fabulous chicken empanadas from the migrant kitchen that specializes in Arab-Latino cuisine. For every meal served, the migrant kitchen donates a meal to a family in need.

After all the carbs, it was time for another walk outside. David and Jane Walentas had the vision to develop DUMBO. David spent 12 million dollars to buy up warehouses and other buildings in a dying industrial area near the Brooklyn Bridge that now houses trendy restaurants, shops, and galleries. Jane’s Carousel sits in a park near the Brooklyn Bridge. The Walentas bought the 1922 vintage carousel at auction in 1984. Jane painstakingly used an X-acto knife to remove layers of paint to restore the classic carousel to its original grandeur. 27 years later, Jane’s Carousel opened in 2011 and remains a fun family destination.

The last stop on the tour was Fulton Landing of the Robert Fulton Steamboat fame. The Dames dined on slices of coal-fired pizza from Juliana’s Pizza. It was hard not to think this tour was full of guilty pleasures. Luckily for the Dames, according to Dame Liz Barrett’s calculation, those on the trip walked at least 8500 steps. The history, sights, food, and exercise were a wonderful start to a fantastic Conference.



At Kimlau Square, Chloe Chan shares Chinatown’s history Photo: Susan Slack.

Historic Chinatown

BY SUSAN F. SLACK (CHARLESTON)



Fourteen Dames traveled to Lower Manhattan’s Chinatown for an educational walking tour with Chloe Chan, an engaging guide from the Mott Street Girls (aka M.S.G.). Chloe and partner Anna Huang launched their business during the pandemic. Looking beneath the tourist façade, they share the authentic stories of the Chinatown community to promote knowledge and better understanding of its culture and rich history.

With a population of up to 100,000 people, Chinatown is a city within a city, created as a haven for Chinese Americans and Asian immigrants. The neighborhood has maintained its core identity since immigrants began arriving in large numbers in the 1870s. It is the oldest of nine Chinatown neighborhoods within New York City.

The tour began at Kam Hing Coffee Shop, a Chinatown landmark. A sign on the building reads, “Best sponge cake in town.” We savored the ethereal, paper-wrapped sponge cakes in a rainbow of flavors and colors: e.g., pandan, lychee rose, black sesame, coconut, green tea, and ube (purple yam). You can’t eat just one! The shop is a favorite with seniors who come daily to enjoy the tranquility of sipping tea and eating sponge cakes with friends.

By the 1880s, Mott, Pell, and Doyers Streets were the heartbeat of “China

Walk the Brooklyn Bridge and Spend the Morning in Trendy DUMBO

BY TORIA EMAS (CHICAGO)

On a picture perfect October morning, Jerry Farney and his harem of 14 Dames walked the Brooklyn Bridge and ate their way through DUMBO (Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass). From the moment the van left the Barclay Hotel, Dame Julie Chernoff regaled the group with her theatrical experience in New



York City—small apartment, audition calls, off-Broadway theater companies and where to immerse oneself in the NYC vibe. Rolling down Lexington, Julie pointed out such iconic shops as Kalustyan’s, which is known for Indian and Middle Eastern spices and foods.

Dame Vanessa Trost met the van at City Hall where the official tour began. Vanessa shared local lore along the way and gave the more adventurous Dames alternative routes back to the hotel.

continued ON NEXT PAGE



Photos: Toria Emas.



PRECONFERENCE TOURS

CHINATOWN

continued from page 13

Town.” Developed by immigrants native to Guangdong Province, the streets still exude the vibes of Old Chinatown. (There’s also an enclave with a large population from Fujian Province.) Dames strolled along Mott Street, the “unofficial Main Street,” past diverse restaurants, tearooms, noodle shops, and bakeries. Sidewalk grocery displays presented a kaleidoscope of sights, smells, and tastes.

Dames visited Mott Street Eatery, a new Chinese food court serving Peking duck pizza, lobster burgers, Hong Kong cakes, and bubble tea. The largest vendor, 98 Eatery, specializes in congee, dumplings, and barbecue meats. At the porcelain shop Wing On Wo & Co., the oldest operating store in Chinatown, we learned that fifth-generation owner Mei Lum founded the **W.O.W. Project** to inspire the community to push back against gentrification through arts, culture, and activism.

Leaving the bustle of Mott Street, Dames walked to Canal Street’s Mahayana Buddhist Temple adjacent to the imposing Arch and Colonnade of the Manhattan Bridge Approach. A pair of majestic, golden lions (*shishi*) guard the entrance; inside, an imposing 16-foot-tall Buddha rests on a lotus flower. The walls hold 32 framed prints portraying Buddha’s pivotal life events. Families pay respect to deceased relatives by offering prayers and offerings.

Kimlau Square is a pedestrian island in the center of Chatham Square, a major intersection where eight streets

converge. Fujianese immigrants erected the statue of Lin Ze Xu here in 1997. The formidable bureaucrat led the fight to halt illegal importation of opium from the British. The Kimlau War Memorial honors Americans of Chinese ancestry who lost their lives serving the nation.

Chloe discussed the anti-Chinese movement against the first wave of 19th century immigrants in the West. When the Gold Rush ended and the transcontinental railroad was complete, employment collapsed. Chinese laborers moved East to help develop New York’s Chinatown. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 slowed its growth and prohibited naturalization. The 1900 census reports that 4,000 men and 36 married women lived in Chinatown. In 1965, the Immigration and Naturalization Act granted Chinese citizens and immigrants full rights.

Current struggles include skyrocketing rent prices and anti-Chinese xenophobia associated with the pandemic. Chinatown is resilient; grassroots organizations are working to preserve its heritage—both tangible and intangible. **Liz Young** (LDNY) advises, “It’s up to us to visit and support Chinatowns across the country to maintain and elevate these cultural enclaves that enrich each town where they developed.”

Chinatown is a canvas for imaginative street artists. **The Chinatown Mural Project** is transforming dull walls and streets with large-scale, culturally appropriate murals like the one of Corky Lee on Doyers Street. The late Chinese-American photojournalist used his camera to fight social injustice. The vibrant art brightens



Katherine Newell Smith (R) and Cheryl Hartell share a taste of Zongzi, a sticky rice dumpling wrapped in fragrant bamboo leaves. Chinese sausage, dried shrimp, peanuts, and split mung beans are often added. Photo: Liz Young. Steamed dumplings and flaky custard tarts. Photo: Blanca Aldaco. Tea-lunch at House of Joy. Photo: Liz Young.

neighborhoods and increases foot traffic, benefitting local businesses. Several murals depict whimsical animals engaged in routine cultural activities and celebrations.

The repurposed asphalt on Doyers Street is a pedestrian space painted to reflect a technicolor rainbow. Chloe said the colorful, 200-foot-long street was once ground zero for warring Tong (secret societies). The street’s sharp bend, dubbed “the Bloody Angle,” allowed Tong fighters to stay out of sight until their adversaries blindly turned the corner; underground tunnels provided a quick getaway.

Another highlight was eating dim sum (“touching the heart”

at House of Joy on Pell Street. The 500-seat banquet hall filled quickly as Dames gathered around a large, family-style table for a tea-lunch coordinated by Chloe. A steady flow of bamboo steamer baskets arrived on rolling trolleys with a variety of shrimp, pork, and taro-filled dumplings. Lunch included spring rolls, fried rice, sautéed garlicky string beans, beef chow fun, steamed custard buns, flaky custard tarts, and of course, Chinese tea. Dim sum is traditionally served at *yum cha* (“drink tea”), a Cantonese-style brunch. These days, it may also include dishes and traditions adopted from other parts of China. Dim sum is food for sharing.

Breakfast at the James Beard House and a Stroll

BY MARY ABBOTT HESS (CHICAGO)

Our perfectly escorted tour was a triple header that included the James Beard House, the High Line, and the Chelsea Market. After taking turns getting our photographs taken under the James Beard House plaque, we were ushered into the famous Greenwich Village home of the dean of American cooking. We were greeted with many photographs and portraits, as well as old menus



continued ON NEXT PAGE

JAMES BEARD

continued from page 14

and tributes to the celebrated champion of American cooking. Just a few steps further and we found ourselves in the demonstration kitchen where many classes had been taught by the gastronome himself. Today the kitchen has been upgraded to include the equipment visiting chefs need to prepare dinners for up to 200 guests. We were fortunate to have **Susanna Foo** in our group and she told us firsthand what it takes to put on a dinner at the Beard House.

Behind the kitchen, a glass atrium led to a spacious courtyard used for pre-dinner cocktails. There’s also a stairway up to the second floor where we were treated to a continental breakfast of New York’s finest chocolate croissants, babka, and of course, bagels with shmears. After taking turns experiencing the famous bathroom, which is completely mirrored, we were educated about the James Beard Foundation. We learned that beyond the well-known awards, dinners, and events, that the current focus of the Foundation has expanded to include advocacy. The Foundation has created a Women Leadership Program, Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change, and the Leadership Awards.

Next stop, the High Line. Created on a former NY Central Railway spur, the High Line offered us a leisurely stroll high above the old meat packing section of Chelsea. Beautifully landscaped with native trees and plants and dotted with sculptures and seating areas, this park in the sky was the perfect segue from the Beard House to Chelsea Market with lovely views of the Hudson reflecting the bright morning sun.

Hungry after our walk, we eventually arrived at our final destination, the Chelsea Market. Originally the Nabisco factory, this remodeled and repurposed block-long building is now a food hall with specialty shops that serve 15,000-20,000 visitors a day. Until recently, the Food Network was housed on the second floor of the market. Now that space is being used by Hot Bread Kitchen. We were all impressed with this extraordinary nonprofit that creates economic opportunity through careers in foodservice. They offer an intensive five-week program for immigrant women and women of color. The program provides job training tailored to the goal of each participant followed by job placement and social services to help assure success.

The grand finale of the tour was an over-the-top lunch featuring a variety of foods from establishments in the market owned by fellow Dames. We enjoyed a selection of American artisan cheeses, melt-in-your-mouth pumpkin ravioli, crispy and spicy Korean chicken, delicate dim sum pork dumplings, and refreshing green papaya salad and more followed by a gift bag of freshly baked cookies, Italian candies, and inventive halvah treats.



Tour group and James Beard House kitchen photos: Mary A. Hess. Chelsea Market Lunch: Suzanne Brown.



Dame Yvette Leeper-Bueno discusses the luncheon courses at Vinatería, which serves some of Harlem’s most vibrant, Spanish-influenced Italian cuisine. Our tour guide, Mr. Harlem. Photos: Robin Griffith.

Historic West Harlem Neighborhood

BY ROBIN GRIFFITH (CHARLESTON)

This was an amazing way to spend a brisk, sunny day in New York City with my fellow Dames! On Thursday, October 20, a group of ladies (and a spouse) spend five hours on a tour around West Harlem with our knowledgeable and lively tour guide known as Mr. Harlem. We ended our walk-about with an incredible three-course lunch at fellow New York Dame **Yvette Leeper-Bueno’s** trendy restaurant, Vinatería.



As our group walked from location to location, Mr. Harlem shared the history and stories about the area, often with passionate detail. His descriptions made each of us feel as if the streets of Harlem could talk—telling us about its iconic culture and heritage, residents, and architecture.

Mr. Harlem himself has deep roots in Harlem and New York City. As he led us around the borough, he shared how he and many other residents of the area were passionately involved in serving the interests of the community and preserving what makes Harlem great. It’s important to them that the area stays authentic—in many ways.

Harlem has long been an important center of African American culture and history, as well as the heart of New York City’s jazz scene. We admired the district’s elegant brownstones that were located on tree-lined streets with private gardens and a famous bakery or other shop tucked in here and there.

We learned about the Harlem Renais-

sance and Civil Rights eras. Along the way we stopped to look up and acknowledge the street names that memorialized those trailblazers that were there before us. When we stopped at the Harriett Tubman Memorial, our guide made sure we noticed that the landscaping around the little park included cotton plants, and that we understood the significance. For me, it was amazing to see cotton growing AND blooming in mid-October—and in New York City nonetheless! We stopped to take a photo in front of the offices of the *Amsterdam News*, which is one of the most influential and oldest continuously published African American newspapers. It was established in 1909 by a local resident and continues to this day. The newspaper predominately focuses on issues in African American culture, especially those events and issues concerning New York City from a Black perspective. Among other locations, we went to the Apollo Theater, the spot where the Savoy Ballroom once stood, and walked through newly revitalized apartment complexes; one with a brand-new school.

There was no better way to end this wonderful morning than to have our group walk into the warm (figuratively and literally) and welcoming Vinatería, a Black-owned and women-led restaurant on Frederick Douglass Blvd. Dame Yvette welcomed us all to her place, which clearly showed her passion for the neighborhood, the community, and for bringing people together. We immediately felt at home. After introductions and a glass of wine as we got settled, we dove into a wonderful meal. Each of the three courses was accompanied by an interesting story or description. To top it all off, the courses were paired with wines produced by women.

By Candy Leshner
(Phoenix)

Chapter Leadership Forum:

Leadership—without it there is no forward movement. As veterans in a rapidly evolving industry, we've taken part in the success and failures of businesses. With few exceptions (one being COVID lockdowns), the outcome oftentimes hinges on leadership. And there is no arguing the fact that morale always hinges on leadership!

To expand and enhance our understanding of this vital skillset, LDEI offered members a Conference Leadership Forum that was orchestrated by Chapter Board Liaisons (CBL) **Marilyn Freundlich** (St. Louis), **Stephanie Jaeger** (BC), and **Irene Moore** (South Florida). Marilyn welcomed the attendees and introduced the CBL's. The thread of continuity was a TED Talk video by Adam Grant titled "Are You a Giver or a Taker?" Stephanie introduced **Jenny Vergara** (Kansas City) who opened the discussion on mentorship.

It was clear why the Kansas City Chapter is a pillar of Dame mentorship. Their mentorship program assigns a veteran Dame to come alongside new inductees for their first few years, guiding them through their development as a member and acting as a bridge between that member and the chapter.

In essence, they have created a more intimate model of LDEI's CBL program. This allows for those initial questions about, and insights into, meeting protocols, fundraising efforts, sponsoring new members, mission statements, committees, dues and more to be answered by an experienced, amicable mentor. It is apparent that this process effectively funnels the engagement energies of new members directly into the chapter's common goals, further supporting their culture. What does initiating such a

program look like beyond basic interactions and grounded friendships? The Kansas City Dames implement a special monthly gathering where mutual collaboration between new and mentoring members establishes the engagement level of new Dames. Noted insights to come out of this process included the revelation that the two groups often had distinctly different expectations and goals, which once recognized, could be assessed and addressed. Those gaps were then bridged and leveraged for positive outcomes, rather than creating divisions between new and veteran members.

San Diego Dames **Janet Burgess** and **Maria Gomez-Laurens** gave us great insight into awareness of the consuming burnout that those in leadership roles are regularly exposed to. It's a deep pit to climb out of once you slip down that hill of "easier to do it myself." Creating strong, collaborative support teams was the overriding solution; having consistent and regular team updates ensures one person is not carrying the full load.

Jill Weber (Philadelphia) guided us on the critical topic of leadership discernment. Knowing who to put in the bus driver's seat, who to trust as co-pilot, who to designate as navigator, and who the backups are is crucial. Understanding not only the skill level and personality aspects required for each position, but also the underlying character of each individual member becomes a huge factor in developing effective leadership.

This requires taking time to personally get to know members, then gauging when, and when not, to engage them in crucial roles. Effectively, this circled back to the Kansas City Chapter solution of mentor/mentee support. Mentors help assess which teams



(Top L-R): Janet Burgess (San Diego president); CBL Irene Moore (South Florida); CBL Stephanie Jaeger (British Columbia); Maria Gomez-Laurens (San Diego, past international president); Jenny Vergara (Kansas City president); Jill Weber (Philadelphia president); CBL Marilyn Freundlich (Saint Louis).

and tasks would best suit newer inductees; success in first chapter roles will set the stage for new members' future desire to engage and excel.

Rounding out the forum was a robust breakout session headed up by Irene Moore. It focused on a series of questions that led attendees through the critical assessment processes of leadership, in addition to sharing and engaging in individual chapter practices. Ideas and thoughts were noted faster than one could write them down. Afterwards, Marilyn Freundlich announced changes in the CBL president's

groups for next year.

The Leadership Forum could well have been extended another hour or two, and it still would have only scratched the surface of audience experience. Ultimately, I walked away with a keener appreciation for how the right leadership is a fundamental cornerstone to every chapter's success. And it didn't take a college degree in business to recognize the underlying theme—relationships and how we speak and engage with members is our biggest tool to elevating and transforming the culture—and assuring the success of our chapters!

FIRST TIME ATTENDEES



Having attended my first LDEI annual conference, here's my advice—expect abundance—abundant heartfelt welcome, abundant business connections, resources and opportunities, an embarrassing wealth of bold, talented sister Dames spearheading initiatives to make the world better and more delicious.... and bring your dancing shoes.

Ellen Kanner, Syndicated columnist (Washington, D.C.)

"... I am very grateful for your invitation to be part of this great initiative of women who have dedicated their lives and are entrepreneurs in the field of food, beverage, and hospitality. This trip to New York City, where I had the opportunity to meet many women with extraordinary knowledge, helped strengthen and reassure my passion... my heart is full of joy, knowledge, and the great love I received from many Dames.

Olga Cabrera, Restaurateur (Oaxaca, Mexico)

The experience at our Conference was simply energizing! The breakout sessions I attended created a large awareness about the overturning of land to help the next generation of farmers to grow crops. I also enjoyed the new options for alcohol-free beverages from Spiritless. As women in the hospitality industry we juggle so much, and we do like to party... we are much happier and productive when there are little toxins in our body... being amongst so much expertise and passion made me feel very special

Joselyn Holmes, Natural Detox Club (Atlanta)

I was excited to experience what seasoned Dames had always talked about, and it exceeded my expectations. The beautiful tour of Stone Barns at Blue Hill will be a lasting memory... Seeing the impact of the Legacy Awards for the winners helped me further understand the mission of the organization. I cannot wait to see my new friends in Oaxaca after winning a trip to Flavors of Mexico in the raffle!!

Amanee Neirouz, Relish Restaurant Group (Charleston)

Every Dame that has ever attended a national conference will tell you that you must go—there is nothing like it... Meeting all the Dames from around the globe, touring Harlem, and the outstanding programming was something I will not soon forget. Seeing our organization's initiatives come to life with the recognitions given, awards presented, and scholarships distributed show how blessed we all are to be able to call ourselves Dames.

Robin Lee Griffith, CEO Epicuity, LLC

This was my first Conference, but I already marked next year's event on the calendar. I was blown away by the diversity of fields and expertise of speakers and fellow attendees! I was received warmly and became acquainted with many I now call friends and colleagues.

Barbara Abbott, Canton Food Tours, (Cleveland)

WELCOME TO THE BIG APPLE

By JANET BURGESS (SAN DIEGO)

On a cool autumn evening in New York City, LDEI members from across the globe gathered at the InterContinental Barclay Hotel to reconnect with old friends and to make new ones. The buzz in the room was energetic and lively. Upon entering the reception, the first thing that immediately caught your eye



was two very statuesque ladies, one dressed as the Statue of Liberty with her torch and the other as the Empire State Building—two famous New York landmarks. Unmistakable in their costumes, the models stood between 6'6" and 6'9" tall and were visible from every angle of the room. Dozens of photographs were taken by Dames who looked quite tiny standing next to the models.

A beautiful dual bar in the middle of the room allowed Dames to circulate and mingle. While waiting for a wine or prosecco, hotel staff passed delicious mini quesadillas and crab cakes. Located on food tables around the room were selections of Partner Kerrygold's blue and cheddar cheeses and slices of baguette. It was hard to not nibble too much during the festive reception as most Dames were going out to dinner at one of the nearly 27,000 restaurants in New York City.

One of the happenings this night was that Dame **Maria Gomez-Laurens**, founder of the Mexico City Chapter, presented all the members of that chapter with a beautiful bracelet. It was a lovely evening for everyone to visit and the beginning of a fabulous Conference.



The Skylark Lounge: A Birds-Eye View of New York at Night

By SUSAN SWAGLER (BIRMINGHAM)

The bright lights of the big city were the perfect, sparkly backdrop to a special cocktail party for Dames on Thursday evening after they dined throughout the city.

The semi-private fête at The Skylark, an upscale lounge 30 stories above the heart of Times Square, was limited to 50 Dames and guests, so those in attendance had to sign up early. Their reward: an intimate party and a true NYC nightlife experience in one of Manhattan's coolest (and highest) lounges. A company owned by LDNY Dames **Alison Awerbuch** and **Abigail Kirsch** manages this beautiful and trendy space—with breathtaking views of a city that certainly wasn't sleeping!

The rooftop, indoor lounge is sophisticated and comfortable with plenty of communal sofa seating in front of floor-to-ceiling windows. Stylish lighting illuminated modern art on the walls and books and objects d'art arranged on consoles. A DJ kept the vibe upbeat and fun with music ranging from Prince's "Raspberry Beret" to Lynyrd Skynyrd's

"Sweet Home Alabama." Dames also could venture to the outdoor viewing areas for spectacular photo ops of some of New York's most iconic scenes including the Hudson River, the Empire State Building, Times Square, and the Chrysler Building.

Our dedicated bartenders made drinks to order (everyone got two drink tickets to sample cocktails from The Skylark's award-winning mixologists or for beer or wine). One of The Skylark's signature cocktails was a batched, maple walnut Old Fashioned that was deliciously seasonal with fall spices.

Passed savory hors d'oeuvres showcased a world of flavors: delicious Wagyu sliders with onion jam; crispy duck confit empanadas; umami-rich, miso-glazed king mushrooms; and earthy beet and goat cheese crostini. And sweet treats included little strawberry and chocolate sandwiches and dark chocolate bites.

This optional (and sold-out) event was the perfect way to enjoy this amazing city and kick off our international Conference in truly high style.

Photos: Hayley Matson-Mathes





Conference Co-Chairs Joan Brower and Marsha Palanci presented President Deborah Mintcheff with a welcome letter from NY Mayor Eric Adams saying he was grateful for LDEI for its efforts “to enrich our dynamic and resilient restaurant landscape, especially after two very difficult years. I applaud LDEI’s leadership and members for all they do to advance the culinary arts while empowering women leaders...” The mayor also extended congratulations to Grande Dames Paula Lambert and Bev Shaffer and also to recipients of the Legacy Awards and the M.F.K. Fisher prize. During the Keynote Breakfast, each guest received a Seafoam YETI Rambler, 10-ounce Wine Tumbler made from 18/8 stainless steel and vacuum-insulated. Breakfast included Granola Parfaits with Greek Yogurt and Local Honey, and Farmers Market Scramble of Roasted Ratatouille Vegetables, Feta Cheese, Island Tricolor Potatoes, and Roasted Vine-Ripened Tomatoes. —S. Slack.

Welcome to the New York Conference Opening Breakfast, Friday, October 21, 2022. It is my very great honor to introduce one of our own —Dame Jessica B. Harris...author, editor or translator of 18 books, including 12 cookbooks documenting the foods and foodways of the African Diaspora. Considered one of the world’s preeminent scholars on this subject, she has lectured widely in the United States and abroad, and has written extensively for academic and popular publications... For five decades, she was a professor at Queens College/ CUNY in New York and is currently professor emerita at that institution. Dr. Harris was elected to the James Beard “Who’s Who of Food and Drink in America” and was inducted into the Cookbook Hall of Fame for her body of work, receiving their Lifetime Achievement Award in 2020. Last year, she was named one of *Time* magazine’s “100 Most Influential People in the World.”—Excerpt from introduction by Joan Brower.

BROCK CIRCLE SPONSORS KEYNOTE SPEECH



Dame Jessica Harris, Ph.D. (New York) *“Some Thoughts on the World of Food and Foods of the World”*

BY OLGA BOIKESS
 (WASHINGTON, D.C.)

Relaxed and at ease, (sublimely at ease), the renown Jessica Harris could have been chatting in one’s living room. Instead, she was on stage in NYC’s InterContinental Barclay Hotel’s grand ballroom, giving the Conference’s opening address. Paying tribute to her New York City hometown’s diverse dining scene, she drew on the lessons she learned there, and in her travels, about the world’s foods and the people it sustains.



International School. Birthday parties and potluck suppers introduced her to the “tastes of the world.” Sharing their culture’s food with her classmates and their families prepared her for a future of diplomatic *détentes* developed at dinner tables.

She continued her omnivore vocation as a restaurant reviewer at NYC’s *Village Voice* newspaper. She “ranged widely with a fork”—Spanish Harlem, Korea-town, Little India, and Brighton Beach as well as revisiting classics in Brooklyn and Chinatown, and the “old” Red Rooster (a bar) in Harlem. She was there for the opening salvo of the food renaissance at destinations like the Four Seasons and La Grenouille (“gobbling a fish head”).

The African Diaspora is central to the next chapter in her culinary history. The foods of Haiti, Brazil (enjoyed on Manhattan’s 46th

Street), Creole Chinese as found in Cuba and Dominican Republic and West African *doner* are illustrative examples. References to NYC-themed songs like “New York, New York, It’s a Hell of a Town;” “I’m in a New York State of Mind;” and “A Red Rose in Spanish Harlem” headlined her eating adventures.

“Respect,” the Otis Redding hit song, along with the concepts of Equality and Equity sum up her Conference message. “For more than 200 years, service was about slavery and then disenfranchisement,” she explained. Citing a “disparity of income and gratitude and recognition,” she called for a “reset in restaurant kitchens.” This means “respect, decent wages, and honor in the dignity of the work.” Concerns about appropriation would be met with both “appreciation and rewards for people who created it.” In clos-

ing, this omnivore and diaspora diner reiterated the themes of Equity, Appropriation, Terroir, and Savor.

During a lively Q and A session, she referenced Miss Manner’s observation that Southern hospitality is rooted in African traditions of welcome. After all, she explained, “It was the Black housekeeper who raised the children...instructing them how to behave.”

Asked about tipping—she recommended adding 30 percent to the check, and she stressed that diners should say thank you and be on their good behavior. She advises that grace, a little-used word, can help, “...until we solve the financial issues about wages and tips.” When asked how to teach about equity, she suggested encouraging students to have hands-on experiences (like working at a food bank) for a first-hand look at inequities and issues.

LDEI’S 2023 BROCK CIRCLE COMMITTEE



Stephanie Jaeger, co-chair
 Treasurer, LDEI
 Member, British Columbia Chapter



Deborah Mintcheff, co-chair
 Immediate Past President, LDEI
 Member, New York Chapter



Toria Emas
 Past President, LDEI
 Member, Chicago Chapter



Nancy Fitch
 President, San Antonio Chapter
 Member, San Antonio Chapter



Hayley Matson-Mathes
 Past President LDEI
 Member, Hawaii Chapter





Special thanks to our Partners for hosting an exceptional, celebratory lunch: Yeti, Buffalo Trace, Tito's, Niman Ranch, Kerrygold, Olio Piro olive oil, and The Wine Group.



A CELEBRATORY LUNCH SHOWCASES LDEI PARTNERS

BY SHARON OLSON
(CHICAGO)

Les Dames d'Escoffier Partners and their products were featured throughout the Annual Conference. Their companies were showcased to all those attending in video presentations at a celebratory lunch on Friday afternoon.



The Conference provided an opportunity for continuing partners to strengthen their relationships with our members, and for new partners to experience the distinctive opportunity LDEI partnership provides to connect with a global audience of influencers and professional leaders in food, fine beverage, and hospitality.

LDEI President **Deborah Mintcheff** (NY) recognized the value of our partner relationships and applauded the efforts of **Bev Shaffer** (Cleveland), LDEI Past President and Director of Development who secured a record \$160,000 in fund-

ing from partners this year.

Bev's passion for the program was evident in her comment, "I so enjoy working with new and returning partners. Customizing partnerships allows us to seek out those companies—regardless of their size—that share our values with a vision and a mission of supporting women and a commitment to philanthropy."

Several of our partners shared their own perspectives. Emily Battle of The Wine Group said, "We are thrilled to partner with LDEI to promote the development of women in the food, beverage, and hospitality industries. LDEI is a unique opportunity for our company to participate in LDEI's mission to inspire women to thrive and lead within our community."

LeighAnn Bakunas (Austin), Director, Community Marketing at YETI said, "YETI is proud to continue to partner with Les Dames d'Escoffier International to support and recognize the amazing and impactful work these women are doing within the food and beverage industry. Supporting our communities and those who continue to do inspiring and impor-

tant work has always been at the core of the YETI brand, so we are honored to partner with LDEI."

Marie-Charlotte Piro (South Florida), CEO, Olio Piro shared her thoughts as a new partner saying, "The feature of our premium Extra Virgin Olive Oil Piro within the Dames Partner lunch was such a great add on to my participation to the Conference." She visited tables around the ballroom during lunch, adding, "It was a perfect occasion to raise awareness for our new Tuscan Olive Oil by allowing our Dames to taste and enjoy it with a perfectly curated dish—a fresh burrata and tomato salad, and most of all, to exchange about its freshness and flavors with other Dames, because after all, it was all about enjoying a great meal together."

Before heading off to the afternoon sessions refreshed and inspired, Bev Shaffer reminded Dames to support our partners beyond the celebratory moments at the Conference, saying, "I want to encourage every Dame to support our partners through purchases on a personal and professional level."



YETI

YETI

YETI is a rapidly growing designer, marketer, retailer, and distributor of a variety of innovative, branded, premium products to a wide-ranging customer base. The brand's promise is to ensure that each YETI product delivers exceptional performance and durability in any environment, whether in the kitchen, on the road, or anywhere else life takes you. Austin Dame **LeighAnn Bakunas**, Senior Marketing Manager, represented YETI during the New York Conference. Each lucky Conference attendee received a customized, YETI Rambler® 10 ounce wine tumbler. Crafted with 18/8 gauge stainless steel and double-wall vacuum insulation, the tumbler "keeps wine safe from warm hands, and goes where glass can't." Read more about YETI's partnership with LDEI in *Bev Shaffer's* report on the Woman of Purpose Award, page xxx.

www.YETI.com



THE WINE GROUP

The Wine Group is a global leader in the wine industry with over 60 of your favorites brands like Cupcake, Imagery, Tribute, Chloe, 7 Deadly, Franzia, MD 20/20, and many others. Conference attendees enjoyed their wine selections including Imagery Pinot Noir, Imagery Cabernet Sauvignon, and Chloe Pinot Grigio at the Partner's Showcase Luncheon. Representing The Wine Group during Conference were Sonoma Dame **Nichole Quandt** (L-photo), Senior Director of Sales and Hospitality, Benziger, Imagery, & Concannon Wineries; and Emily Battle, Director of Marketing Innovation at The Wine Group.

www.thewinegroup.com



WENTE VINEYARDS

WENTE FAMILY ESTATES

Wente Vineyards is the country's oldest continuously-operated, family-owned winery in the country. The winery maintains its leadership role in California winegrowing under the ownership and management of the fourth and fifth generations of the Wente family. Wente Family Estates is the national and international sales and marketing organization representing Wente Vineyards, Double Decker, Murrieta's Well, and Hayes Ranch wineries. San Francisco Dame **Aly Wente**, VP of Marketing, and fifth generation winegrower, presented several Wente wines during the Conference including 2020 Murrieta's Well Sauvignon Blanc and 2021 Eric's Small Lot Chardonnay. In 2020, LDEI's prestigious Grande Dame Award was bestowed upon Wente Vineyards CEO **Carolyn Wente**.

www.wentefamilyestates.com
www.wentevineyards.com



TITO'S HANDMADE VODKA

Tito's Handmade Vodka—America's Original Craft Vodka—is distilled and bottled in Austin, Texas by Fifth Generation Inc. In 1997, Bert "Tito" Beverage, now a 50-something geophysicist, obtained the first legal permit to distill in Texas and created Tito's Handmade Vodka. Tito's distills its gluten-free, corn-based vodka using old-fashioned pot stills. The process is similar to those used in making fine single malt scotches and high-end French cognacs. Tito's served creative cocktails throughout Conference, including the Mule. There's an abundance of cocktail recipes at the website including for mules and infusions. Tito's Time Out, shown in the signature copper mug, is made with ginger beer, lime, and thyme.

www.titosvodka.com



ÖRA KING

ÖRA KING

The New Zealand King Salmon Co. Ltd has been perfecting sustainable husbandry practices and breeding expertise for a quarter of a century. Their classical breeding program has produced nine generations of King salmon, creating over 100 distinct salmon families; only the very finest examples are carried forward to the next generation. Through this program, a unique breed has been created called Öra King that is genetically distinct from any other King salmon found in the world. Only the highest quality salmon are hand selected by a master grader and branded Öra King. Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch gives Öra King its top rating for sustainability. "Öra King is to salmon as Wagyu is to beef." Öra King salmon was the featured entrée at the Partner Showcase Luncheon.

www.orakingsalmon.co.nz

Salmon fillet photo: Öra King



SOPEXA

Sopexa an international food & beverage communication agency that has embodied the "think global, act local" adage for over 60 years. Sopexa continues moving forward to get a jump on the latest innovations, understanding the hottest trends, and working hand-in-hand with clients to develop creative, impactful strategies. Located in 24 countries, Sopexa has the ability to work all around the globe. From influencer and digital strategies, PR events, branding, and shopper marketing, Sopexa works with its clients to meet every challenge. Sopexa generously provided financial support for the 2022 New York Conference.

www.sopexa.com



KERRYGOLD

Kerrygold produces butter and cheese from the rich milk of cows that graze in lush, Irish pastures—free of growth hormones and nurtured on small, family run Irish dairy farms. Ireland enjoys one of the longest grass-growing seasons in the world. The butter's natural golden color is derived from beta-carotene in the intensely green Irish grass. Kerrygold provided delicious Irish cheeses and butter for several Conference events. At the Opening Reception, several cheeses, sliced baguettes, and butter were served. Kerrygold Reserve Cheddar, Dubliner, Cashel Blue, and Skellig cheeses were included on charcuterie platters at the Partner's Showcase Luncheon.

www.kerrygoldusa.com/
www.facebook.com/KerrygoldUSA

Cheese photo: Kerrygold.



BUFFALO TRACE DISTILLERY

"Honoring tradition; Embracing Change." Buffalo Trace Distillery, designated as a National Historic Landmark, has been making bourbon whiskey the same way for over 200 years. The distillery is located on the banks of the Kentucky River, where early American pioneers and explorers followed the paths of ancient buffalo through the wilderness to new frontiers. Throughout prohibition, the distillery had permits to produce and bottle "medicinal" whiskey. In a tribute to the mighty buffalo and the rugged, independent spirit of the pioneers who followed them, Buffalo Trace Distillery created their signature Buffalo Trace Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey. The distillery provided their fine bourbon whiskey for several Conference events including the Partner Showcase Luncheon.

www.buffalotracedistillery.com

Buffalo photo: Buffalo Trace Distillery.



SPIRITLESS

SPIRITLESS

Founded in 2019, Spiritless is a distilled, full-of-flavor non-alcoholic brand. Kentucky 74 was crafted for everyone's favorite bourbon cocktails, while the most recent addition, Jalisco 55, is the perfect replacement for tequila. A unique reverse distillation process gives the flexibility to go completely spirit-free or to lower the ABV (alcohol by volume) by enjoying your favorite cocktails with half Spiritless and half full-proof spirit. Spiritless is woman-owned along with being vegan, gluten-free, non-GMO, and keto friendly with 0.5 percent ABV. Spiritless supports the conscientious cocktailers, the no- and low-ers, the people who want to live fully but shake, stir, sip, and celebrate differently. Spiritless products were served at Conference including Whiskey Sour and Old Fashioned pour-over cocktail cans. Simply pop the can, pour over ice, and enjoy!

www.spiritless.com



NIMAN RANCH

Niman Ranch is a community of more than 700 independent family farmers and ranchers who raise pork, beef, and lamb traditionally, humanely, and sustainably to deliver the finest tasting meat in the world. Niman Ranch is the largest farmer and rancher network in North America to be Certified Humane®. The protein of choice for America's most celebrated chefs, Niman Ranch is also the premier option for discerning home cooks looking for meats Raised with Care®, with no antibiotics or added hormones—ever! For the Partner's Showcase Luncheon, Niman Ranch provided Genoa Salami, Hot Sopressata & Prosciutto for the charcuterie platters and for the entrée, Pan-Seared Berkshire Pork Loin with Herbed Shallot Marmalade.

www.nimanranch.com



Piro.

OLIO PIRO

Brother and sister Romain and Dame Marie-Charlotte Piro (South Florida) are proudly bringing to foodies worldwide an award-winning, extra-virgin olive oil from the Maremma region of Southern Tuscany. Developed in cooperation with the Italian *Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche* and master miller Daniele Lepori, Olio Piro launched in 2018 and has been showered with accolades ever since. Complex and balanced, with floral aromas, herbaceous flavors, and a distinctive peppery finish, a drizzle of ultra-premium Olio Piro will take your dishes to the next level. Marie-Charlotte (pictured above) is the worldwide ambassador for Olio Piro. She provided olive oil for each table during the Partner's Showcase luncheon; in addition, each luncheon guest took home a bottle.

www.olio-piro.com

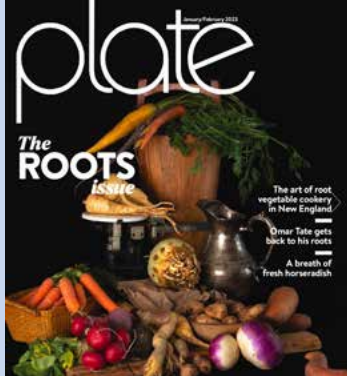


plate
Take food further.

PLATE

Plate magazine engages chefs in all segments at the highest level and inspires them to explore their creativity. Driven by an insatiable curiosity and passion for food, Plate loves the challenge and excitement of taking food further and uncovers the most interesting food and drink ideas in the most interesting kitchens in the country. By sharing these ideas with their readers, they are stimulating creativity and menu innovation.

www.plateonline.com

Photo: Plate



JUSTIN

JUSTIN VINEYARDS & WINERY

Located in Paso Robles, California, JUSTIN Vineyards & Winery was founded in 1981 by Justin Baldwin and is known for crafting world-class wines using Bordeaux grape varieties, including the iconic ISOSCELES blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Merlot. Traditional Old World methods—like hand-harvesting and small barrel aging in French oak—are combined with New World technology. The vineyard estate features a tasting bar and dining room; luxury five-star accommodations at the JUST Inn; and the MICHELIN-starred, The Restaurant at JUSTIN. The winery is the only one in the U.S. to hold both a MICHELIN Star and a MICHELIN Green Star, noting The Restaurant's sustainability practices.

www.justinwine.com

Photo: JUSTIN Vineyards & Winery



Nation's Restaurant News
Restaurant HOSPITALITY
Nation's Restaurant News

INFORMA CONNECT

The Restaurant & Food Group by Informa Connect is the leading business-to-business integrated media group connecting products, solutions, and thought leadership with the largest, most engaged and highly-qualified audience in the foodservice and grocery industries.

www.nrn.com

Photo: Nation's Restaurant News



steelite
INTERNATIONAL

STEELITE INTERNATIONAL U.S.A., INC.

Steelite International, which began in 1875 in Staffordshire, U.K., is a leading world manufacturer and supplier of award-winning tabletop and buffet solutions for the hospitality industry. "TabletopStyle" provides chefs with a canvas to create innovative, unique food presentations. The company won a 2019 Green Apple Award for Environmental Best Practice. Steelite International U.S.A., Inc. is once again partnering with LDEI for Table Talks with Les Dames.

www.us.steelite.com

www.us.steelite.com/showroom

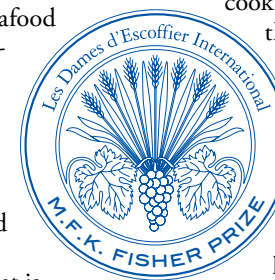
Meet the New M.F.K. Fisher Prize Winners

By STACY ZEIGLER (ATLANTA)

After a delicious lunch from our Partners, we were treated to the words of Angela Lyn Dansby. She is the 2022 winner of the M.F.K. Fisher First Prize. Her story was part of 50 Reasons to Love the World for BBC Travel. "Europe's 500-year-old Seafood Tradition" is a story of history and change relative to a unique tradition and draws the reader into the evocative details of shrimp fishing and its social context. Who would put horses together with shrimping? Apparently, that is the way it has been done for hundreds of years until innovation has found cheaper and more efficient ways with boats instead of horses. Today there are only 17 people alive who continue this now Unesco-recognized tradition. And



only as of five years ago, was one of them a woman. Oostduinkerke, an 8,500-person Flemish community on Belgium's northwestern tip, is the last place in the world where shrimp fishing by horseback is still being practiced. Angela was able to spend a day with Nele Bekaert, horse fisherwoman to understand this deep tradition and tell her story. This craft not only requires excellent equestrianism, but also knowledge of the coastline, sand banks, currents, wave patterns, and even cooking shrimp. Nele says, "Besides the culinary benefits, shrimp fishing on horseback is good for the soul. It makes me calm and peaceful, as it's just me, my horse, and the sea. I have a sense of time without time, and oneness. I think about nothing else. I'm also happy to preserve and share this very important cultural tradition"



Thank you to **Mindy Merrell**, this year's chair, and to her co-chair **Mary McMahon** for reimagining this program and highlighting amazing women and their stories.

Les Dames d'Escoffier International (LDEI), in partnership with the M.F.K. Fisher Literary Trust, recognizes excellence in any format of media that broadens the understanding of food and culture. The Prize is named in honor of renowned culinary writer M.F.K. Fisher whose trailblazing work has encouraged deeper thought about the cultural significance of foodways.



SECOND PRIZE WINNER is **Pati Jinich** (Washington, D.C.) for "La Frontera with Pati Jinich," PBS Broadcasting. Watch the TV series [HERE](#). Jury Statement: "Pati Jinich's work is expressive and compelling, presenting the viewer an opportunity to reflect on food and culture through life on the border."



THIRD PRIZE WINNER is **Sheila Dillon** (London) for "Tastefully Worded: Exploring Food in Language," The Food Programme, BBC Radio podcast. Access the episode [HERE](#). Jury Statement: "Sheila Dillon takes the listener on a creative cultural journey of the interplay between language and food."



Angela Lyn Dansby



Success Stories of Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Hospitality

BY CINDY JURGENSEN (MINNESOTA)

Inspiring role models—the key descriptor of each panelist in a session moderated by another role model... Master of Wine and independent consultant **Mary Gorman-McAdams** (NY). Mary asked each woman, all New York Dames, what brought her to the U.S.



Silvia Baldini felt Italy (at that time) wasn't as advanced for a liberal woman pursuing dreams of starting a business. She began with art education and advertising before a career change to foods. "How hard can it be? Very hard!" Culinary French Institute and Cordon Bleu in London led to founding Strawberry and Sage in Connecticut. Her advice? Be a tank; surround yourself with positive, inspirational people. Learn from mistakes and move on. Social media is "the pit" but it also made her successful; it's a branding tool and the future. **Maria Loi**, founder/owner of

Loi Food Products and owner/chef of Loi Estiatorio, hails from Greece. A farm girl from a poor but happy Greek Italian Jewish family, she didn't go to school for cooking but came to the U.S. to advise in business, then she left the jet-setting career of bank lobbyist for food. Her mantra? "Give without the expectation of getting back." She's cooked for Presidents Obama and Biden and for the homeless. When the riots came to NYC she was told to board up her restaurant but she didn't. No one bothered her place; instead, they guarded it because during the pandemic she fed 150 homeless every day. She opened a kitchen to teach women which gave her "more joy than cooking at the White House."

Hiroko Shimbo, founder of Hiroki's Kitchen, is from Japan. She married an American man she met in Tokyo who, unlike Japanese men, encouraged her to pursue her goals; she gained independence working for an American banking company. Teaching Japanese cooking to Europeans and Americans led to several cookbooks with a large audience in the U.S. for her lifelong



Session 1 panelists, L-R: Moderator Mary Gorman-McAdams, Silvia Baldini, Maria Loi, Hiroko Shimbo, and Surbhi Sahni.

venture of teaching and demystifying Japanese cooking. It wasn't easy to come to the U.S. ("I was thrown in deep water") but what helped Hiroko was being fluent in two different cultures.

Surbhi Sahni, who was born and raised in India, got into hotel management school instead of art school as she'd hoped. Her Dad encouraged her, which was unusual in India. After NYU for anthropology in food, she worked (illegally) for small establishments to pay for school. As a new immigrant, she learned to build community and friendships and to do everything herself after being taken care of and having everything paid for by her parents. Chef/Founder of TAGMO, Surbhi opened one of the first Michelin star Indian restaurants. Home meals, gift packaging, and a storefront for artisanal

sweets and Indian food got her restaurant through the pandemic. She feels people expect big portions and low costs at Indian restaurants compared to other restaurants, which disadvantages the diaspora "trying to make it happen."

What is the secret sauce of these self-motivated women? There is none! Silvia advised, "Work hard, make mistakes, get up and keep going. There's no easy way." Maria advised, "Be giving. Enable the people around you, your good employees...it's their business too. They have grit and are curious. Focus and adapt as you go." Hiroko said, "Be diligent, keep learning, and work hard." Surbhi summed it up, "Persevere, be diligent, create friendships in the community and give back to them." Parting words? "Party on and have fun!"

SUSTAINABLE continued from page 28

and farmer with a background in food justice, currently works for the Anne Saxelby Legacy Fund, "which provides paid apprenticeships for young adults to live on sustainable farms."

Each woman highlighted the importance of supporting local, growing heirloom, and farmer apprentice programs. Maya noted the importance of going back to grassroots practices, how farming practices protect the soil and our environment. She also pointed out the importance of paying our producers a living wage, a responsibility that is vital for the survival of our local farmers.

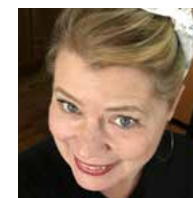
Lizzy went on to stress the impact the hospitality industry should have on supporting local agriculture and producers. We should look for small, local producers who are able to experiment with crops and plant diversity. She reiterated that the soil health is core to growing success. At Stone Barns Center they used nutrient-rich clover that is plowed under to help rejuvenate the lush topsoil; they also plant perennial flowers to ensure bees have food to help pollinate the farm.

Amy discussed the importance of promoting agro-tourism and chef experiences at farms to deepen our understanding of food. She believes in promoting community connectors such as farm stands and social hubs to leverage interest. She also feels we need to promote soil health and the health of our community.

Darcie Schipull from San Antonio commented that this session was pretty technical and thought provoking. She wonders if Texas has farms that look at sustainability and regenerative agriculture. She highlighted how the session pointed out "that we need to be looking for sustainable farming practices that help rather than extract, that protect the land, and that use grains and crops that are appropriate for the area that we are growing them in." San Antonio Dame **Nancy Fitch** reiterated from the session that the hospitality industry is not only able to support our local producers, but it's vital to saving them. Overall, the panelists were very enlightening and clearly dedicated to preserving environmental and ecological balance through farming.

New York in Your Glass: Grapes and Grains and Apples, Oh My!

BY DESTINY BURNS (CLEVELAND)



The hotel ballroom was set with rows of wine glasses on white paper with room for notes, ready for an exploration of some of the best fermented beverages New York has to offer. My tastebuds tingled with anticipation! Did you know there are over 1600 family vineyards and 400+ wineries in New York? It's the third largest wine region in the country. There are also nearly 500 breweries and 160 craft distilleries (seven owned by women!) in New York.

Dame **Wanda Mann**, East Coast Editor of The SOMM Journal and Founder of @winewithwanda, expertly moderated this panel. The esteemed panelists Nancy Irelan (Winemaker/Owner, Red Tail Ridge Winery and 2X James Beard Award nominee); Celeste Beatty (Founder/Brewer, Harlem Brewing Co.); and Louise Newsome (advisor to the NY State Distiller's Guild and distillery co-owner) gave their perspectives on this dynamic and growing industry.

The panelist first discussed challenges they've faced in the industry. Celeste spoke of the initial barriers to sales and having her beer taken seriously due to her sex, her race, and the perception of "Harlem" as a negative when her product was launching. Sometimes she couldn't even get people to taste it. Nancy talked about her transition to entrepreneur following her 12-year stint with Gallo Winery in California. She felt lost in that corporate structure and instead wanted to get her hands dirty. Louise described the challenges created by the silos and silence she found in the distilling world and how she works to create a

collaborative space that fosters advocacy. Getting funding and support to launch a beverage brand is not easy. Celeste spoke about how she started in the 1990s with investments from friends and family, as traditional funding was impossible to secure. She has made serious sacrifices to chase her dream, and she's pleased to see industry resources, opportunities and openness for women becoming more available now. Over the last 18 years, Nancy has invested everything, including her life savings, into her Finger Lakes winery and she's so proud to be part of the fast, steep evolution in the region, underpinned by its energy and pristine natural beauty.

Nancy IS her brand, and her love affair with wine has turned into her obsession. Her talent and passion truly came through in the incredible sparkling Brut she shared with us called Perpetual Change. The innovative winemaking methods she uses allows the best representation of each vintage of her grape varietals in this special wine to shine. Celeste presented her "Renaissance Wit" beer, smooth and spicy with layers of flavor including coriander, cumin, and orange peel. She beamed with pride as she described her new project in North Carolina, a "brewer's village" collaborative space to house, support, and mentor black and brown emerging brewers. To round out our lovely tasting, we enjoyed Abandoned Barrel-Aged Hard Cider, which was soft, light and bright and made from crowd-sourced apples from across the Catskills and Hudson Valley. Each beverage we sampled had a story of grit, vision, and excellence and unique New York charms. Cheers to all these amazing women, blazing trails and kicking butt in the New York beverage industry!



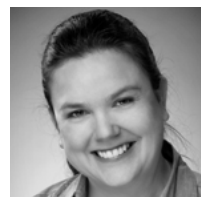
Session 3 panelists, L-R: Jessica Baker Vodoor, Amy Zavatto, Lizzy Grauer, Meryl Rosofsky, and Maya Netzer.

Sustainable Hospitality: Innovative Farming Practices Add Value to Restaurants and Communities

BY STEPHANIE JAEGER (BC)

As suggested by the overview, this session was truly full of dynamic New York women. Moderator **Amy Zavatto**, a wine, spirits, and food journalist who supports Snug Harbor Cultural Center, welcomed the panelists.

Jessica Baker Vodoor is president and CEO of the Snug Harbour Cultural Center and Botanical Garden. Lizzy Grauer is a volunteer on urban farms, which led to cooking at restaurants like avec in Chicago, and she is now growing at Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture. Dame **Meryl Rosofsky** is a food scholar, arts advocate, writer, and educator. Maya Netzer, an artist



continued ON NEXT PAGE



Session 4 panelists, L-R: Nancy Irelan, Celeste Beatty, Louise Newsome, and Moderator Wanda Mann. The tastings, shown L-R: Abandoned Barrel-Aged Hard Cider; Renaissance Wit beer (Harlem Brewing Company), and Sparkling Brut Perpetual Change (Red Tail Ridge Winery).

Food Horizons 2022: *What's New in Food Politics, Food Studies, Food Equity, and Food Advocacy*

BY JULIE CHERNOFF
(CHICAGO)

Lately, it seems that the world is going to hell in a handbasket: super hurricanes, rising seawaters, catastrophic inland flooding, and widespread forest fires fueled by drought and high winds, all in combination with worldwide inflation and lingering supply chain problems stemming from the COVID pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Earth's nearly 8 billion inhabitants are affected by these issues every day—and any one of these factors can lead to hunger and food insecurity.

The topics of food insecurity, advocacy, and justice were front and center in the fascinating panel helmed by Grande Dame **Marion Nestle**, Ph.D., legendary academic and author, public health advocate, and Food Studies pioneer. She was joined by **Michelle Hughes**, Manager of Equity and Organizational Change for the National Young Farmers Coalition (NYFC), and **Jennifer Berg**, Ph.D., Director of Graduate Food Studies at NYU and soon-to-be Chair of NYU's Nutrition and Food Studies program.

Grande Dame Marion began with an overview of where we are in food politics. Three new things in the field of nutrition have changed the way we are talking about the future of food: food systems, climate change, and obesity and its health consequences. The catchall term "food systems" encompasses "...everything from production to waste in context of the culture in which it happens, and how people are eating now," shared Marion. Roughly half of the people on earth are currently food insecure, malnourished, or starving. Climate change—driven by fossil fuel usage and methane off-gassing from food animals—plays a large part in the many issues we have now, with heat waves, droughts and fires becoming both more frequent and widespread; this will gradually force the movement of vast populations from lands that are no longer able to sustain life or provide sustenance. Lastly, the proliferation of ultra-processed industrial foods has led to a global crisis of obesity, diabetes, cancer, and the like.



Session 5 panelists, L-R: Jennifer Berg, Marion Nestle, and Michelle Hughes.

Michelle Hughes, who got her Masters in Nestle and Berg's NYU Food Studies program, moved into food policy and advocacy with NYFC, where she is raising awareness of racial equity and young farmers marginalized out of the system. She serves on the Equity Commission and acts as a resource for farmers, connecting them with policy leaders and preparation programs in social justice and equity. "The USDA has a history of discrimination," said Michelle, "so they've passed the American Rescue Plan trying to do a comprehensive job of cleaning up past mistakes." Land access, student debt, and the lack of national resources, housing, and healthcare are all issues under discussion.

Rounding out the panel introductions was Jennifer Berg, who told us she grew up in a "very liberal, politically active NY Jewish family." Everyone has preconceived ideas about societal modes, she shared, but "My baggage? I'm 60!" (That got a big laugh from the room.) Back in 1996, when the Food Studies program first began at NYU, most students wanted to be food journalists. "The first big turning point was 9/11, which changed how we thought about food and how the world talked about it," said Jennifer. Food became more political and their student body more diverse. We started really looking at food through a historical lens, and more students became interested in food as politics, as a path to social justice. Society, the greater good, can make sustainable, healthful, and delicious food available. We can design, implement, and enforce food waste programs. We can be the changemakers.

After the esteemed panel answered some probing and well-considered questions from the audience, Marion neatly wrapped up the discussion. "If you're paying attention, there's no shortage of need for advocacy. Food matters. Advocacy matters."



Session 7 panelists: L-R: Moderator Melanie Young, Amanda Cohen, Erin Reifsnyder, and Carolyn D Richmond.

Breaking the Silence 2.0— The Discussion Continues

BY ANITA LAU (LA/OC)

This session was vital amidst all the movements that were amplified during this current climate we are living in. The panel of experts included Moderator **Melanie Young** who kicked off the session by introducing new Dame **Carolyn D Richmond**, an attorney who specializes in workplace issues; Restaurateur Amanda Cohen of Dirt Candy in New York City; and Erin Reifsnyder, M.A., mental health counselor (MHC) and board member of Restaurant After Hours.

As the title of the session clearly states, it is about "breaking the silence" of injustices within the industry, especially that towards women. While founded in 2006, the MeToo movement truly stepped into the forefront with the Harvey Weinstein sexual assault allegations and the movement of 2017.

WHAT IS GENDER AND HOW IMPORTANT IS GENDER IN THE WORKPLACE.

Harassment in the food and beverage industries is nothing new, however, with COVID hitting in 2020, restaurants were forced to shut down, which created incredible mental health issues. Suicides increased, as well as an uptick in substance abuse. People experienced an overwhelming level of stress never seen before. When businesses started re-opening, there were labor shortages and logistical issues. How does one run a business when there are labor shortages and supply chain issues? One of the biggest questions that's still a major issue everywhere: how does one keep and retain employees while trying to keep one's sanity?

Carolyn Richmond reflected on how the workplace has always seen changes throughout the years. In the early '70s, women started entering the workplace in droves, and in the last 30-50 years, we see changes every five to 10 years. She said, "The confluence of events which have cascaded onto us is scary and there is a lot of change. We are now seeing similar turbulent times leading to pretty

continued ON NEXT PAGE

SILENCE 2.0

continued from page 30

substantial changes. This crisis we are going through is a huge problem in the workforce."

Carolyn was adamant that we adapt to this new generation and noted, "A new generation of employees is coming into the workplace. Gen Z knows their rights. We have to adapt to the new employees who, in five to 10 years, will come into leadership positions. It means we have to understand gender identity issues, pronouns, issues that are important to people that are 30 years younger than we are." Gone are the days of "sucking it up and just taking it." This generation knows their rights, and they won't stand for the things our generation took. They won't put up with discrimination and misidentifying people. In short, they won't put up with a toxic work environment. While Carolyn is a lawyer, she was clear that a lot of what she does isn't law. She added, "Law is easy, these are issues about people. We now have to learn how to communicate with different generations where the expectations are very different."

Amanda Cohen agreed that this is the biggest challenge. "They know what they want and there is a lot of back and forth and learning, but they are also very young. Figuring out how to have a dialog with them is challenging." However, Amanda has incorporated different strategies to help retain employees, and provides a safer environment for her staff. Team building activities that include educational programs and bonding opportunities are all part of her repertoire.

For Erin Reifsnyder, returning to grad school was mainly prompted by her experience in the hospitality industry, which left her feeling dehumanized. She hopes that this is an opportunity for us to learn from this generation how to heal ourselves, reflect on our experiences, use some of the tools that the new generation is advocating for, and shepherd ourselves into a more holistic realm.

"It used to be labor and management," said Erin. "We used to deal with people as a group, but now the younger generation is demanding we see them as individuals from different walks of life, each with different experiences." She advised, "Partner with them to find a solution. The key is to meet issues with validation and support."

Carolyn concluded, "You have to be aware of the legal and the emotional, and be aware of the steps you need to take. But at the end of the day, you want to put an employee back to work, you want to make them productive, and you want to make the workplace safe and happy. When hiring, do not just hire a body; spend some time in the hiring process. Adapt, listen, and be empathetic."

Marketing and Communications in the Hospitality Industry: *New Approaches to Change*

BY JILL WEBER (PHILADELPHIA)

Panel: Moderator Shari Bayer, Susannah Gold, Francine Kowalsky, Robin Insley, and Valerie Gerard-Matsuura.

This expert panel was full of useful information on navigating the rapidly changing world of marketing and promotion. While the conversation was largely from the perspective of large-agency capabilities and strategy, these experts were able to translate that strategy for the small-business or solo owner/entrepreneur. Importantly, while an agency has the expertise to perform best-practice promotion and marketing, there is free tutorial content everywhere—especially YouTube—that is a knowledge base for using social media and marketing channels by individuals or small-budget businesses.

For those with larger budgets and agencies, content sponsorship in magazines and on podcasts is a strong driver of sales and influence and a force in reaching a large and broad audience. This is particularly true in a post-COVID age where large, in-person marketing opportunities are less common and less reliable to plan and execute. Social media channels also remain significant for content sharing, as well as creating advocates for our products and services among "influencers"—those people who have a large social-media following and are able to influence purchasing patterns.

While an agency is adept at discovering and employing those influencers, this can also be done by solo entrepreneurs. Our experts explained that we could do our own research and find "influencers" on channels that share our specific concerns and priorities. Engaging with these people and their pages can extend one's own audience and capture that of those influencers. Once created, though, that community of followers and influencers needs to be managed. Following and "liking" people of interest is important, but it is also necessary to comment on posts and be

active and engaged in the community one is trying to capture.

While social media seems like a tool mainly for younger generations and customers, this is not the case. While younger audiences are tech-savvy and utilize social media for much of their information, they tend to flit around. On the other hand, an older audience tends to be more loyal and more invested. This also means that—rather than relying on trends or co-opting voices of a younger generation—women in older age-groups can rely on their own voices and expertise to create content and capture engaged customers. Know who your *loyal* customers are; speak to them and as you would to yourself.

While Tik Tok and YouTube are important sources for sharing and discovering that which makes great additions to one's social-media portfolio, we were also encouraged to look to some traditional forms of advertising. Print isn't dead and our experts exhorted us to utilize our local, neighborhood papers. These often have great engagement and serve as sources of knowledge to those who may not be easily reached via social media. "Likes" do not always translate to transactions, whereas engagement by neighbors—via the neighborhood paper—more frequently do.

Regardless of one's budget, these are meaningful ways to identify and engage likely customers through both traditional and emerging media.



Panel L-R: Moderator Shari Bayer, Susannah Gold, Francine Kowalsky, Robin Insley, and Valerie Gerard-Matsuura.

Recap: Running Your Chapter Board Like a Business

BY NANCY VIENNEAU (NASHVILLE)

For more than three decades, Jackie Henson has been a guiding force as LDEI's legal counsel, providing the blueprints for structures, policies, by-laws and best practices for our organization. Her session, "The Business of Running Your Chapter Board," brimmed with valuable information, especially in light of our (so-called) post-pandemic environment.



As more than 30 percent of non-profits ran into deep trouble due to the pandemic, either completely folding or getting perilously close, Jackie discussed some key aspects of the board's responsibilities to properly—and legally—run a successful chapter. There's a lot to unpack from her 90 minute presentation, so let's get started:

YOUR MISSION IS YOUR BEDROCK.

It has not changed; how you fulfill it has been changed by the pandemic. Furthermore, if your chapter wishes to join the Community Foundation in your area, having these parameters well-understood and these policies in place will help positively propel you within the nonprofit community. Potential donors looking at your chapter want to know that you are running a reputable nonprofit. You want to be appropriately listed in Guidestar.org.

REVIEW THE PARAMETERS OF FIDUCIARY RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BOARD AND ITS OFFICERS

Duty of Care

You perform all functions in the

best interest of the organization, as you would for yourself.

Duty of Loyalty

You put the chapter's needs and preferences ahead of your own in your work.

ALSO

Code of Ethics

While not mandatory, this is important for laying the groundwork for behavior, the "shoulds."

POLICIES (LDEI/Greg Jewell can provide these documents to your chapter)

Conflict of Interest Policy

As a prerequisite to serving on the board, you should read, understand, and sign this policy.

Document Retention Policy

It is imperative to hold onto documents for specific time periods: 3-7 years on contracts, 7 years on tax documentation, some are forever, such as the IRS Letter of Determination, Articles of Incorporation. Keep documents safe. An E-Doc is just as good as a hard document.

Historic Documents and Working Documents can be organized on Google Drive.

Note: The President MUST know when things should be filed, i.e. Form 990 (often 990N in postcard form) to the IRS. Otherwise you could blow up the chapter's 501c3 status.

Each chapter needs a good accountant and access to a good attorney.

In the past only .05% of non-profits were audited. However, the IRS is in the process of rebuilding. Make Sure the House is in Order.

Whistleblower Policy

This applies to board directors, officers and chapter members. Bottom Line: If you see something, say something.



Top: Jackie Henson

IMPLEMENTATION

Problems arise in Interpretation, Precedence, and Consistency. For instance, having members leave the chapter is rife with potential liability. What is the Policy? Is membership reliant on attending a certain number of meetings a year? Would the member like a Leave of Absence? Or prefer to resign? Or is it another issue relating to Conflict of Interest or Code of Ethics? Give the member a chance. But, do what you say you are going to do. Each action sets a precedent. Be consistent.

ADVOCACY

Remember, lobbying is an attempt to influence legislation. This is a hard NO. No political act by the chapter is permissible. Promoting members events could be a problem. Be careful.

Remember, your chapter is bound by LDEI.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

It is not a transcript. The secretary listens and distills the information. Regarding each resolution, the statement can be, "Upon motion duly made, seconded and

agreed (which implies 100%) ..."

You can record dissent. How you vote and record is a function of State Law. Most states require board votes to be unanimous. Check your Articles of Incorporation.

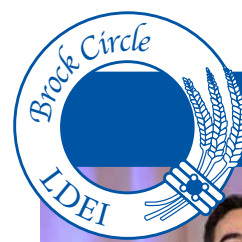
You want the minutes to be the definitive document. The Zoom recording assists the secretary in creating the minutes. Once minutes are approved, get rid of the recording. Also, be mindful that some sensitive things do not belong in the minutes.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT DISASTER

In 2001, it was 9/11; 2008 The Great Recession; 2020 The Pandemic, 2022 The Great Inflation.

The classic Rule of Thumb was to have 1 Year Operating Funds in reserve. Now, it is 1 1/2 to 2 Years in reserve. Within the realm of your board's Strategic Planning, you can determine what reserve level is prudent.

If you have any questions or concerns, ask. LDEI and Jackie Henson are here to help your chapter succeed and thrive.



From Pushcarts and Peddlers to A Global Jewish Food Industry

BY SUZANNE BROWN (ATLANTA)

The majority of Jewish people that emigrated from central Europe to the United States arrived between 1891-1924. Imagine how they must have felt when their steam ship entered the New York Harbor and the Statue of Liberty welcomed them. While they couldn't read the poem inscribed on the statue's base, they knew her symbolism of freedom and democracy. You didn't even need to read or speak English to quickly understand the poem's meaning. "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Keynote speaker Jeffrey Yoskowitz shared his stories and experiences of how old world Jewish foods and traditions are being integrated into American foodways.



A native of Brooklyn, Jeffrey is an expert in Jewish food and culture. He is the co-founder and "chief pickler" of The Gefilteria, a Brooklyn-based food venture that reimagines old world Jewish foods. The Gefilteria conducts workshops and collaborations with companies and organizations throughout the US. With co-author Liz Alpern, Jeffrey wrote *The Gefilte Manifesto*. More than a cookbook, Liz and Jeffrey provide histories of old world recipes and traditions from Ashkenazi cuisine (Ashkenazi refers to those Jews who trace their roots to central and eastern Europe)

In addition to having a Jewish background, Jeffrey wanted to revive recipes and traditions brought to America in the late 19th and early 20th century. One of the motivations for his devotion to authentic Jewish cuisine was his experience working on a pickle farm learning the art of pickling cucumbers, which included lacto fermentation. Pickling know-how extends to other vegetables as well.

In an effort to incorporate Jewish foodways and traditions into America, immigrants arrived in the United States carry-

ing their brass candlesticks, mortars and pestles, and pots and pans in order to prepare traditional recipes. These recipes such as potato latkes were fried in goose fat, which was not readily available in U.S grocery stores. So, immigrants raised their own geese in their backyards. With the introduction of Crisco, goose fat, which is called "schmaltz," was reserved for special occasions like Hanukkah. And did you know the hotdog or frankfurter was first sold from a pushcart in the 1870s? Frankfurters were created in Frankfurt, Germany.

Not a cheeseburger, Philly cheese steak, or Reuben sandwich, the Chop or Chopped Cheese Sandwich, originating in Harlem, is a New York favorite and sold from bodegas throughout New York City. Toasted hoagie rolls are stuffed with chopped ground beef burger, caramelized onions, melted American cheese, lettuce and tomatoes.

When they first arrived in the U.S., immigrants' livelihood was made using pushcarts, and peddlers used stands to sell meat, vegetables, fruits, and other goods. In fact, pushcarts, in many instances, were forerunners

to brick-and-mortar shops as well as bodegas. Russ & Daughters, which started 100 years ago as a pushcart business on the Lower East Side, continues to evolve as a leading purveyor of smoked salmon.

Sharing the platform with Jeffrey was Niki Russ Federman, whose family founded Russ & Daughters in 1914. As the fourth generation owners, Niki and her first cousin, Josh Russ Tupper, took over the family business in 2009, expanding into two restaurants—a kosher outpost at the Jewish Museum as well as an emporium and mail order business. Adhering to their reputation of making and selling Jewish foods, Russ & Daughters carries on the family tradition of kibitzing with customers. Through the years, making bagels has changed; the Old World recipe traded in for easier, faster ones. But that's not so at Russ & Daughters. Maintaining authenticity coupled with 100 years of kibitzing has perhaps been their key to international success.

Keynote speaker Jeffrey Yoskowitz. Speaker Niki Russ Federman's family founded the iconic "appetizing" shop Russ & Daughters.

CLUB CB COCKTAIL RECEPTION

Delivering the World on a Plate

BY IRENE MOORE (SOUTH FLORIDA)

New York Conference attendees enjoyed “The ‘World on a Plate,’” Speakeasy Cocktail Reception at Club CB at Pier Sixty. In honor of late Dame Carol Brock, the cocktail reception spotlighted six New York Dames who are chefs, restaurateurs, and cookbook authors. The Dames presented their own ethnic cuisines and cultures at various tasting stations, showing that New York’s place as a unique global community is built on the myriad of cultures reflected in the city’s culinary heartbeat. Dame **Carol Brock** would have loved it!



“Delivering Greece on a Plate” featured **Maria Loi’s** Cold Roast Lentil Faux Meatballs served in Bibb & Baby Gem Lettuce Cups with Loi Tzatziki from her New York restaurant, Loi Estatorio. Maria, the author of more than 36 cookbooks, is a superstar in the U.S. and in her home country, Greece, where she’s a popular TV chef.

“Delivering Korea on a Plate,” **Shin Kim**, a native of Seoul, South Korea, is the author of *Korean Vegetarian Cooking—Authentic Flavors in Simple Steps*. She presented Vegetable Bibimbap, a Korean bowl (*Bibim* means “mixed” and *bap* means “rice”) with micro cucumber carpaccio, pickled carrot, roasted shitake, egg mimosa, and white sesame seeds.

Paulette Awino Pinnock, a chef and native of Nairobi, Kenya, recently launched her first cookbook, *Africa Eats: Traditional & Ancient Foods for the Modern Kitchen*. During the cocktail reception, Chef Paulette presented *Bhajia*, fried potatoes—a very popular street food in Kenya—with Kachumbari, an uncooked salad of fresh, chopped tomatoes, onions, and chili peppers. *Bhajia* was popularized by the Indian population who were brought to Kenya to work on the railroad.

Marisa May-Metalli “delivered Italy on a Plate” with *Gamberi & Fagioli Cannelini al Rosmarino San Domenico alla Tony May* (shrimp with rosemary, cannellini beans, tomatoes, rosemary, and EVOO), from San Domenico, her famous father Tony May’s restaurant on New York’s Central Park South. The recipe was inspired by her father, who was dedicated to enhancing the quality of Italian restaurants in the United States.

Grace Young, 2022 James Beard Humanitarian of the Year Award-winner, cookbook author, culinary historian, and fierce advocate for Chinatown, offered Dim Sum Go Go, Shrimp & Vegetable Rolls, and Three Star Dumplings with Ginger Scallion Sauce at her station, “Delivering China on a Plate.”

Michael-Ann Rowe, aka “the Fishionista” is an Emmy® award-winning television personality and a food and travel journalist. For “Canada on a Plate,” she served Atlantic Aquafarms Le Petite Barchois Oysters from Prince Edward Island, Canada, on the half shell, served with mignonette, fresh horseradish, cracked black pepper, and lemon wedges.

Even more delicious offerings were presented by stylishly dressed butlers who wended their way through the crowd serving different international hors d’oeuvres.

The Speakeasy Bar served up libations of New York-centric cocktails: The Manhattan, made with Eagle Rare Bourbon; a Cosmo with Bootlegger New York Craft Vodka; the Pink Gin Martini made with Wölffer Estate Pink Gin; and a Big Apple Mocktail for non-alcohol imbibers.



Top photo: The “World on a Plate” delivered by New York Dames Maria Loi, Grace Young, Michael-Ann Rowe, Marisa May Metalli, Pauline Awino Pinnock, and Shin Kim.

DINNER AT SPECTACULAR PIER SIXTY

BY TERESA FARNEY (COLORADO)

The Saturday dinner of LDEI’s 2022 Annual Conference was truly one for the books. New York’s Pier Sixty was transformed that October 21 evening into a sophisticated speakeasy—called “Club CB,” in honor of LDEI’s founder Carol Brock—that gave us one surprise experience after another.



After the amazing cocktail reception, the master of ceremonies announced that the secret word for gaining entrance into the speakeasy’s dining room—which was not in view—was “CB.” He began to pound on what looked like a solid wall as all the Dames shouted “CB! CB!” On his third count, the walls magically began folding up, exposing a second huge area lit by hundreds of twinkling lights and candles. Tables were draped in red cloths and festooned with several wine glasses per seat. The table centerpieces were large, mirrored trays filled with red rose petals; the mirrors reflected the flickering candles. It was a breathtaking sight!

Victor’s Jazz Band played lively tunes as we found our seats for the formal sit-down dinner. Our starter was salmon tartare, caviar crostini, gilded egg flan, and savory leek fennel brûlée. Wines for the first course were poured from bottles provided by New York Finger Lakes wineries, including: Dr. Konstantin Frank Winery (2020 Dry Riesling, Margrit Single Vineyard), Ravines Wine Cellars (2020 Ravines Dry Riesling, White Springs Vineyard), and Red Trail Ridge (2018 Estate Riesling Sext, Extra Brut).

The entrée featured truffles two ways: grilled tournedos of beef with truffled hollandaise and red wine Bordelaise; and cauliflower gratin and roasted harvest vegetables with truffled parmesan pommes frites. A California red wine—Justin 2017 Reserve cabernet sauvignon—was served with this course.

Dessert was Chocolate Red Wine Noir—dark chocolate ganache, candied hazelnuts, black currant sorbet, and caramelized figs.

The menu was created by Dame **Alison Awerbuch** and Pier Sixty’s chefs, who produced and executed the dinner. Also responsible for the dinner were Jennifer Bradley, executive sous chef and 2014 LDEI Legacy Award winner, and Tanya Shevloff, director of event services and 2022 LDEI Legacy Award winner.

Between the starter and entrée courses, **Pamela Morgan**, a cabaret performer, entertained us with outstanding, high-energy songs. Pamela has decades of experience in the hospitality world and shares her tips, ideas, travel adventures, and experience in the food and lifestyle realm through her biweekly blog *Flirting with Flavors*, YouTube channel, and social media channels.

As the fabulous evening wrapped up, we were treated to a variety of passed signature sweets. Waiters walked about carrying clear umbrellas with fresh pretzels dangling off the edges. Guests received gift boxes of Pier Sixty Pop, an indulgent snack of popcorn, chocolate, dried fruit, and nuts. Spectacular is an understatement for this exquisite evening.





Legacy Winners: Luisamaria Castillo, Samantha Etienne, Dame Deborah Mintcheff, Tanya Roth, Liz Einhorn, Co-Chair Kathy Gold, Nicola Buchanan, Marta Rivera, and Co-Chair Belinda Smith-Sullivan.

2022 LEGACY AWARDS LUNCHEON

BY SHEILA CRYE
(WASHINGTON, D.C.)

Established in 2009, the Legacy Awards provide targeted mentorship opportunities for professional women in the food, fine beverage, and hospitality industries. The 2022 awardees were offered one-week experiences in six distinct categories: Supply Chain, Hotels & Hospitality, Fine Spirits, Wine & Hospitality, Culinary, and Culinary Entrepreneurship. Legacy Award Chair **Kathy Gold** recognized mentors, who together with the Dames in their chapters, opened their businesses and welcomed the Legacy Award winners behind the scenes.



Six extraordinarily talented women received the awards. The spring issue of the *Quarterly* will feature details of their experiences. Legacy Awards Co-Chair **Belinda Smith Sullivan** will succeed Kathy Gold as 2023 committee chair. Nicola Buchanan learned about distribution within different industries because of her Supply Chain Award experience with **Carol Huntsberger** at Quality Seafood in Austin. "You can be confident in what you've accomplished," she shared, "and aware of the need to support those around you." Luisamaria Castillo Castro stayed at Nashville's Hermitage Hotel, hosted by **Dee Patel**, to experience the Hotels and Hospitality Award. "It

was a great team," Luisamaria said, "They do everything with love. We need more Mexican women who are willing to help others."

"Many women put aside their own passions," Marta Rivera Diaz told Dames the reason she applied for the Culinary Entrepreneurship Award. She felt she was too old, but then she followed her own advice and took support and inspiration from women entrepreneurs. She learned how to grow a business from **Jill Weber** and the Philadelphia Chapter.

Liz Einhorn won the Fine Spirits Award, hosted by Dame **Christa Cotton** at El Guapo Bitters in New Orleans, where she learned about manufacturing. "It is important to lift one another up," Liz advised. Now she assists a bank with women and minority loans.

For her Culinary Award, Samantha Etienne spent about a week at Zingerman's in Ann Arbor with mentor **Amy Emberling**, learning all she could about bread, pastry, and everything. In restaurants she always worked on the line, and this was the first time she was allowed a 30-minute break. The award was her wildest dream come true.

Tanya Roth, winner of the Wine and Hospitality Award, learned that the Wenthe family of Livermore, California, is filled with powerful, smart women like her mentor, **Carolyn Wenthe**. The concept of women who love and are passionate about what they do resonated with her. She cares about her staff at Pier Sixty. The only way the industry survives is to really care, she believes.



London Dames Sue Carter and Jacqui Pickles announce exciting new plans for 2023 Edible London. Mexico Chapter Dames Veronica Madrigal and Maria Gomez-Laurens reveal plans for 2023 Taste of Mexico.



THE MENU: Lunch began with an arugula and baby kale salad with Marcona almonds, tart cherries, and shaved Manchego with an orange-sherry vinaigrette, paired with Wenthe Niki's Rosé. Ora king salmon followed, accompanied by pumpkin risotto and sautéed collard greens, paired with 2021 Wenthe Riva Ranch vineyard chardonnay. For dessert, there was an apple-almond tart with crème fraiche ice cream, paired with a 2020 Wenthe Riva Ranch pinot noir. In anticipation of the 2023 Kentucky Conference, attendees received a sample of Larceny Bourbon Whiskey (produced by a woman-led spirits company) from the Kentucky Chapter.

Grateful thanks for the steadfast and generous support from our partners, Wenthe Family Estates and The Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and the Culinary Arts, for sharing LDEI's vision and mission of mentorship. Thanks also go to the Timothy S.Y. Lam Foundation, whose grant helped with the Legacy travel this year.

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES MEETING



LDEI Executive Director Greg Jewell, Deborah Mintcheff, and Jennifer Goldman.

BY GREG JEWELL

The LDEI Council of Delegates meeting, our Annual Business Meeting, was held on October 22 during the Conference in New York City. The Council is responsible for the approval of new chapter charters, approval of the LDEI annual budget and the approval of any bylaws changes.

The first order of business was the approval of a charter request for the Tuscany, Italy Chapter. LDEI Secretary **Kathy Gold** reviewed the information for the newly formed organization and its founding members. A motion was made and seconded to approve the charter for the Tuscany chapter, which becomes LDEI's 44th chapter.

LDEI Treasurer **Barb Pires** presented the

proposed budget for 2023. The budget included an increase in international dues from \$85 to \$100 effective for the 2023-2024 dues year. The board was asked to re-evaluate the increase in dues for international chapters in light of current economic conditions in the post-pandemic world. There was a discussion of the increasing costs of producing the annual conference. The delegates approved the budget as submitted.

The board reported on two new contracts: **Bev Shaffer** has signed a new two-year agreement to serve as partnership development director and AEC Management signed a new five-year agreement to serve as the management company for LDEI. President **Deborah Mintcheff** reported that Greg Jewell, who has served as the

Outgoing LDEI Board 2022
Front Row: Erin Byres Murray, President Deborah Mintcheff, and Kathy Gold. Back Row: Marilyn Freundlich, Irene Moore, Liz Barrett, Barb Pires, Stephanie Jaeger, and incoming 2023 President Jennifer Goldman.



executive director for LDEI since 2001, would be retiring at the end of the AEC contract in 2027. The board will launch a search for a new executive director a year before Greg's departure.

Several chapters volunteered to host the 2025 LDEI annual conference: Mexico, North Carolina, and Sacramento. San Diego volunteered to host in 2027 and New Orleans volunteered to host in 2026 or 27. (As of the deadline for this article, the board was pursuing Mexico City as the potential host for 2025).

BOUTIQUE CB



Photo: Susan Slack



GRANDE DAME RECEPTION



Photo: S. Slack



Photo: Barbara Abbott

GRANDE DAME DINNER

TWO TRAILBLAZING DAMES RECEIVE AWARD

BY ELLEN KANNER (WASHINGTON, D.C.)



Everything about LDEI's Annual Conference in New York City was grand, but the last night, the Grande Dame Gala was grandest of all. Nearly 300 Dames from 43 chapters—a Conference attendance record—came ready to party and honor not one Grande Dame, but TWO—an artisan and an activist: Dallas

Dame and mozzarella artisan **Paula Lambert** and Cleveland Dame and LDEI Past President **Bev Shaffer**. Conference Co-Chairs **Marsha Palanci** and **Joan Brower** and their committee made sure the Conference, with its theme, "Delivering the World on a Plate," not only delivered the world, but delivered the WOW!

Taking place at the InterContinental New York Barclay, the Conference host hotel, the Grande Dame celebration started with the kind of sparkle founder **Carol Brock** would have approved of. The Cleveland Dames rocked tiaras, but all the Dames showed up in their finery. They gathered outside the aptly named Grand Ballroom, took chapter photos and selfies on the sweeping staircase, and enjoyed luxe appetizers including baby lamb chops, cocktails featuring Tito's Vodka, and three different pours from Wente Vineyards.

Then the ballroom doors opened. The spot where attendees had gathered for breakfast, lunch, and keynote presentations had magically transformed. The vibe and look were city chic, with Vision Decor's cascading centerpieces of pillowy white orchids and butter-yellow roses adorning linen-draped tables. Unlike in years previous, chapters weren't assigned tables, allowing Dames to mix and form new connections and friendships.

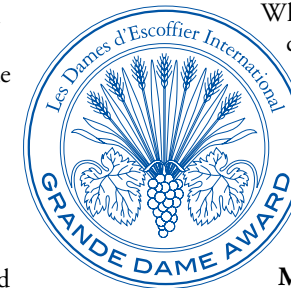
After an exquisite dinner (see sidebar), Dames stood to honor outgoing LDEI President **Deborah Mintcheff** (NY). Deborah admitted she'd been nervous about taking on the presidency while the Dames, the food and beverage industry, and whole world were still struggling through the pandemic. She said despite that, serving as President turned out to be "the most transformative, fulfilling year of my life." She thanked her strong, supportive Executive Board and shared her takeaway—"Never fear change."

Dames cheered for Deborah and for incoming LDEI President **Jennifer Goldman** (Cleveland). Affectionately known as "the blonde from Charleston," Jennifer thanked the Board and President Mintcheff. She spoke of her desire to lead LDEI and advance Carol Brock's vision of what the organization has stood for since the beginning—inspiring, advancing, and supporting women in our industry to achieve excellence in leadership and philanthropy.

That kind of achievement and inspiration is personified by this year's two new Grande Dames. Washington, D.C. Dame **Ann Yonkers** introduced Paula Lambert, who 38 years ago founded The Mozzarella Company, its modest name belying its grand ambition—making artisanal, hand-crafted cheese that would awaken America's palate and put the country on the culinary map.

Paula has been a pioneer in the industry for 40 years, racking up awards and accolades along the way. Her cheeses have earned numerous Gold Medals, and last year, *Food & Wine* named her one of the "Top 50 Cheesemakers in America."

But cheese isn't Paula's only accomplishment. She's also served



as president of IACP, is a founding member of LDEI Dallas Chapter, and has chaired the Dallas-Fort Worth Chapter of the American Institute of Wine and Food.

While Paula has made mozzarella her calling, Bev Shaffer has been dishing up many different ways to better the culinary community and the community at large. Just how many ways took not one but two Cleveland Dames to explain. Cleveland Chapter's Immediate Past President **Beth Davis-Noragon** introduced Bev while Dame **Melissa McClellan** provided the narration in

a brief video. Bev has had impact as chef, cookbook author, culinary instructor and consultant, USA ambassador to Slow Food, TV personality, Cleveland Chapter founder, and LDEI President. She is the organization's tireless champion. Bev served as LDEI President even while serving as caregiver to her husband John, stricken with Alzheimer's, but she never missed a beat. "I dislike the word busy," she said with trademark deadpan. Paula agreed. "The more you give, the more you will receive. It's not work if you're having fun."

Rather than the crystal awards Grande Dames have received in the past, this year they were awarded \$500 to be gifted to the organization of their choice as a way to further their advocacy and their legacy. Bev, ever the activist, donated her Grande Dame Award to Cleveland Rape Crisis Center. Paula chose her Dallas Chapter. "I love my Dallas Chapter," she said, and from the whoops, whistles, and cheers from the Dallas Dames, it was clear the feeling is mutual.

The Grande Dame program and the Conference officially ended with a bang from the gavel and a beaming smile from incoming LDEI President Jennifer Goldman, but the party kept going. Buzzed with the happy energy that comes from being together again, Dames got up and danced to Bruno Mars and ABBA. Some Dames may still be there dancing, but all will hold dear Conference memories as crisp and sweet as New York State apples.

Gala Grande Dame Awards Dinner

An over-the-top menu befitting two Grande Dames and a very grand occasion began with glasses of crisp, blonde 2020 Murrieta's Well Sauvignon Blanc paired with a starter of plush foie gras with a tart terrine of cranberry soda bread and red currants.

The wine kept flowing with a creamy 2021 Eric's Small Lot Chardonnay from Wente Vineyards, served with a bracing salad of roasted, candied baby beets, heirloom tomatoes, and tangy Humboldt Fog goat cheese on field-fresh mache from upstate New York, drizzled with honey-curry dressing.

A 2017 Murrieta's Well Merlot with notes of red ripe fruits paired perfectly with the main event of plump Cornish hens glazed with wild mushroom fricassee sauce, silky mashed sweet potatoes, and bright bundles of asparagus.

The fruity, chocolaty notes in Wente Vineyards 2018 Duetto Cabernet echoed a dazzling dessert of a sexy chocolate dome garbed in chocolate sabayon and raspberry coulis. But the evening's true sweetness was the program itself.



SUNDAY GOSPEL BRUNCH AT RED ROOSTER HARLEM

BY ANN M. EVANS (SACRAMENTO)



On a cold and damp Sunday morning after Conference conclusion, Dames lucky enough to have a ticket to the gospel brunch headed uptown to the heart of Harlem. Acclaimed restaurateur and author Chef Marcus Samuelsson's Red Rooster Harlem, located around the corner from Harlem's famous Apollo Theatre, hosted a brunch and a performance.

Entering the Red Rooster, one walks by Chef Marcus's cookbooks on display, including *Yes, Chef*; *Our Harlem*; *New American Table*; and *The Rise: Black Cooks and the Soul of American Food*. There's a large, mirrored bar with shelves lined with jars of pickled okra, pickled figs, and pineapple hooch. Vertical rows of soil based herbs, like sage and basil, grow vertically under grow lites, lining one entire wall in the ground level restaurant. There's an awe and hush to entering the place.

Down the stairs we descended into the basement of this renowned restaurant, to Jenny's Supper Club™, first opened in December 2010 in a long shuttered Harlem hangout. With its red vinyl lounge banquettes, black and white tiled floor and large bar, the room had a classic Harlem speakeasy vibe. What an honor to hear the first performance in that basement since Covid began some two years prior for Sing Harlem Choir.

The choir was back in action, singing Sunday brunch downstairs at Red Rooster Harlem. Ahmaya Knoelle, is co-creator of Gospel for Teens, along side her mother, Vy Higginsen. Ahmaya leads Sing Harlem, which is for advanced members of Gospel for Teens. Its mission is to preserve gospel singing as an art form. Mama Vy greeted us with a warm welcome to Harlem, USA. Her family, she said, had lived on the same block in Harlem for the past 100 years.

To hold us over through the concert, Red Rooster initially served a fresh green salad, cornbread madeleines, and deviled eggs, plus drinks, including a refreshing house made ginger beer. The choir led with transcendent versions of "You are Love, All the Time," followed by "Amazing Grace." What we witnessed touched my heart. I spoke with Vy Higginsen after the concert to see how Dames might donate to support this amazing educational arts program, and she encouraged us to do so through their website (www.mamafoundation.org.)

The brunch? A gracious plenty buffet on two long tables. Red Rooster staff served up collard greens, mashed potatoes, catfish with black-eyed peas, creamy baked mac and cheese, and fried chicken with three sauces. They followed brunch with an array of desserts served at table. The concert and the brunch were a most grand finale to the well-done New York Conference.

Ann M. Evans is cofounder of several mainstays of her local regional food system such as the Davis Farmers Market and author of the Davis Farmers Market Cookbook.



L-R: Conference Co-Chair Joan Brower; Ahmaya Knoelle and her mother Vy Higginsen, co-creators of Sing Harlem Choir; Conference Co-Chair Marsha Palanci; and NY Dame Rita Jammet.



Vy Higginsen.



Singing Dame Liza Hinman (Sonoma Chapter), is a first-time attendee.



CHAPTER PROGRAMS *Nichole Bendele (San Antonio)*

ANN ARBOR | ATLANTA | AUSTIN | BIRMINGHAM | BOSTON | BRITISH COLUMBIA | CHARLESTON | CHICAGO | CLEVELAND | COLORADO | DALLAS
FRANCE | GREATER DES MOINES | GREATER MADISON | HAWAII | HOUSTON | KANSAS CITY | KENTUCKY | LONDON | LOS ANGELES/ORANGE COUNTY
MEXICO | MINNESOTA | MONTEREY BAY | NASHVILLE | NEW ENGLAND | NEW ORLEANS | NEW YORK | NORTH CAROLINA | ONTARIO | PALM SPRINGS
PHILADELPHIA | PHOENIX | PORTLAND | SACRAMENTO | SAN ANTONIO | SAN DIEGO | SAN FRANCISCO | SAVANNAH/COASTAL GEORGIA
SEATTLE | SONOMA | SOUTH FLORIDA | ST. LOUIS | TUSCANY | WASHINGTON, D.C.

ATLANTA *Demetra Overton*

The Dish With Dames Atlanta! On Instagram Live! **Demetra Overton** of Sweet Savant and Virginia Willis, **Virginia Willis** Culinary Enterprises, Inc., began hosting an LDEI Atlanta new, monthly Instagram LIVE show! The online conversations are a fun and interesting way to highlight Les Dames d'Escoffier's mission through interviews with our members. Taking advantage of Instagram Reels, each Instagram Live show is posted as a video expanding the reach and providing an opportunity for people to view who could not attend the chat. The added bonus is our follows and engagements have grown. **Dame guests** have included **Erin Croom** who is the co-founder of Small Bites Adventure Club, an innovative subscription service for kids, and **Brandi Shelton** who is the founder of Just Add Honey. Please check out these lively conversations at @lesdamesatl.



Demetra Overton



Virginia Willis

AUSTIN *Lindsey LaRoy*

Austin Dames were thrilled to finally gather again for the annual Fall Meeting to reconnect and introduce a new class of members. After two years of virtual ceremonies, the event took place on October 24 at the historic Barr Mansion property where Dames celebrated each other's successes, found familiar faces, and welcomed an exciting new group of women into the chapter. Kicked off with a fun "getting to know you" bingo game to reconnect, Past President **Stacy Franklin** passed the presidential torch to **Anna Tauzin** who led the evening's events and introduced the new board which laid out plans for the coming year. The 2022-2023 class was introduced and pinned by **Kim Hanks**. Special thanks to **Dame Melanie McAfee** for hosting at the Barr Mansion and to board members who rolled off the board this year: **Sarah Heard** (treasurer), **Alicynn Fink** (programming chair), **Monique Santua** (fundraising co-chair), **Lorena Amparo Legarreta** (DEIB chair), and **Kendall Antonelli** (immediate past president).



Austin Dames gather at Barr Mansion for their annual Fall Meeting. Photo: Ha Lam

CHARLESTON *Susan Slack*

The Charleston Chapter welcomes the new Board of Directors for 2022-2023, which includes President **Amanee Neirouz**, Vice-President **Robin Griffith**, Secretary **Amethyst Ganaway**, Treasurer **Mary Kay Gill**, Immediate Past President **Helen Mitternacht**, and **Belinda Smith-Sullivan**, DEI Ambassador.

Several Dames attended the LDEI Conference in New York: Amanee Neirouz, Robin Griffith, Belinda Smith-Sullivan, **Danielle Weckler**, and **Susan Slack**.

The Charleston Chapter proudly congratulates **Jennifer Goldman** (Cleveland), Les Dames d'Escoffier's new international president for 2022-2023. Jennifer was a beloved, longtime member of the Charleston Chapter, and she served as our chapter president.

In collaboration with *Field + Supply* and *Garden & Gun Magazine*, several

Charleston Dames participated in the 2022 Modern Makers Holiday Market on December 9-11 at the newly renovated Charleston Visitors Center. Local and regional artisans, including several Dames, showcased their goods and participated in interactive workshops, chef demonstrations, and other holiday-themed activities. A chapter culinary bazaar fundraiser is being organized for spring.

DALLAS *Heather Kurima*

We held a Celebration of Life to honor and remember **Doty Griffith**, **Michelle Brown**, and **Renie Steves**. Stories and memories were shared by their family members as well as the



Charleston Dames Amanee Neirouz, Belinda Smith-Sullivan, new LDEI President Jennifer Goldman (Cleveland), and Robin Griffith at the New York Conference. Photo courtesy of Amanee Neirouz. Photo three, L-R: Dallas Chapter Dames Nikky Phinyawatana (left) and Gen Gray with Charleston's Robin Griffith and Amanee Neirouz enjoy a leisurely breakfast at Russ & Daughters Cafe, a NYC landmark. This Lower East Side cultural and culinary icon began in 1904 when immigrant Joel Russ peddled herring from a pushcart. Smoked fish, cured fish, and fine caviar are displayed in the café's refrigerator case. Photos. Susan Slack.

over 50 Dames attending. Many of the stories shared involved travel adventures with Renie to other countries and to Annual LDEI Conferences, which she never missed until COVID. The Renie Steves Conference Scholarship was also announced. It supports Dames attending the Annual Conference and continues the legacy she started. In September, **Andrea Shackelford** hosted us at Harvest Seasonal Kitchen to learn about "The Seed Project," which the chapter supports. A new program called Dames in the Kitchen kicked off in October with **Nikky Phinyawatana's** hands-on cooking class, Thai Things Up. The program is a series of monthly classes to raise money and provide educational experiences with Dames sharing their knowledge and passion. Andrea Meyer will lead the upcoming November class on French macarons. The New York Chapter's amazing Conference was thoroughly enjoyed by 15 Dames who celebrated Grande Dame **Paula Lambert**. We continued the party later in the month by raising a glass and toasting her accomplishment and during a hands-on cheese class in November.



Dallas Dames celebrate Grande Dame Paula Lambert.

HAWAII *Hayley Matson-Mathes*

The Hawaii Chapter gathered on November 12, 2022, for the Annual Escoffier Dinner at Hy's Steak House, Honolulu. The chapter hosted three Kapiolani Community College and Leeward Community College culinary students as their special guests. The Hy's classic steak house menu featured an appetizer trio: Oyster Rockefeller, Sashimi Duo, and Crabcake, followed by tableside Caesar Salad, Steak Au Poivre (with a vegetarian option), and flaming Cherries Jubilee. G. Lion Sommelier **Ariana Tsuchiya** presented the female-forward wine pairings from women-owned wineries and artisans.



The Hawaii Dames Classic Annual Escoffier Dinner. Photo: Hayley Matson.

KANSAS CITY *Ann Brockhoff*

The Kansas City Chapter is growing, both in sheer numbers (70 members) and in the variety of ways it helps them support each other. Events included "Connecting the Dames" at **Cindy Campbell-Reynolds' Somerset Ridge Vineyard and Winery**,

which brought members together for a tour, wine tasting, and speed dating-style networking. Collaboration was the theme in September, when **Cheryl Hartell's** long-standing culinary book club hosted **Cheryl Bisbee**, the owner of Boozy Botanicals, who curated cocktails made with Empress Indigo Gin, which was provided **Louisa Schulteis**. Besides being just plain fun, the group also donated \$500 to LDEI-KC. Monthly mentor/mentee happy hours continued with an event at Chewology, a Kansas City gyoza bar, and an ongoing "Meet Our Members" series introduces both new and veteran Dames through the chapter newsletter and social media. **Jo Marie Scaglia** (a.k.a. The Midwest Maven) hosted the chapter's latest Mini Supper Club. The private dinner was reserved by the International Food and Wine Society for the benefit of its scholarship program and rounded out a very busy Kansas City autumn!



Dame Cheryl Hartell collaborated with other Kansas City Dames to create a special book club event. "Connecting the Dames" was the theme at a November networking event at Cindy Campbell-Reynolds' Somerset Ridge Vineyard and Winery. Photo: Dame Carmen Chopp.

MINNESOTA *Kim Ode*

Minnesota Dames dined at the iconic Kramarczuk's Sausage Company in October, now in its 68th year. Owner Orest Kramarczuk described his family's path from a modest butcher shop in 1954 to winning a James Beard Award as an "American Classic" in 2013. "They started making sausage that no one had tasted before, in the European way," Kramarczuk said of his parents, Wasyl and Anna, who emigrated to the U.S. in 1949. Current events in Ukraine seemed sadly familiar as he shared his mother's story, during World War II, of having one hour to flee before the Russians arrived. A tradition of hiring refugees and immigrants continues, with four refugees hired since Russia invaded Ukraine this year. The restaurant had an Eastern-Euro cadence; aromas wafted from the service counter and the dining room's booths. Our meal was a cafeteria tray spread with cabbage rolls, pierogis, giant meatballs, beet salad, sauerkraut,



Orest Kramarczuk shared the story of his Ukrainian family's iconic sausage company. The Kramarczuk's cabbage rolls are a top seller. Photos: Kim Ode

potato salad, fried onions, mashed potatoes in mushroom gravy, and sausages. Orest Kramarczuk's son is the third generation running the shop. They mean to remain a landmark for years to come. The Dames contributed \$1,000 to a fund to help Ukraine in its struggle to retain its independence.

PHOENIX *Patty Emmert*

The Phoenix Chapter focuses their philanthropic support by working to strengthen the many nonprofit efforts across Arizona that reinforce our own food community. Each year we partner and support the Annual Harvest Moon Feast Fundraiser to benefit C-CAP Arizona and the 9,000 Arizona students who receive the culinary, job, and life skills training this 30-year-old nonprofit provides. Top chefs from around the valley gathered under the big golden Moon at the 8th Harvest Moon Feast, which was held at Tarbell's on October 9, 2022. Chef Mark Tarbell hosted and played music with Nate Nathan and the MacDaddy-O's, and students cooked and sampled their dishes with chef mentors. In addition, we had two local celebrities on hand signing their recently published books: Chef Brother Luck signed his latest book, *No Lucks Given*, and local Dame **Emma Zimmerman**, co-founder of Hayden Flour Mills, also signed copies of her new book *The Miller's Daughter*. Harvest Moon 2022 did not disappoint. From the food to the beverages, to the entertainment and cookbook signing, this event raised over \$100,000 for student scholarships.



Chef Rebecca Tillman, a Phoenix Dame and Executive Sous Chef of the Phoenician Resort, is with her C-CAP students at the Harvest Moon Festival. Photo: Debbie Wolvos

SAN ANTONIO *Karen Haram*

New Dames **Maeve Bassett**, **Erin Engels**, **Katrina Flores**, **Caitlin Foose**, **Kelly Hagemeier**, **Sarah Pequeno**, **Jenny Plattette**, **Dr. Lana Frantzen**, and **Emily Simpson** were inducted at our September New Member and Officer Induction Meeting at historic St. Anthony Hotel. **Darcie Schipull** will be Archivist; **Jennifer Michaelis**, Recording Secretary; and **Diana Addison**, returning Treasurer. Our Aspirations Grant fundraiser "An Evening with Julia" at the historic Roosevelt Library in November was a hit! It featured a *Le Cornue* cook stove from France with copper pot collection, an Eiffel Tower ice sculpture, refreshing beverages (cocktails, a bathtub full of wines, and 15 liter of Champagne Bollinger), a table of our famous Dame-baked pies (for sale) in Emile Henri donated pie pans, and Dame-cooked cuisine such as Beef Bourguignon, Croque Monsieur, Duck Confit with Dumplings, various French pastries, Madeleines, and tarts. There was also a table of assorted cheeses, fruit, and charcuterie. Culinary students from St. Phillips College also assisted and received school credit. Our amazing chairs were **Cathy Siegel**, **Elise Russ**, and **Jenny Rabb Faz**. Aspirations Grants are awarded to women seeking assistance to grow their agriculture, culinary, beverage or hospitality industry related businesses.



Dame Mary Martini stands in front of the oversized charcuterie table presented in her honor by HEB. Photo: Diana Barrios Trevino. A table of Dame-baked pies in Emile Henri pie dishes. A bathtub filled of wines including a 15-liter bottle of Champagne Bollinger. Guests posing with Le Cornue cook stove from France. Photos: Nichole Bendele.

SOUTH FLORIDA *Barbara Seelig Beyer*

The South Florida Chapter was thrilled to host their annual meeting at the home of member **Juana Franklin**. It was fabulous meeting in person and being together to enjoy a delicious brunch prepared by our members after a two-year hiatus. New board members were introduced and welcomed by Immediate Past President **Irene Moore** and incoming President **Ann Stratte**.

Ann has quite a history of dedication to LDEI. First as a charter member of the Atlanta Chapter, President of the Washington, D.C., Chapter, and eight years on the LDEI Board. In 2019, Ann served the organization as its international president. The South Florida Chapter is now proud to call Ann our new President. As a thank you to Irene Moore for founding the chapter and being a dedicated board member and president since its inception, she was presented with a commemorative LDEI silver bracelet.



South Florida Chapter President Ann Stratte.



Ann Stratte and Irene Moore.

MEMBER MILESTONES *Dottie Koteski (Philadelphia)*

ATLANTA

Gena Berry was honored with the 2022 Local Food Legend Award for her local community service. Gina is the founder of Culinary Works, which provides food styling, culinary event planning, and all manner of recipe development for clients across the country.



Gena Berry

Jennifer Hill Booker

opened her new restaurant, Bauhaus Biergarten, a German-style bar and outdoor Biergarten in Springdale, Arkansas. Bauhaus Biergarten provides German, European, and Wisconsin beverages and dishes. It also offers collaborative dinners with chefs from around the country.



Jennifer Hill Booker

Simone Byron's

vision of a summer camp for culinary and hospitality high school students was realized in 2022. The C.H.E.F. program was five days of training that connected Dekalb County students with professional chefs including **Deborah VanTrece** who shared her talents and experiences as an entrepreneur.



Simone Byron

Debra Franklin Cannon, Ph.D.,

was awarded the 2022 Georgia Restaurant Association Crystal of Excellence (GRACE) Lifetime Achievement Award. Debra serves as the Director of the Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality in the Robinson College of Business at Georgia State University. www.garestaurants.org/news/lifetime-achievement-award-ed-to-dr-debra-f-cannon



Debra Franklin Cannon

Erin Croon's

company Small Bites Adventures partnered with Georgia Grown where **Holly Chute** is executive chef, to produce an exciting program for young



Erin Croon

students. Meet The Farmer is a series of 12 free videos featuring Georgia specialty crop farmers. **Judith Winfrey's** farm, Love Is Love, is featured. www.smallbites.club/meetthefarmer

Ellen Weaver Hartman, APR, Fellow

PRSA, CEO of Hartman Public Relations, was inducted into the first class of the Georgia Restaurant Hall of Fame for 2022. This prestigious award recognizes individuals who have exhibited the highest standard of excellence and professionalism and have made significant contributions to Georgia's restaurant industry.



Ellen Weaver Hartman

Deborah VanTrece

was highlighted in *Nation's Restaurant News*. The article focused on the expansion of her company, the VanTrece Hospitality Group. Currently two restaurants are serving the Atlanta market, Twisted Soul Cookhouse & Pours and Oreathea's. Two others, Serenidad and Dulcet, will open soon. www.deborahvantrece.com



Deborah VanTrece

Hope Webb,

co-founder of the new Filipino restaurant Estrellita, was highlighted in *Food & Wine Magazine's* "The Best Places to Eat Filipino Food in Every State." Estrellita is the only full-service Filipino restaurant in Atlanta. Hope is passionate about sharing these traditional foods. www.estrellitafilipino.com



Hope Webb

Judith Winfrey's

farm, Love Is Love Cooperative Farm, was officially certified as organic. The farm is a unique collective of farmers working together to grow food, plants, and flowers for both wholesale markets and directly to consumers. www.loveislovefarm.com



Judith Winfrey

AUSTIN

Dawn Orsak signed a contract to write a cookbook for University of Texas Press called *Kolach Culture: Cooking in Texas Czech Kitchens*, to be published early 2024.

Jessica Sanders

was honorably mentioned in the 2022 Liquor Awards, recognizing those who move beyond existing in a community to being an active part of it. Jessica has contributed over \$15,000 to organizations and projects serving the community. Her efforts are seen throughout Austin's hospitality industry. www.liquor.com/honorable-mentions-award-2022-6363344



Jessica Sanders

CHARLESTON

Helen Mitternight's

October 2022 article on chapter member **Jodie Holder** for the *Charleston City Paper* revealed, "What it takes to Harvest Charleston Oysters." Helen, a veteran journalist, also wrote "Barbecue in Slovenia has Carolina Connections," highlighting new chapter member **Elizabeth Karmel** who recently served as culinary ambassador for the Wild West Fest in Slovenia.



Helen Mitternight

Amethyst Ganaway

appeared in *The Local Palate* magazine in the article, "Bringing up Benne." Amethyst shared tips for cooking with benne seeds and a flavorful recipe for Southern Vegetable Salad with Benne Dressing.



Amethyst Ganaway

Reina Gascón-López was featured in *The Post and Courier* in a story about her exploration of Puerto Rican cuisine. She is documenting it through The Sofrito Project, which she created to showcase the food culture and her culinary heritage.

Nathalie Dupree was featured in the November 2022 *Garden & Gun* story "Southern Kitchen Essentials According to Nathalie Dupree," which was authored by North Carolina Dame **Susi Gott Séguret**. Nathalie discussed downsizing and the

absolute essentials that traveled with her from Charleston to her new home in Raleigh.

DALLAS

Susan Auler and **Rebecca Murphy** were selected by the nonprofit, People's History in Texas, for their "invaluable contributions to Texas history." The organization's objective is to showcase the stories of ordinary people and significant political movements.

www.peopleshistoryintexas.org/gallery-of-stars/



Susan Auler



Rebecca Murphy



Becky Renfro Borbolla



Tareka Lofton



Audree Minter Miller



Nikky Phinyawatana



Jamie Knee

Becky Renfro Borbolla and Renfro Foods received the Global Nexus Award from Fort Worth Sister Cities for the international growth of Mrs. Renfro's products.

Tareka Lofton, pastry chef and owner of Loft 22 Cakes, was a contestant on the Dr. Seuss Baking Challenge, which aired on December 13, 2022, on Amazon Prime.

Audree Minter Miller is the new sales operation manager for Demeine Estates, a recognized leader in fine wine sales and marketing.

Nikky Phinyawatana, owner of Asian Mint, recently won Best New Product of Consumer Ready Food and several other awards for her Drama Queen Crispy Chili at the Fiery Food Challenge.

LOS ANGELES/ ORANGE COUNTY

Jamie Knee, sommelier, wine educator, and wine writer, whose credentials include: WSET, CSW, SWS, AWE, CWAS, and CMS1, assumed the position of the Santa Barbara County Wine Educator & Trade Host for Jackson Family Wines.

www.petitewinetraveler.com/

NEW YORK

Michael-Ann Rowe's Off the Beaten Palate productions partnered with Docks Oyster Bar & Seafood Grill in Manhattan for the first Canadian Oyster Festival. www.youtube.com/watch?v=q44rjh2bc6Q&t=199s

Karen Tenenbaum and her legal team spoke at a webinar hosted by the New York State Restaurant Association. This webinar served as a refresher for restaurant owners on various tax situations and issues, including NYS tax collection, non-filers, and bulk sales issues. www.litaxattorney.com



Karen Tenenbaum

SAN ANTONIO

Nancy Fitch along with others transformed the historic Liberty Bar to Carriqui at the Pearl district. The restaurant showcases South Texas foodways—the Rio Grande Valley to the Texas coast and north to San Antonio. Its menu incorporates regional flavors mirroring the flight path of the carriqui, which is the bird's sole U.S. habitat.



Nancy Fitch

Karen Haram, a founding member of San Antonio Chapter, was named to the People's History in Texas's Gallery of Stars, which features the incredible individuals that have made invaluable contributions to Texas history. Karen's 45 years of culinary expertise and knowledge of Texas food and its history led to this honor.



Karen Haram

June Hayes, a long-standing Dame, was awarded emeritus membership. June was instrumental to the chapter's success while serving as LDEISA president and Second Vice President of LDEI. Her efforts included working with Time Dollar fundraising projects, chairing multiple committees, and participation in raising tens of thousands of dollars for the chapter's missions.



June Hayes

Kim Mauldin's visit to France included meeting Paris Chapter board members **Emily Monaco** and **Allison Zinder**. In addition of having fun discussing the differences between

their chapters, Kim was given a market tour and the group enjoyed meeting up for the opening of the Fête du Vin and dinner at Bouillon Pigalle.



Kim Mauldin

SAN FRANCISCO

Maryam Ahmed was nominated by the *Wine Enthusiast* Wine Star Awards for Social Visionary of the Year. *Wine Enthusiast* also featured Maryam on the cover of their Future 40 issue in October, with her company being honored for its creative programs and DEI efforts in the food & beverage industry.



Maryam Ahmed

Linda Carucci, culinary instructor, cookbook author, and a two-time, breast cancer survivor worked with Sutter Health to present a cooking class focused on healthy dishes for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. She teaches a free monthly class, Healthy Cooking on a Budget, for the Cancer Support Community of the Bay Area.



Linda Carucci

Kathleen Thompson Hill, longtime *Index-Tribune* food and wine columnist was honored for her contributions to the Sonoma culinary community with a Sonoma Community Center event in October. Additionally, the Kathleen Thompson Hill Culinary Collection has taken up permanent residence at Elizabeth Spencer Winery in Rutherford in the Napa Valley.



Kathleen Thompson Hill

Tanya Holland's third cookbook, *California Soul: Recipes from a Culinary Journey West*, was released October 2022 by Ten Speed Press. Featuring more than 80 seasonal recipes, the chef/restaurateur's book traces the roots of modern California soul food to the Great Migration of African American families, including Tanya's. www.tanyaholland.com

Cathy Jörin, Senior Director for The Culinary Institute of America developed and launched a master's degree program in Sustainable Food Systems. This is the CIA's third professional master's degree for future leaders in the food and beverage industry. Other master's degrees are in Food Business and Wine & Beverage.



Cathy Jörin

Tonya Pitts, sommelier, and wine director at One Market Restaurant in San Francisco, has been awarded the prestigious 2022 Sommelier of the Year Wine Star Award by *Wine Enthusiast* magazine.



Tonya Pitts

Eileen Spitalny celebrates 30 years of Fairytale Brownies. She and her business partner, friends since kindergarten, grew up eating these brownies. Since 2001, they have worked with the nonprofit KABOOM! building play spaces across the country. To celebrate this anniversary, they are raising



Eileen Spitalny

funds to build a playground in the spring. www.brownies.com

SOUTH FLORIDA

Barbara Seelig-Beyer was invited to be guest speaker at a November meeting of the philanthropic education organization P.E.O. to talk about her path from Stress Free Cook to a member of Les Dames d'Escoffier. Both organizations have a common goal, which is to grant scholarships to deserving women. www.peointernational.org



Barbara Seelig-Beyer

Kim Miller's firm, Ink Link Marketing, was named as one of MarTech's Top 10 PR Agencies 2023 for the work the firm does with food and restaurant technology support companies. Based in Miami, Florida, the agency specializes in the food and hospitality industries.



Kim Miller

Irene Moore is excited to share that she's the new writer of "Restaurant Reviews" featuring reviews of Miami's top restaurants and "Chefs Share," a monthly interview and recipe from one of Miami's culinary stars in *Biscayne*

Times. The magazine covers an area from downtown Miami to Aventura, including Miami's island communities.

Marie-Charlotte Piro's company Olio Piro received an astonishing 97/100 points in the 2023 International Extra Virgin Olive guide FLOS OLEI, a 14-point jump over their 2021 performance when they championed their first year of publication in the guide with "Best in the World" category with 83 points.



Irene Moore



Marie-Charlotte Piro

Nichole Robillard, a new Dame and the Chief Marketing Officer for Smokey Bones, participated in the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show in Orlando to discuss "The State of Off-Premises Ordering" and how casual brick-and-mortar restaurants can embrace the challenge of digital consumer behaviors. The two-day exposition showcases local talent in the market.



Nichole Robillard

THE WINE GROUP
is a proud sponsor of
Les Dames d'Escoffier INTERNATIONAL

Remembering Two Visionary LDEI Leaders

Beth Allen (New York)
1940 -2022

Beth Allen passed away peacefully in New York City on October 20. Born in Houston on September 27, 1940, Beth lived in NYC for over 50 years. She was very special: a gentle lady, Southern through and through, ever so polite, always ready for a good time, and generous to a fault. She always looked on the bright side—many



referred her to as Pollyanna. Beth's full name was Elva Elizabeth Allen, and she often referred to herself as Mrs. Allen Allen—Beth Allen was married to John Allen.

President and owner of Beth Allen Associates, Inc., Beth was a cookbook producer with over 40 years of experience producing over 22 books for the major publishing houses. Highly respected for attention to detail, her top-quality, illustrated books were well researched, professionally developed, always a great read, and renowned for the reliability of the recipes.

Beth co-authored *Junior's Home Cooking* and several Junior's cookbooks, including *Junior's Cheesecake Cookbook*. She also produced *The Quick Cook* cookbook series and wrote the *Good Housekeeping Great American Classics Cookbook*. Other books included *Readers' Digest Perfect Pies*, *A Cozy Book of Tea Time Treats*, and *Down Home Cooking The New Healthier Way*. She also contributed to *The New York Times*, *Woman's Day*, *Self*, and *Chef Magazine*, just to name a few.

Prior to starting her own business, Beth held various corporate positions: Campbell Soup, Pillsbury, Corning and Jewel, Burson Marsteller.

Happiest when involved and making a difference, Beth gave her time tirelessly. She was past president of Les Dames d'Escoffier International and the New York Chapter. She was also past president of the New York Women's Culinary Alliance and a member

of its board of directors for nine years. President of New York Home Economists in Business, Beth was named Outstanding Business Home Economist of the Year in 1966. She was a member of the American Book Producers Association and an active member of the International Association of Culinary Professionals. Beth was actively involved in her co-op and member of Marble Collegiate Church where she was married.

Beth had a master's degree with honors in advertising from the Newhouse School of Communications at Syracuse University and a bachelor's degree in food science/home economics and consumer food business from Iowa State University. She studied culinary science at Ecolé de Cuisine La Varrenne in Paris, France, and at the Antoinette Pope School in Chicago, Illinois.

Beth was one-of-a-kind. She never forgot a birthday, distributed her famous Christmas cookie trays to friends far and near, and was always the first one to help when someone was in need. After Beth witnessed the two planes fly into the World Trade Towers on September 11, she spent days downtown preparing food for the rescue workers.

Always dressed to the nines, Beth was bubbly and enthusiastic and a devoted friend to many. She was a regular at Carnegie Hall, saw every Broadway show, loved the ballet and was an avid concert goer—the best seats in the house were a must.

A superb Southern cook and baker, Beth didn't know what it meant to cook up a meal for just a few. For her, it meant a whole, delectably juicy ham basted with cherry brandy, a mound of melt-in-your-mouth biscuits served on one of her mother's silver trays, piles of crispy fried chicken and featherlight, lemon-glazed angel food cake. Beth's Thanksgiving dinner was Southern through and through. Her chocolate chip cookies are legendary. Beth had a love for travel, exploring new places, experiencing new cultures and local foods, always dissecting how they were prepared so she could add them to her repertoire.

Beth and her husband, John, drove a baby blue 1986 Cadillac named Blue Bonnet, a gentle nod to her Texas roots. We mourn Beth but also celebrate her wonderful life. She will be greatly missed.

—**Janice Hamilton** and
Deborah Mintcheff (New York)

Dolores Snyder (Dallas)
1933-2022

It is with great sadness that the Dallas Chapter shares the news that LDEI Past President and founding Dallas President **Dolores "Dodie" Snyder** passed away on Friday, November 11, at the age of 89. She died peacefully during a nap at her daughter Emily's home as she had recently relocated from Dallas to Boca Raton to be closer to her daughter. In 1976 Dolores established the Dolores Snyder Gourmet Cookery School, which she ran for 16 years. She was perfectly proper in all of her endeavors.



In 1978, Dolores was studying on the French Riviera at a culinary program designed by Simone Beck, the co-author of **Julia Child's** *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*. While there, Dolores attended a champagne reception at the Escoffier Museum in Villeneuve-Loubet (the birthplace of trailblazing chef and writer Auguste Escoffier) that honored **Carol Brock**, founder of the New York Chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier. Befriending Carol motivated Dolores to establish a Dallas Chapter, which began with 10 founding members in 1984. Dolores went on to become International President of Les Dames d'Escoffier in 1989, and she was very proud of both being a Dame and establishing our chapter.

In 2004 she released a cookbook, *Tea Time Entertaining: A Collection of Tea Themes and Recipes*, which was a Best Book Award winner and a finalist for Cookbook of the Year 2004.

Dodie was a proud graduate of El Centro Community College and later graduated from of the University of Texas in Austin. To honor her, Les Dames d'Escoffier Dallas Chapter established the Dolores Simmons Snyder Scholarship in Nutritional Science at The University of Texas. This scholarship benefits an outstanding junior or senior female undergraduate who is studying nutritional science in the Department of Human Ecology.

—**Emily Snyder** and the Dallas Chapter.



The Great Hmong Community of Minnesota

By **Kendra Lee Thatcher** (Philadelphia)

On July 28, 2022, Minnesota Dames gathered at the Hmong Village Shopping Center for a tour and potluck luncheon. Located in Saint Paul's Eastside neighborhood, the Hmong Village is a bazaar-like, warehouse-sized indoor market and shopping center with more than 250 vendors featuring fresh produce, restaurants, professional services, and merchant stores selling everything from children's toys and home furnishings to clothing and beauty products. While a private tour to any cultural market can be an exciting (and delicious) venture, the importance of the Hmong (pronounced *Muhn-g*) community in Minnesota is especially unique.

Saint Paul is home to the largest population of Hmong people of any city in the United States. This concentration is due to a post-Vietnam War resettlement program. During the Vietnam War, the Hmong people, who lived in the northern mountainous region of Vietnam, were cooperative with U.S. forces. Once the war ended, however, communist forces retaliated against the Hmong. Because of this brutality, the U.S. created a resettlement program in 1975 for the Hmong people to relocate from Laos to the northern parts of America where Lutheran and other religious humanitarian groups had a stronghold. Minnesota quickly became a destination for generations of Hmong families.

"The Hmong are a pivotal part of our community," says Minnesota Chapter President **Kim Ode**. "Many of the Hmong farmers became the keystones of our farm markets. This was part of a real driving force for institutions such as the Hmong Market Place and Hmong Village."

One of the Hmong Village founders, Chef Yia Vang (who happens to share a name with the more well-known Vang of Iron Chef fame), talked with the group and shared the story of the marketplace's birth. What began as an economic development plan for nine Hmong entrepreneurs quickly became a collective dream for their entire community. In 2009, the Hmong entrepreneurs brought their multimillion dollar shopping and dining destination idea to local bankers but were denied loans. Undeterred, they reached out to friends and family and pooled resources to purchase and flip an abandoned warehouse. Word spread of their work and other vendors began lining up. Hmong Village opened in November 2010 to rave reviews and continues to be a Saint Paul staple more than a decade later.

After weaving their way around the vibrant aisles, learning about the vision, dedication, and resilience of the Hmong entrepreneurs to open and maintain this exquisite Asian cultural center, the 19 Dames in attendance purchased food from various vendors and shared a family-style meal.

"Some of our favorite dishes," recalls **Andi Bidwell**, "were the Hmong sausages served with purple sticky rice and the three-piece Hmong stuffed chicken wings."

A true labor-of-love, these traditional chicken wings are first deboned and then stuffed with a mixture of ground pork, vegetables, and vermicelli noodles before being either baked or deep-fried. They are served with a sweet chili sauce and were quite a treat for the Dames to taste!

Visit this [website](#) to learn more about the Hmong community in Saint Paul.



Global Culinary Initiative



Top to Bottom: Hmong farmers specialize in growing Vietnamese and American produce for cooks to enjoy. A Hmong vendor mixes spices to create an aromatic paste in a traditional tall mortar and pestle. Hmong Stuffed Chicken Wings are a delicacy not to be missed when visiting the Hmong Village. Pastries and raw sugarcane stalks are among the snacks offered. Photos courtesy Dame Andi Bidwell.



Photo: Toria Emas



Photo: Amanee Néirouz



20 **KENTUCKY** 23

OCTOBER 5-8, 2023
MARRIOTT LOUISVILLE DOWNTOWN
LOUISVILLE, KY

Photo Courtesy Kentucky Department of Tourism

the Women Behind
WENTE
VINEYARDS

PROUDLY SUPPORTING
DRESS FOR SUCCESS
Going Places. Going Strong.

Learn more. Please Drink Responsibly. California Table Wine. ©2023 Wente Vineyards, Livermore, CA. All Rights Reserved.

ORAKING

Sustainably raised King salmon from Marlborough, New Zealand

www.orakingsalmon.com

Instagram icon Facebook icon

LOVE, *Tito's*

TURNING SPIRITS INTO LOVE AND GOODNESS

"Spread some joy. Spread some love."

-Tito

If you would like to request support for an upcoming program or event for a 501(c)(3) organization, please fill out a donation request form at titosvodka.com/donation to get started.

• Tito'sVodka.com • Crafted to be savored responsibly. DISTILLED & BOTTLED BY FIFTH GENERATION INC. AUSTIN, TEXAS 40% ALC/VOL. ©2023 TITO'S HANDMADE VODKA.

BRINGING CREATIVE VISIONS TO LIFE



Behind the Lens

I am uncertain as to who had the most fun at Conference—the attendees or our amiable event photographer, Dallas Dame **Lisa Stewart**. Like an artist, Lisa has a sharp eye for detail. She responds to the subject, composes the photo, then shoots. Within a fraction of a second, she captures a slice of life that might otherwise be overlooked. Lisa’s playful sense of humor often emerges in her photos, and especially in the ones taken of her. Thanks, Lisa, for capturing the glitz and the glam of the New York Conference. You worked every angle of the event, and didn’t let a single moment go unnoticed.

Communicating Through Design



Joni Keith is a skilled graphic designer who seamlessly incorporates LDEI’s brand identity into inspiring design ideas. One of her most important accomplishments is the *Quarterly*. A master in InDesign, she integrates art with technology to create visual layouts; no doubt, sprinkled with Carol Brock’s pixie dust to bring each issue to its full potential! Joni is a great collaborator; she doesn’t shy away from challenges, she embraces new ideas, and can pivot on a dime. Her skill at design storytelling effectively conveys the mission of LDEI.

—S. Slack

Les Dames d’Escoffier International
Quarterly

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

DEADLINES Summer Issue 2023 – May 1, 2023
Fall Issue 2023 –August 1, 2023

MEMBER MILESTONES

(Editor, Dottie Koteski)

To submit your milestone, go to this link:

<http://link.ldei.org/ldei-member-milestones> For any questions or issues, email the editor at MemberMilestones@ldei.org.

Include:

- **CHAPTER**
- **DAME’S NAME**
- **Maximum 50 words** for each Dame about personal honors or accomplishments, but not about new product introductions or other promotions. Please include a website URL, if applicable. Press releases and cookbook covers are NOT accepted.

PHOTO: You may submit a high resolution quality headshot to accompany your news (see below), and agree to the photo permissions questions for the photo. *Note: Due to space constraints, only two Member Milestones will be published per Dame per year.*

CHAPTER PROGRAMS

(Editor, Nichole Bendele)

To submit your chapter program, go to this link: <http://link.ldei.org/ldei-chapter-programs> Up to 200 words about chapter events that have already occurred. For any questions or issues, email the editor at ChapterPrograms@ldei.org.

Include:

- **CHAPTER**
- **SUBMITTER’S NAME**
- **Maximum 200 words for each chapter.**
- **Captions** for all photos submitted. Photos without captions will not be used.

Submissions that exceed 200 words will be edited to comply. Press releases are not accepted. We regret we don’t have space to print full menus but menu items can be included in the copy. *Note: “Chapter Programs” and “Member Milestones” may be dispersed through LDEI social-media channels, as well as in print and online.*

PHOTOGRAPHY/IMAGES

- Electronic images must be properly focused and in color with a minimum resolution of 300 dpi (TIFF or JPEG).
- Cell phone photos are acceptable if they meet requirements.
- Do not send photos taken off the Internet or embedded with text in Word files or PDF files.
- Include photo credits, if required.
- A maximum of three photos can be submitted per chapter.
- **ALL PHOTOGRAPHS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY CAPTIONS OR THEY WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED.**

LDEI regrets that we cannot include lengthy profiles of individual Dames due to space limitations. Submit Dames’ accomplishments to “Member Milestones” or to LDEI’s Closed Group on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/218435184886471/>

Appearing in person or online at an LDEI-sponsored event grants LDEI full rights to use any resulting photography images or video, and any reproductions or adaptations for the Quarterly, social media, PR, or other purposes to help achieve the organization’s aims.

UPCOMING in the *spring issue*

All aboard! The new era of culinary and cultural excursions. Spring cleaning! A deep dive into leadership and getting the most of your membership.

A few words from our 2022 Legacy Award winners.

Additional 2022 Conference coverage on Building and Rebuilding Your Brand, and Reflections and Renewal of the Hospitality Community.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ANN ARBOR | MINNESOTA |
| ATLANTA | MONTEREY BAY |
| AUSTIN | NASHVILLE |
| BIRMINGHAM | NEW ENGLAND |
| BOSTON | NEW ORLEANS |
| BRITISH COLUMBIA | NEW YORK |
| CHARLESTON | NORTH CAROLINA |
| CHICAGO | ONTARIO |
| CLEVELAND/
NORTHEAST OHIO | PALM SPRINGS |
| COLORADO | PHILADELPHIA |
| DALLAS | PHOENIX |
| FRANCE | PORTLAND |
| GREATER
DES MOINES | SACRAMENTO |
| GREATER MADISON | SAN ANTONIO |
| HAWAII | SAN DIEGO |
| HOUSTON | SAN FRANCISCO |
| KANSAS CITY | SAVANNAH/
COASTAL GEORGIA |
| KENTUCKY | SEATTLE |
| LONDON | SONOMA |
| LOS ANGELES/
ORANGE COUNTY | SOUTH FLORIDA |
| MEXICO | ST. LOUIS |
| | TUSCANY |
| | WASHINGTON, D.C. |



Les Dames d’Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

P.O. Box 4961
Louisville, KY 40204

PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS
U S POSTAGE
PAID
LOUISVILLE KY
PERMIT #1051



LDEI Welcomes the New Tuscan Italian Chapter



Les Dames d’Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

Tuscan Italian Chapter

What a thrill it was as the 2021-2022 LDEI Board Secretary to usher in our newest chapter, Tuscany, Italy. Working with (now) Dames Silvia Mariani and Camilla Fondelli, and with some assistance from Dame **Irene Moore**, the new chapter had everything they needed in place to be approved unanimously at the September LDEI Board meeting and then ratified at the Council of Delegates meeting in NYC. With an eruption of applause and lots of exclamations of joy, a new planet joined our universe. You can bet that I had the “It’s Official!!” text typed and ready to send to Silvia the second the meeting was adjourned!

The Tuscany, Italy Chapter has 18 members, 8 of whom are dual-members whose businesses are either based in Italy, or they travel there frequently. The chapter is composed of professionals in agritourism, wine, olive oil, public relations, culinary instruction, cooking shows, and pastry arts.

Chapter meetings will be held in person in Italy, with a Zoom component so those who are traveling or in the U.S. are able to join in. The first Chapter meeting was held in January.

Bienvenuta, Dames!
Kathy Gold (Philadelphia)

New and Future Dames, L-R: Noemi Vallucci, Federica Sovrani, Dame Camilla Fondelli, Dame Julie Hartigan, Thea Peters, and Dame Silvia Mariani. A celebration at Il Santo Bevitore in Florence. Silvia Mariani, President of LDEI’s Tuscany, Italy Chapter. Photos: Silvia Mariani

