

Les Dames d'Escoffier International

Quarterly

FALL



2023

IMPACT!



2023 Woman of Purpose, Dame Nina Furstenaus, hosted 2023 Legacy Award Winner, Cassandra Loftin, in St. Louis this past summer; Dame Erin Boyle shares how she and others are paving the way for industry-wide mental health reform; Nola Dames give first annual Leading From the Heart Awards; June Hersh's Kreplach symbolizes so much more than something delicious in our Global Culinary Postcard.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's great to be a Dame!

Dear Dames,

During the time I served on the Charleston Chapter board, the many hours we spent together planning and working on chapter business bonded us because of our shared love for WHY we were Dames. The impact we were making in our community was meaningful, and we were proud to be a part of it. Likewise, attending my first LDEI Conference was a game changer for me. I finally understood from a larger perspective what it meant to be a Dame and how wonderful it was to be in the presence of so many women who felt the same way.

I happened to sit next to our beloved founder, **Carol Brock**, at a Legacy Awards luncheon a year or two later. At one point she leaned over and told me it was about time we held a Conference in Charleston, to which I quickly replied, "yes ma'am." We were on the calendar not long after and, as chapter President, I was honored to Co-Chair the 2015 Conference, where we danced by the dusky light of the Ashley River, ate freshly shucked oysters and were serenaded by Dame **Sylvia Ganier**. After that I felt there was really no choice but to keep moving forward, so I applied for a position on the LDEI Board of Directors.

These years on the board have been a career highlight for me. I've gotten to know and work alongside like-minded women from around the world. I have had the opportunity to serve LDEI in new ways and build bonds with a new group of women to provide support for our chapters and members at a level that unites us under one brand.

What has been especially meaningful has been getting to meet so many of you in person. I was blessed with the opportunity to spend time with the Mexico Dames at an LDEI board meeting last January in Mexico City. Dame **Marcela Briz** hosted us all at her restaurant El Cardenal Palma for a special evening together. In May I was in Denver on business and was hosted for dinner by some of the Colorado Dames at **Holly Kinney's** restaurant, The Fort. It was a delightful evening of incredible local fare, Native American music and storytelling, and insightful conversation. The efforts and collaboration of both of those chapters came shining through at every turn, further illustrating how special it is to be a Dame.



I have been especially fortunate to have worked alongside an outstanding group of women on this past year's Board of Directors, and each one of them will forever have a special place in my heart. I thank each of them for their dedication to serving the best interests of LDEI with professionalism and grace. I am also grateful for this year's committee chairs who kept the wheels turning. I especially thank Greg Jewell and his team at AEC Management, whose dedication and passion for LDEI matches our own. His wisdom and counsel were invaluable.

I am most grateful, however, for you the women of LDEI, who make me proud to be a member. As our industries and lives evolve, we will continue to push forward. I urge all of you to play an active role in LDEI's continued success by helping to promote the LDEI brand. Support our Partners. Be a mentor. Host a fundraiser. Go to Conference!

It's great to be a Dame. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as your President.

Gratefully,

Jennifer Goldman
President, LDEI Board of Directors

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.

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Les Dames d'Escoffier International Quarterly FALL 2023

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FROM THE EDITOR

"Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall." – F. Scott Fitzgerald

Dear Dames,

I'm writing my letter to you from a warm little café on a quaint little street in a historic little village on the edge of the Delaware River. The air outside is crisp, the trees are beginning to shed their vibrant and colorful leaves, and the sky is as blue as Paul Newman's eyes. Fall has completely wrapped itself around us—and I'm loving every cozy moment.

For me this year has certainly been one of IMPACT! I've enjoyed attending more in-person events and continue to welcome the energy that being together brings. As I begin to navigate marriage and building my own family, the Dame spirit has been motivational and moving. In the spring, I joined Boston Dame **Mary Ann Esposito** at The Restaurant School at Walnut Hill College in Philadelphia for a dinner celebrating her new cookbook, *Plant, Harvest, Cook!* I've been watching Mary Ann's *Ciao Italia* for years and was over the moon to sit with her, her husband, and their close friends. On my way to Kentucky for our Annual Conference, I sat two seats away from (the unbelievably cool) Dame **Amy Hoopes** of The Wine Group. Amy is one of those inspiring women who is raising her family, running a hugely successful business, staying active in giving back, and still making the time to exercise each morning. Friendship, love, connection, and health—what more could we strive for?

This issue of the *Quarterly* was an honor to produce and it embodies those elements mentioned above. The pages celebrate some extraordinary women who are pioneering movements of change locally, nationally, and beyond. In "Leadership: Health Reform" (page 10) **Erin Boyle** (Denver) and **Maria Campbell** (Philadelphia) discuss the strides and hurdles of addressing mental health in our industry; "Green Tables: Waste Not" (page 23) highlights our D.C. Chapter's approach to bringing awareness to waste. We spotlight our award and scholarship recipients and pay recognition and gratitude to our dedicated Partners who help make these prizes of distinction possible. Additionally, I'm excited to feature some stories about the Jewish High Holidays in our "Global Culinary Postcard" (page 36).

As always, none of this would be possible without the support of our LDEI leaders. My utmost gratitude to **Jennifer Goldman**, **Deborah Mintcheff**, **Kathy Gold**, **Anita Lau**, **Susan Slack**, **Erin Byers Murray**, and *all* of our contributors. Additional appreciation and gratitude to Greg Jewell and Joni Keith for their expertise and patience.

Keep shining. Keep giving. Keep positive.

With love and light,

Kendra Lee Thatcher, Editor, Fall *Quarterly*





YETI

THE 2023 WOMAN OF PURPOSE AWARD

Nina Mukerjee Furstenau (St. Louis)

Director of Food Systems Communication, University of Missouri



“The Woman of Purpose Award celebrates a visionary Dame who has made strides towards improving our food system.”

Nina Mukerjee Furstenau is this year’s LDEI Woman of Purpose Award Winner presented by YETI. She is a journalist, author, editor, humanitarian but most importantly, a storyteller.

In Nina’s own words: “I was six and sat at the back of a bus on a trip to India to visit tea plantations, and my uncle. A boy, near my age but small, held his arms up below my window. I had a banana in my lap and threw it to him, and that yellow fruit turning end-over-end through the air holds firm in my memory. I watched him snag it, and quickly take a bite right through the skin, fearful that the older children near him would get to it first. I pressed my tongue to the roof of my mouth, imagining bitterness. Ever after, that boy influenced every major decision in my life, and gave me the courage to write my first book.” That book was *Biting Through the Skin: An Indian Kitchen in America’s Heartland* (Iowa, 2013).

Nina has accumulated many awards through the years including the 2014 M. F. K. Fisher Book Award and the Grand Prize for Excellence in Culinary Writing from LDEI, as well as the Kansas Notable Book Award.

“I joined the U.S. Peace Corps in Tunisia in 1984 for that boy,” says Nina, “and found that food became the warmest way to make connections in what used to be the Roman breadbasket but was now, due to depleting soils, the edge of the Sahara.” Nina was one of the U.S. Peace Corps’ delegates for the U.N. World Conference on Women in Nairobi, Kenya.

On top of all her achievements, she was also a Fulbright Global Research Scholar (2018-19) and is on the board of directors for Media for Change. As the former Director of Food Systems Communication at the University of Missouri, she used her influence then and continues to encourage food writers to think in new ways about food, and create content with a better understanding of regenerative agriculture and soil health.

Besides *Biting Through the Skin: An Indian Kitchen in America’s Heartland*, her other writings

include the textbook *Food & Culture, Green Chili & Other Impostors (Chilies, Chhana & Rasa in India), Tasty! Mozambique, Savor Missouri: River Hill Country Food and Wine*; and numerous stories and essays for newspapers and magazines.

THE ST. LOUIS CHAPTER WRITES OF NINA:

“She has unselfishly used the power of the pen to promote the work of others. In 2019, after being introduced to Chef Matthew Raiford at an organic farm school in Ferguson, Missouri, Nina made a point of stopping by his farm in Brunswick, Georgia on a trip to the southeast. Months later an article by Nina appeared in the *Atlanta Constitution Journal* highlighting the black-owned farm that has supported six generations of Georgians and produced a James Beard nominated chef and keeper of Gullah Geechee culture. Having written extensively about the intersection of food and culture, she dispels myths and misconceptions about the origins of food and food systems, or as she calls it ‘food story,’ while educating us on how to be more culturally sensitive.

On the heels of Covid, and now with the displacement of thousands in the Ukraine refugee displacement in Syria, and so many other humanitarian crises, Nina recognized that we are all eager to help, be it in our own communities or in far off struggling countries. With the belief in the centrality of food nurturing humanity and showing respect to those who distribute the harvest, Nina along with others launched **“The Common Ingredient.”** This site is a place to share food stories and recipes, reminding all who participate to pay attention to the food insecure and undernourished in our communities. For Nina, food stories connect us all as members of the family of man.

Nina has stretched us to think about food beyond our town and to consider it in all its complexity. She is tuned into the changes in the world around us and seeks to find solutions to the growing needs and problems of our time. As she continues to write her story, she brings inspiration and hope to all of us.”

To learn more about Nina’s many accomplishments and to connect with her, visit her full [biography](#).



Dame Nina Mukerjee Furstenau is a woman of the world. She demonstrates empathy and compassion for everyone she meets through continuous active philanthropy. The photos presented here are a sampling of the women and men Nina has worked with around the globe to make a lasting difference. Photos courtesy Nina Mukerjee Furstenau.

INSPIRE & THRIVE: WOMEN OF PURPOSE FOSTERING THE FUTURE

*17 Extraordinary Dames make the
Mentoring Network*

Marianela Blanco

(Greater Des Moines)

Bilingual Family Liaison for Des Moines Public Schools



I have been a member of the Greater Des Moines Chapter of Les Dames since 2019 and a board member of the chapter since 2022. I was born and raised in Costa Rica and moved to the United States to the state of Iowa in 1994. I graduated from the Iowa Culinary Institute in 1998 with degrees in Culinary Arts and Hotel / Restaurant Management. I am also a Bilingual Family Liaison for Des Moines Public Schools. In addition, I am a board member for Iowa’s Largest Latino Heritage Festival. Being a member of the Greater Des Moines Chapter has opened many avenues for me. Read more about Marianela Blanco [here](#).

Joi Chevalier

(Austin)
Founder and CEO, The Cook’s Nook



Thinking about food insecurity and creating opportunities for positive health outcomes through quality food and nutrition has become a singular focus these days. The Cook’s Nook has become a center of culturally relevant food and nutrition, innovative solutions, thought leadership, and policy influence, in order to reach those most vulnerable to nutrition deficiency—whether food insecure or needing tailored meals to support living with chronic disease. The Cook’s Nook is pioneering with Ascension Seton Hospital in Austin the ‘Food Is Best Medicine’ post-partum maternal nutrition program, featuring The Cook’s Nook Cultura Cuisine Meals and Elements products, in order to combat maternal food insecurity and improve post-delivery health outcomes. Read more about Joi Chevalier [here](#).

Erin Croom

(Atlanta)
Farm-to-School Developer



Erin is the co-founder of Small Bites Adventure Club, which creates turn-key teacher resources that help children discover, love and eat their fruits and vegetables. Since 2019, Small Bites Adventure Club has reached over 40,000 children in childcare, afterschool and K-2 classrooms. As a long-time advocate of farm-to-school programs, Erin worked with statewide partners to establish Georgia’s Farm-to-School and childcare programs. Read more about Erin Croom [here](#).

Valerie Erwin (Philadelphia)

Chef/Social Justice Advocate, The People's Kitchen Philly

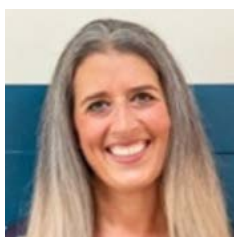
I've always been interested in social justice. I've always loved food. I've spent my career trying to connect those worlds. I am on a mission to join my two passions in a meaningful way. I consider myself a connector: putting like-minded people, organizations, and causes in touch with one another. I opened Geechee Girl Rice Cafe because I'd run out of places where I wanted to work, and because the food that I loved was largely ignored by the restaurant world. Geechees are the descendants of the enslaved Africans who live on the coast and islands of South Carolina and Georgia. This is where my grandparents were from and its foods were some of the first things that I learned to cook. Read more about Valerie Erwin [here](#).



Naomi Green (Atlanta)

Senior Regional Director, Giving Kitchen

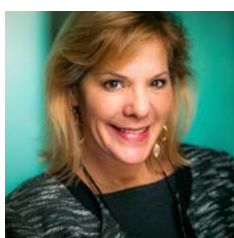
In 2014, I resigned from a career of more than 20 years in food service to become one of two inaugural employees of Giving Kitchen. Giving Kitchen was founded following the devastating cancer diagnosis of Atlanta Chef Ryan Hidinger in 2012. Despite being a salaried employee with health insurance and disability leave, the diagnosis proved to be too much of a financial burden for Ryan to overcome. He found himself choosing between the best possible medical treatments and his mortgage payment, gas bill, power bill and water service. Read more about Naomi Green [here](#).



Ellen Kassoff (Washington, D.C.)

Co-Owner, Equinox Restaurant and The Federal Bistro

A consummate manager and marketing professional, Dame Ellen Kassoff is a trailblazer among Washington, D.C.'s hospitality scene, developing a sustainable and humane approach to hospitality since 1999. Groomed for success via years of experience in gourmet food sales, economics, and program management, Ellen manages front of house operations and community involvement for their two restaurants and catering company. Working side-by-side with husband and co-owner, Chef Todd Gray, Ellen is the driving force behind the restaurant's critically acclaimed plant based fine dining offerings, including Equinox's famous Sunday vegan brunch. Read more about Ellen Kassoff [here](#).



Karen Killough (Austin)

Co-Founder and Marketing Director, Vista Brewing

After traveling to destinations near and far, including time living in England, Karen and her husband Kent put their mind to creating a mission-driven destination centered around craft beer and local food in the Texas Hill Country. They opened Vista Brewing in 2018 in the beautiful town of Driftwood, just southwest of Austin, with a focus on experience and local sourcing. The 21-acre ranch includes a brewery and tasting room,



farm-to-table restaurant, vegetable farm, apiary, live music and private event spaces. The company also recently opened an All Day Café and Tap Room in San Antonio. Read more about Karen Killough [here](#).

Mary Kimball (Sacramento)

CEO, Center for Land-Based Learning

Mary started with Land-Based Learning in 1998 and has led its growth since that time; in 1998, there was one program and 30 high school students. Today, Land-Based Learning runs five different model programs that serve thousands of high school students and adults each year in close to 60 percent of California's counties, primarily in the Central Valley, from Butte to Kern. This includes the California Farm Academy, the only beginning farmer training, business incubator, and two-year Registered Apprenticeship Program for beginning farm and ranch management in California. Read more about Mary Kimball [here](#).



Dr. Lizbeth Kliwer (Minnesota)

Culinary Instructor and Division Chair, South Central Minnesota College

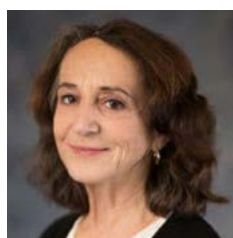
A German grandmother with a passion for baking set me up for a life in the culinary and food service industry. Grandma Mayme was the mentor who taught me how dough should feel in your hands, how temperature and moisture affect products, and the love of ingredients picked fresh from the garden. This inspirational woman has long passed, but the lessons that she taught and the encouragement that she gave live on in me as well as in the young women that I teach every day. Read more about Dr. Lizbeth Kliwer [here](#).



Sibella Kraus (San Francisco)

Founder and President, Sustainable Agriculture Education

From environmental sustainability to land accessibility, Sibella's investment in our food systems is large, and it runs generations deep. Her love for the land was nurtured in her family's kitchen garden in Australia, where she picked ripe strawberries and apricots and learned to appreciate the rich offerings of the land. Knowing and investing in the land has always been a meaningful way of finding home in a new place for her. Her affinity for food systems—their beauty, cultural value, and utility—transcends continents. Read more about Sibella Kraus [here](#).



Maria Loi (New York)

Chef and Entrepreneur, The Life of Loi

Dame Maria Loi is an internationally respected authority on wellness and the Mediterranean diet, a celebrated chef, a successful businesswoman, and a steadfast supporter of philanthropic causes around the world. Her mission in life is simple: subscribing to THE LOI motto—Tasty, Healthy, Easy and Live On It—Chef Loi wants to change the world

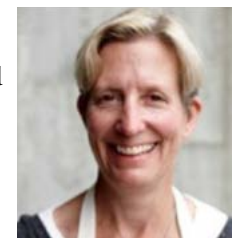


one healthy bite at a time. She is the founder of Loi Food Products, the namesake of Loi Estiatorio in Manhattan, and the author of over 36 cookbooks. Loi is the host of international Telly Award winning series, *The Life of Loi* on PBS, which debuted on broadcast in December 2022. It aims to build an inspirational and educational movement around the Mediterranean diet and lifestyle—from ancient to modern, food to culture and everything in between. Read more about Maria Loi [here](#).

Leslie Mackie (Seattle)

Founder, Macrina Bakery

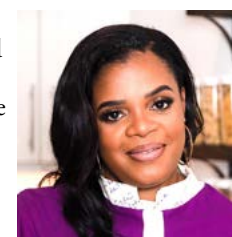
Macrina Bakery is built around family, community and tradition. Warmth and good food are the heart and soul of Macrina. Leslie Mackie, one of the most esteemed figures in the national artisan baking scene, opened Macrina Bakery in Seattle's Belltown neighborhood in 1993 with six employees. The following January, Sunset Magazine featured Macrina's bread in an article on West Coast sourdough. In 1996, Leslie appeared with Julia Child on *Baking with Julia*. Over the years, Leslie has received multiple nominations by the James Beard Foundation for Outstanding Pastry Chef. Now, there are five cafés, a talented team of bakers and pastry chefs, and a large wholesale operation. While the scale has changed, Macrina's devotion to baking great artisan bread, using sustainable and organic ingredients, making delectable pastries and savory items, and enriching communities hasn't changed. Read more about Leslie Mackie [here](#).



Shanita McAfee-Bryant (Kansas City)

Executive Director and Founder, The Prospect: An Urban Eatery

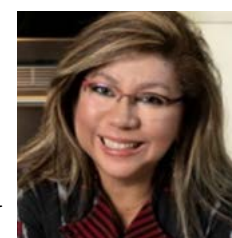
Dame Shanita McAfee-Bryant, a Kansas City native and a civic-minded chef, founded The Prospect KC in 2019. She fell in love with cooking as a teen and went on to receive her professional culinary training at Johnson County Community College. She created and owned a restaurant and competed on The Food Network's *Cutthroat Kitchen*. Shanita is a board member for Harvesters, Kansas City's food bank, serving 26 counties and more than 800 agencies, and a board member of the Greater KC Food Policy Coalition, NourishKC and Lazarus Ministries KC. She was selected to attend the James Beard Foundation's Chef Bootcamp for Policy and Change, a unique opportunity for civically and politically minded chefs to mobilize the support for policy decisions that impact our food system. In October 2022, Chef Shanita attended the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, the first such gathering in more than half a century, at the invitation of U.S. Representative Emanuel Cleaver. Read more about Shanita McAfee-Bryant [here](#).



Amalia Moreno-Damgaard (Minnesota)

Co-Founder, Women Entrepreneurs of Minnesota

Prior to becoming an entrepreneur and founding Amalia Latin Gourmet and co-founding Women Entrepreneurs of Minnesota, I had a prior career in international banking in the Midwest, which provided a solid base upon which to build my culinary business. I learned the discipline of smart, consistent, and focused work from my maternal grandmother, Mélida in Quezaltepeque,



a small town in Guatemala in the department of Chiquimula. She was an entrepreneur and artisan cook in her own right. After her divorce, she fended for herself. At home, she started a variety store that catered to the needs of her town, from basic foods like dried beans and corn, to cooking pottery and horse gear. I helped on weekends. Read more about Amalia Moreno-Damgaard [here](#).

Tigist Reda (Chicago)

Restaurateur and Social Activist

Tigist was born in the Tigray region of Ethiopia more than 40 years ago. She came to the U.S. in 1997 as a teenager, with her husband (also Ethiopian.) With no formal culinary training—but as a skilled home cook used to cooking for large family gatherings—Tigist opened Demera in 2007. "I wanted to share the food of my country with the people of my new hometown," she says. But in November 2020, Tigist's native land was wracked with civil war. The situation made it impossible for even humanitarian groups to enter the region, communications were shut down, banks and schools were shut down, and civilians were randomly arrested and terrorized—especially women. As one of 11 children and with most of her family still in Ethiopia, Tigist had to do something. Read more about Tigist Reda [here](#).



Amy Sins (New Orleans)

Founder, Fill The Needs

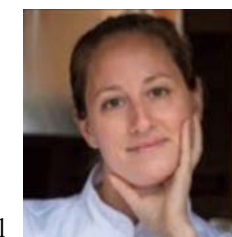
A New Orleans-born Louisiana native, Chef Amy Sins is the founder of Langlois and an award-winning cookbook author, media personality, entrepreneur and humanitarian. She was determined to "pay it forward" after losing everything when the levees failed in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and strangers helped her. After 15 years as a rogue-do-gooder, she made it official by starting FillTheNeeds.org. She has played many roles over the course of her 25-plus-year professional journey, including that of "girl with a cellphone" who has developed a template for quick and effective disaster relief. Through a super-human level of energy, a deep well of empathy, and the inability to accept the word "no," she's accomplishing her goals and more. Read more about Amy Sins [here](#).



Erin Vickars (British Columbia)

Chef and Educator

I am a professional Chef of 20 years in British Columbia, Canada and I am leading a project with a group of women to establish the first Indigenous Red Seal Cook Trade Training program in Canada, created from an individual Nations traditional culinary history. In an industry historically dominated by a fierce patriarchal view, this is the example of reclamation to bring forward a matriarchal led, community focused, Indigenous culinary trade training program. Through an active partnership with Heiltsuk Nation, Vancouver Community College (VCC) and Skilled Trades BC, we believe this culinary program will set a precedent of program creation that could be implemented nationally in Canada. This Red Seal Program creation stems from a deep need for culinary inclusion, cultural reclamation and the power of small community creation and vision belief. Read more about Erin Vickars [here](#).





THE 2023 M.F.K. FISHER PRIZE

Formerly known as the M.F.K. Fisher Award for Excellence in Culinary Writing, established in 2006, the M.F.K. Fisher Prize recognizes excellent works by women in all media that broaden understanding of the diversity and depth of the intersection of food and culture. This prestigious prize was established in honor of the late renowned culinary writer, M.F.K. Fisher, whose trailblazing work encouraged deeper thought about the cultural significance of foodways.

LDEI supports the exploration of past and present foodways as fundamental to insightful and impactful leadership and growth. Public recognition of these compelling works in all formats, including print and electronic, generates opportunity, connection, and advancement for the creator.

Three top prizes are awarded annually—First (\$3,000), Second (\$2,000), and Third (\$1,000)—and five additional works of distinction will also be recognized. The entries are evaluated by a panel of distinguished, independent judges with diverse backgrounds invited by the M.F.K. Fisher Prize Committee.

This year, our three esteemed judges include: Moni Belu, Sara Moulton, and Andrea Weigl. The judges met via Zoom on July 13 to select the three winners and the five works of distinction. A special thank you is in order to the M.F.K. Prize Committee whose hard work, time, and effort in organizing and leveraging this most valued prize made it possible: **Jean-Marie Brownson, Carol Mighton Haddix, Sheana Davis, Christine Burns Rudalevige, Melissa Hall.**

OUR M.F.K. FISHER PRIZE JUDGES

MONI BASU is the director of the MFA in Narrative Nonfiction and the Charlayne Hunter-Gault Distinguished Writer in Residence at the University of Georgia. She is an award-winning veteran journalist who worked at CNN, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, and various other news outlets.



Born in Kolkata, India, Basu grew up straddling two cultures. As such, her work has explored race and identity as well as immigration.

She has reported exhaustively from South Asia and the Middle East. Her 2012 e-book, *Chaplain Turner's War*, grew from a series of stories about an Army chaplain in Iraq. A platoon sergeant named her "Evil Reporter Chick," which became the name of her blog, and she was featured once as a war reporter in a Marvel comics series.

SARA MOULTON is the host of *Sara's Weeknight Meals*, a public TV show, heading into its 12th season this fall. She also co-hosts a weekly segment on *Milk Street Radio*, with Chris Kimball, answering questions from listeners.



Sara, a protégé of Julia Child, graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in 1977, and worked in restaurants for seven years in Boston and New York. She joined *Gourmet* magazine, first in the test kitchen, and then as the chef of the executive dining room for a total of 25 years. Concurrently she served as the executive chef behind the scenes at ABC-TV's *Good Morning America*, prepping and styling all the food for the chefs and cookbook authors who appeared on the show, followed by a 10-year, on-air stint as food editor.

Sara also hosted 1,500 episodes of several well-loved shows, including, *Cooking Live*, a live call-in show on the Food Network during that channel's first decade. She is the author of four cookbooks, including most recently, *Home Cooking 101*.

ANDREA WEIGL is an award-winning journalist, cookbook author and television and documentary film producer. She spent 20 years working for newspapers in North and South Carolina, ending her print journalism career as the assistant features editor at *The News & Observer* in Raleigh.



She was a finalist for a James Beard Foundation Local Impact award in 2017. She spent nine years serving on the James Beard Foundation Book Awards subcommittee, including six years as the committee chair. She spent the last six years working as a producer for Markay Media on such projects as the PBS shows, *Somewhere South*, and *A Chef's Life*, which won Emmy and Peabody awards. She also worked as a producer on a two-part documentary for HBO Max about the late actress Brittany Murphy, and on *Burden of Proof*, a four-part documentary for HBO that broadcast in June 2023.

She also works as a publicist and social media manager in the hospitality space in North and South Carolina.

FIRST PRIZE:

Kiki Aranita

"Here's The Difference Between Hawai'i's Local Food and Hawaiian Food, Plus How Spam Fits Into All of It"

Kiki Aranita is a chef, food writer, fiber artist, sauce entrepreneur, and recipe developer. These career paths exist simultaneously and are tied together by the same themes: nostalgia (particularly when it comes to the food of her hometowns of Honolulu and Hong Kong) and care for the ocean. As a chef, she specializes in Hawai'i's fresh fish dishes and low-waste cooking. Kiki spent seven years as co-chef and owner of Poi Dog, a restaurant, food truck, and catering company. She created a line of retail sauces now sold nationwide.

Kiki is a columnist for San Pellegrino's Fine Dining Lovers and a frequent contributor to *Food & Wine Magazine*, for which she was nominated for a James Beard Foundation Media Award in 2022. She has written for *USA Today*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, and the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*. She has created content for companies such as the Mushroom Council, Vitamix Commercial, and the Norwegian Seafood Council.

Her winning entry can be found at: [The Difference Between Hawai'i's Local Food](#).



SECOND PRIZE:

Rachel Levin

"The Hunt"

Dame **Rachel Levin** is a San Francisco journalist who has written for the *New Yorker*, the *New York Times*, *Eater*, *Bon Appetit*, and elsewhere.

She is the author of *Look Big: And Other Tips for Surviving Animal Encounters of All Kinds* (Ten Speed) and co-author of two cookbooks, *Eat Something* and *Steamed*. Her first children's book, *Who Ate What?*, was recently published by Phaidon.

Her winning entry can be found at: [The Hunt](#)



THIRD PRIZE:

Cynthia Greenlee

"Reinventing the Peach, the Pimento and Regional Identity"

Dr. Cynthia Greenlee is a North Carolina-based historian and award-winning writer who chronicles the foodways of the U.S. South and, specifically, its African-American residents and culinary creatives. She is the winner of a James Beard Award, and her work has been selected for various recent editions of *Best American Food Writing* and *Best American Science and Nature Writing*.

Her writing has been published in media as diverse as *The Atlantic*, *Elle*, *Essence*, *The Nation*, *The New York Times*, *Oxford American*, *Smithsonian* magazine, *Vox*, and *YES* magazine, among others. She's also co-editor of *The Echoing Ida Collection* (Feminist Press), an anthology of Black women and people writing about reproductive and social justice.

Dr. Greenlee is currently an editor of special projects at *The Guardian* (U.S.) and previously edited for *The Counter*, the independent journal *Crop Stories* and the Southern Foodways Alliance. You can read more of her work at www.cynthiagreenlee.com.

Her winning entry can be found at: [Inventing the Peach](#)



2023 ADDITIONAL WORKS OF DISTINCTION

- ▶ Dame **Stephanie Jane Carter**, "The First Asian Settlement in the US"
- ▶ Mackenzie Martin and Dame **Jenny Vergera**, "A Kansas City Family Created Wishbone Italian Dressing. It Became an American Obsession"

- ▶ Gin Sander and Roxanne Lander, "Churchill: A Drinking Life"
- ▶ Dame **Jileen Russell**, "Killing it"
- ▶ Michele Gargiulu, "Pairing Paws"



LEADERSHIP

Your support is needed. Become an ambassador for CHOW and purchase the *Cooks Who Care Community Cookbook*. Visit www.chowco.org and www.cookswhocare.org to learn more.

Leading the Way: Healthcare Reform

In mid-September, I met with Dames **Erin Boyle** (Denver) and **Maria Campbell** (Philadelphia) over Zoom to discuss mental health. Both of these remarkable women work to bring awareness, assistance, and reform to a seemingly rising epidemic of mental health. Whether it be substance abuse, suicide prevention, disordered eating, among other concerns, Erin and Maria are leaders in this movement. What follows is a snapshot of our more than hour-long conversation. Their work is having a huge impact and I hope you'll join the movement.

Kendra Thatcher:
Erin, tell us about CHOW. Who does your organization assist and how?

Erin Boyle:
Culinary Hospitality Outreach and Wellness, or CHOW, was started in 2019 in Denver as peer support meetings for people who work in the food, beverage, and hospitality industry. Ironically our first peer support meeting was two days after Anthony Bourdain died, so what could have been two people showing up to the meeting ended up being about 35 people. That first peer support meeting we talked for about three hours—maybe even longer—and realized we needed to have more conversations like this. So, we added a weekly peer support meeting. During Covid we went online and started getting people logging on from all over the country. We quickly recognized that we couldn't just have one meeting so we added more. Now, we have eight peer support meetings a week—one for all men, one for

all women, one for Spanish language speakers, and then the rest are general—available hybrid or board virtual. An astounding 76 percent of the people who come to the peer support meetings are return attendees and we have people asking all the time, how do I start another one?

Additionally, we have created evidence-based mental health and substance use disorder educational materials that are both approachable and vocationally specific to our industry. We've also created a workplace wellness toolkit that was developed with the input from many operators and owners of various businesses who shared what's working and what's not in their organization. We're all kind of siloed and a lot of times we don't know what's going on even next door. So, we wanted to make sure people have an opportunity to see what's worked somewhere else and they can give it a try.

Who do we serve? If you touch food, beverage, or hospitality, you're one of us. So that might mean that you work as a driver at Cisco, or you're a driver for Uber; servers, writers, chefs, bar backs, bartenders, hosts; if you work in a hotel and you work in laundry or concierge; and the list goes on.

Kendra Thatcher:
Maria, tell us about your organization *Cooks Who Care*?

Maria Campbell:
Cooks Who Care is a financial facilitator and we're fiscally sponsored by a nonprofit organization, Chester County Community Foundation, which allows us to do tax de-

ductible donations. We started our journey in 2017 and then in 2020 we were able to really streamline how we support others. We decided we could help by creating something that would generate funds which we'd be able to funnel back to nonprofit organizations who need the support. That something turned out to be a cookbook project which features 27 Philly chefs. Purchasing the cookbook raises funds for mini grants which are given to support people with the services they need for medical and/or for healthcare and mental health services.

I recently just partnered with a psychologist to do some workforce development programming that are specific to just leaders. We've created a Ten Pillar Program through her medical background and expertise, which I'm super excited to kick off. There's some really cool stuff that's in the works. I want to be a financing resource to these mental health resources as well as continue awareness and education.

I am in awe at the coalition group and how participants—like Erin and CHOW—do what they do from an educational standpoint.

Kendra Thatcher:
What is the coalition?

Erin Boyle:
There's no name to the coalition. It's made up of organizations who serve the food, beverage and hospitality industry. And we try to meet quarterly just to discuss who's doing what and also support each other because this work is hard.

Kendra Thatcher:
What a great resource!
Maria, how did you become interested in being involved in supporting mental health?

Maria Campbell:
I've been an educator for over a decade in the culinary space and seeing both sides from people getting into the industry and people who are in it for about 15 years. And my husband's a chef as well. You see lots of things over a course under 20 years. You know, addiction, drug abuse, suicide, divorce, you know, people just not taking care of themselves in healthy ways and coping strategies just weren't existent. Working in these industries, these are just not typical skill sets that everybody knows and understands, nor to Erin's point, is it conversational yet. And that's what kind of initiated me to say we, we need to start more conversations that point in this direction.

Kendra Thatcher:
Erin, what has your journey looked like?

Erin Boyle:
I've been diagnosed with anxiety, depression, ADHD and PTSD, but, while I was running restaurants, I did not have any diagnosis and I did not have any coping skills besides alcohol. And it worked great, until it didn't. So, I reached a point in my life where I was like, I don't like the people I'm around, I don't like myself, I don't know how to be an adult, I don't know how to have relationships...and so I got into therapy.

In the first three years I lived in Denver, I was either the phone call or the person that somebody came to physically to say "I'm about to attempt suicide" or "I am in the process of attempting suicide. Can you help me?" And as a chef, I had no idea what to do with that information. I literally Googled *what do I do when my roommate says that they're trying to kill themselves?* What do you do when they say "I don't have health insurance?" I've lost a few friends.

I learned how to help myself and take care of myself, but that's never enough. I don't think that we can get better alone. And we need to have a community and support each other. And I wanted to learn more about that.

I noticed the need for change as soon as I started getting better, but we don't know what we don't know. If you're working in this silo and you're working around people where it's normal to drink a bottle of wine or a case of beer every night, or if you're working with people who have normalized working in a toxic workplace, you have no idea what it's like outside of there. So, you can't improve until you know what else is out there.

Kendra Thatcher:
On this road to reform, what are the hurdles you encounter and how do you try to overcome them?

Erin Boyle:
There are so many but I'm going to start with the biggest hurdle: getting someone to take care of their mental or behavioral health is getting them to first take care of their physical health.

Maria Campbell:
Everything Erin is mentioning is why we are asking ourselves: how can we actually make an impact? The average percentage of people in our industry who do not have insurance is 60 to 80 percent. That's way too high! If the barrier is "I can't afford to go to the dentist" or "that's why I'm not going to my gynecologist, because I don't have insurance"—we are trying to tackle the problem from the healthcare side by providing supplemental assistance even if it's incremental.

Kendra Thatcher:
I'm curious how about the impact you've seen since you began?

Erin Boyle:
We have seen some shifts. For example, there's a restaurant group locally that figured out it was costing them \$15,000 to do shift drinks each year. So, they asked their staff what they would want to do with that money instead? They canceled the shift drinks and now they offer Spanish and English language classes, they offer cooking classes, and they offer a stipend for health insurance. I think the important thing is to look at what isn't working in your organization and what you can change and get buy-in from your employees. I think that's the future of our industry is collaboration and conversation.



THE WINE GROUP



Samantha "Sami" MALDONADO



Donna SMITH



Lani FURBANK



Cecilia PICOAGA

THE 2023 SCHOLARSHIPS FOR IMPACTFUL CHANGE

Offering a Transformational Opportunity

BY ELLEN KANNER (WASHINGTON, D.C.)

If you ever doubt the impact of LDEI, just ask any of the four winners of this year's Scholarships for Impactful Change. Created in partnership with The Wine Group, this LDEI initiative offers "transformational opportunity," says scholarship recipient Cecilia Picoaga of Peru. Scholarships for Impactful Change, which just debuted this year, has provided \$5,000 in scholarship funding to Cecilia and to each of our other three winners: Sami Maldonado, Donna Smith, and LDEI Washington D.C. member, **Lani Furbank**.

"I was really excited LDEI is doing this," says Lani. "It aligns so well with the purpose of the organization." It also aligns with the purpose of LDEI Platinum Partner, The Wine Group. "LDEI's purpose and values are perfectly aligned with our focus," says The Wine Group's Director of Corporate Communications, Catherine Brew-Cain, "to advance diversity, equity and inclusion across food, beverage, and hospitality industries. Women have long played critical roles in these areas—leading, advancing, and shaping them for generations—and we're committed to helping all women grow and achieve their ambitions."

"This opportunity and support makes such a big difference," says Lani. "Higher education has only gotten more expensive."

Cost isn't the only thing keeping women from pursuing their goals. "In South America, there are different types of barriers," says Cecilia. "Social barriers, political barriers, challenges after Covid," including a volatile government and economy and a high crime rate. "I was needing a big step into the future—a better education and more knowledge for new challenges." Being awarded the scholarship "was like a dream," Cecilia says through tears.

Scholarships for Impactful Change enables Cecilia and others to take that big step. It's open not just to Dames but to all women seeking more education in culinary, hospitality and related fields. "Funding a scholarships program supports our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion," says Catherine. "All women should have the opportunity to achieve their education goals."

For Donna Smith, already a triple threat with degrees in culinary arts, nutrition and computer science, the scholarship enables her

to go back to get her doctorate in nutrition at Texas Tech. "I want to know more," she says. "It's bigger than just the food we put on our plate, it's the decisions we make, their impact on the family, the culture. All these things work in tandem."

Cecilia, Sami and Lani are each pursuing master degrees in sustainability, a growing field with a growing need. It's also where they believe they can make the most impact. Cecilia, with a background in corporate work, is studying Sustainability Management at Columbia University. Sami is pursuing Environmental Policy and Planning at the University of Michigan with the goal of working in policy and civic engagement. Lani is enrolled at CIA Greystone to study sustainable food systems.

"It's so clear," Lani says. "We can support nonprofits, grow food in our gardens, but we need the bigger picture, a food system that's healthy and sustainable." Lani's been writing for the Center for International Environmental Law, but it took the pandemic to bring the harsh realities of the food system to light. "I had managed to avoid seeing how broken the food system is."

With climate change and so many other challenges facing us, making impactful change will take more than one person, and more than one path. Donna says there's room for everybody. "There's a market for every path for food. You shouldn't limit yourself."

Catherine of The Wine Group agrees: "Now more than ever, leaders can't solely invest time and resources on innovation for future growth. Protecting our planet, people, and communities requires significant focus to ensure a viable future in which we can all continue to thrive," she says. "A healthy future is dependent on a commitment to sustainability and strong community responsibility. The leaders of today and tomorrow need a strong understanding of all that goes into running a responsible business—bringing diverse perspectives around the leadership table will be key."

This year's Scholarships for Impactful Change winners—Black, Latina and mixed race—embody the diversity The Wine Group advocates. They look to become the kind of responsible leaders Catherine describes not just in business but beyond, leveraging their education and experience to change the world in positive ways.

For our Scholarships for Impactful Change winners, the support has been more than

financial. They've each felt embraced by the sisterhood LDEI stands for. "It's a community that connects women," says Sami. She's no stranger to LDEI, having received a local scholarship through the Minnesota Chapter for two years running. The chapter encouraged her to apply for Scholarships for Impactful Change, and when they knew she'd be attending University of Michigan, contacted the Ann Arbor Chapter. "Moving from a different state was intimidating. The Ann Arbor Chapter reached out to me and made me feel welcome. LDEI," Sami says, "gives me a lot of hope."

"This scholarship has a wider impact than one person. It can improve the lives of others in terms of community and social justice," Cecilia says. "It's amazing."

The Awards Committee invites all LDEI members to create impactful change. "Support The Wine Group by helping us carry forward our commitments to growth and diversity," says Catherine. "Make time for your development and seek out all available opportunities that help you reach your goals. Not only serve as a role model for other aspiring women leaders but support them in reaching their own potential. And finally, be a convener for diverse perspectives—at the leadership table and beyond."

One easy way to do that is by helping us increase public awareness of Scholarships for Impactful Change and encourage more women to apply. Help us grow our database of food and beverage institutions so we may continue to share information about the Scholarships initiative and reach more diverse, dedicated women.

Please send your contacts to LDEI Awards Committee Chair **Deborah Mintcheff** dsmintcheff@gmail.com

Why Supporting Your Chapter and LDEI Means Something More

BY 2ND VICE PRESIDENT ANITA LAU (LA/OC)

Want to make a difference in the world around you? Support a non-profit! Being a Dame already means you're part of a community with a mission to serve others. Unlike other organizations, non-profits aren't providing services or selling goods, they must turn to donors, volunteers, and other supporters to fulfill their goals.

"Being a member of LDEI is a privilege, not a right," that's what former LDEI President, **Maria Gomez-Laurens** said to me when I first joined the LA/OC Chapter. Through the years, I've had the opportunity to serve on my local chapter's board in various positions (including President), co-chaired the 2017 LDEI Annual Conference in Newport Beach, and now, serve LDEI as Second Vice President on the International Board.

I often hear members asking what LDEI can do for them, but in my opinion, that's the opposite of giving. The real question we should be asking ourselves is, "what can I do for LDEI and the causes our organization supports?" There are so many ways in which to support your local chapter, let alone, the greater organization. While donating monetarily is one way to support, it isn't the only way! In fact, volunteering and giving your time and efforts are even better ways in which to show your support. Below are some suggestions.

VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME.

I've heard from some members that it feels intimidating to sit on the Board, but I assure you, it's not as scary as it sounds. The best way to show up for your local chapter is to be involved and there are so many ways in which to do so. The first thing I tell new members is to volunteer your time to either serve on your local chapter's board or a committee. What better way to learn about the organization, and the charitable and networking opportunities your chapter has to offer.

SPONSOR AN EVENT.

Both your chapter and LDEI offer an array of events to help raise funds and awareness. Offer to sponsor an event, whether it's a cash or in-kind donation, such as supplying food for an event, or providing a gift certificate or prize for an auction. You can also help publicize

the event to help draw attention to it. If you attend an event, you can up your involvement by sharing your plans on social media.

FOLLOW. LIKE. COMMENT.

On the topic of social media, you can also support your local chapter—and the greater organization—by following their social media accounts and engage with it by liking or commenting on posts. This boosts algorithms and reaches more people. By following, you influence those around you, and boost their reach. Simply put, your clicks help touch more lives.

SHARE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA!

You can use social media to help spread the word. Even if you're not sure about how to ask for donations or you may feel uncomfortable doing so, stick to sharing the facts. Let your friends and followers decide for themselves whether they want to support or get more involved. Even if you don't specifically ask for money, awareness helps your chapter—and LDEI—continue to grow.

BE THE MOTIVATION.

Motivating members is another way to support your local chapter. Attend events and activities your chapter puts on and rally other Dames to do the same. It's an important way to team build and strengthen the sisterhood bonding of your chapter. Ask your president how you can assist. Introducing friends who you think would make excellent members by bringing them to chapter activities (whenever possible) is also a great way for potential new members to be acquainted with the organization and learn more about it. Your vote of confidence is an excellent way to prove that the organization's causes are meaningful. It is also a great networking resource for you, as connections unlock new possibilities!

Supporting nonprofits doesn't just benefit the organization you support; it can benefit you as well. Studies have shown that giving to and helping others can enhance your mental health, provide you with a greater sense of happiness, and give you a deeper sense of purpose. Other research reveals that it may enhance the number of social connections and even improve your overall health, producing a longer lifespan. Plus, it simply feels good!



THE 2023 LEGACY AWARD WINNERS

The Legacy Awards are supported by The Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and the Culinary Arts and the Timothy S.Y. Lam Foundation. The awards were established in 2009 by Les Dames d'Escoffier International with one goal in mind: to provide targeted mentorship opportunities for professional women in the food, beverage, and hospitality industries.

"Since its inception in 2009, LDEI's Legacy Awards have provided more than 60 women with extraordinary opportunities to gain priceless, first-hand knowledge and professional training from Dames in a diverse array of food, beverage, and hospitality-related industries," said LDEI president **Jennifer Goldman**. "Mentorship is at the core of LDEI's mission, and we are thrilled to partner with The Julia Child Foundation to offer these unique experiences. As a member of Les Dames d'Escoffier and a culinary and media trailblazer, Julia Child paved the way for many of us in the industry and we are grateful for the support of her foundation."

We are proud to introduce the six recipients of the 2023 Legacy Awards.

GRACE AGUILAR

The Supply Chain Award (Austin, Texas)

Hosted by **Carol Huntsberger** and the Dames of the Austin Chapter

Grace Aguilar is a Honduran-American and Louisiana native chef who is spreading her unique take on both of her cultures. Her goal is to not only to satisfy taste but to also tell the history within every dish. This is displayed in her first digital cookbook, *Little Taste of Home*.

Grace has worked and interned at two James Beard-nominated restaurants allowing her to sharpen her skills and gain knowledge while also food styling and freelancing several private dinners.

She has led fundraising efforts with food sales, donating to causes like Bakers Against Abortion Ban, the Austin Justice Coalition, and 2020's Hurricane Laura relief in Lakes Charles, LA.

She is currently working as a personal chef for a high-profile client. You can follow up with her on Instagram at @bettersaygrace and subscribe to her website bettersaygrace.com.



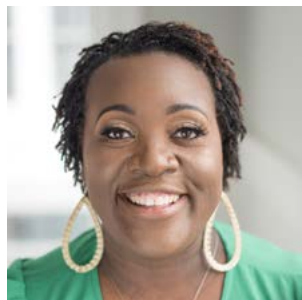
Emma Cromedy

Catering & Event Planning Award (New York City)

Hosted by the Pier Sixty Collection and the New York Chapter

Growing up, Emma has always loved baking and cooking. Fast forward to adulthood, she channeled her passion for baking into a business. The SouthernCakeQueen was officially launched as Charlotte's first mobile dessert truck in 2011. After operating for more than six years, Emma and her husband moved to Charleston to focus on their family.

They then joined forces with Carolima's Lowcountry Cuisine, a full-service catering company, and launched Carolima's Dessert Boutique. There, they offer from-scratch Southern desserts that are made with love. The Charleston Chewies and specialty cakes are the most popular desserts and Emma's always baking a delicious dessert that has guests wanting more. Whether she is whipping up something savory or something sweet, it's sure to be a crowd pleaser.



Cassandra Loftlin

The Food Journalism Award (St. Louis, Missouri)

Hosted by the Dames of the St. Louis Chapter

With experience as a private chef, environmental educator, and recipe developer, Cassandra has worked in various areas of the hospitality industry. However, her philosophy goes beyond the functional aspects of cooking. She believes that the kitchen is a space that can bring people together and create a sense of community through food.

After completing the James Beard



Chef's Boot Camp for Policy Change, Cassandra's focus shifted to becoming an advocate for food justice. She is currently working with the Ark Republic and Black Farmer's Index, where she works to highlight the importance of food sovereignty through journalism.

Cassandra is also actively involved in her community, serving on the boards of two organizations. As the co-founder of Goodness Gracious Grocery, a start-up that provides regionally sourced and organic produce, as well as ethically sourced meat and dairy products, she is focused on making changes in her home community. As a board member of Fresh Future Farm, she is dedicated to promoting simple, ancestral farming techniques and a self-sustaining regenerative ecosystem to provide efficient and effective fresh food solutions for the Southeast.

Cassandra's future goals include using food journalism as a tool to explore community and culture and a tool to inform and educate people about the issues surrounding food justice.

Tara Meineke

The Wine and Hospitality Award at Wentz Family Estates (Livermore, California)

Hosted by Grande Dame **Carolyn Wentz**, Chairwoman of the Board and Owner of Wentz Family Estates

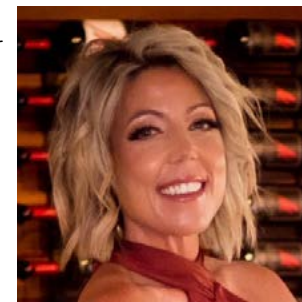
Tara Meineke is the co-owner and operator of M Cellars Winery located in Geneva, Ohio.

She has always worked hard to earn the things she desired, something her parents instilled in her at a very young age. She has spent the last 16 years setting a new standard of wine growing and production to the Grand River Valley, building a legacy that she hopes to pass on to future generations. People always ask her what made her decide to leave teaching to open a winery and her response every time is "passion mixed with a lot of crazy; the blissful ignorance of maybe not knowing everything and the drive to do what you love."

When she wasn't teaching, she enjoyed a hobby with her husband: wine, and everything associated with it. They spent time visiting the wineries of Ohio, New York, Napa, Sonoma, and Ontario Canada. They loved finding new wineries; it inspired the dream to have their own vineyard and winery one day. From that decision, combined with the support of various people and institutions that believed in them, that "one day" became a reality and Meineke Vineyards and M Cellars Winery in Geneva, Ohio were born.

In 2007 they acquired prime land in the Grand River Valley with a vision to plant European *Vitis Vinifera* grape vines. The unique microclimate of the region allowed them to plant Pinot Noir, Riesling, Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Saperavi and Petit Verdot. Tara and Matt opened the winery in November 2012. They dreamed of bringing world-class wine production to Northeast Ohio; that dream continues to fuel their desire today.

Tara's mission at M Cellars is to celebrate the potential of winemaking in their region by handcrafting authentic wines that create meaningful connections between land, vines, and people. Her hope is to pass this on for generations to come.



Shari Shobe

Culinary Entrepreneurship Award (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Hosted by the Dames of the Philadelphia Chapter

Detroit's very own 2022 Culinary Krave Winner Chef Shari Shobe is a wife, mother of five, and the Founder of Chef Shobe. Shari is dedicated to creating a memorable guest experience from beginning to end.

Years of a variety of professional catering experiences has resulted in cooking and executing private dinner parties, corporate events, important social celebrations, and providing exclusive service to professional athletes and other high-profile clientele around the state of Michigan.

One of Shari's core beliefs is that professionalism paired with flavorful food results in a dining experience that her guests will crave to have again. In addition to feeding the city of Detroit, the Chef Shobe Spice Drive will be entering its fourth year this Fall. Outside of cooking and creating great meals, Shari enjoys volleyball, ax throwing, and painting.



Meghan Sigurdson

The Hotels and Hospitality Award (Nashville, Tennessee)

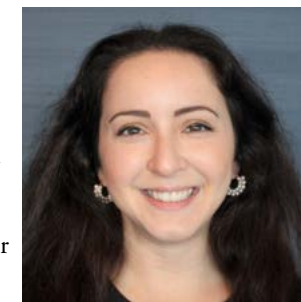
Hosted by the Hermitage Hotel and Dames of the Nashville Chapter

Born in San Diego to two parents in the Navy, Meghan was destined for a life of travel and hospitality. Before she turned two her family packed up and moved cross-country, settling in a small coastal town in Maine where she would spend her adolescence. It was there that her parents bought and renovated a 20-acre farm and restaurant before selling it several years later, her first true glimpse at the hustle and bustle of hospitality.

After graduating from high school, she attended Roanoke College for four years, obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Relations, minoring in Spanish with a concentration in Latin American Business and Politics. She took her formal education and moved to our nation's capital, Washington D.C., to begin her next chapter.

During her ten years in Washington D.C., Meghan built a career and reputation with Kimpton Hotel and Restaurant Group, working at some of the best spots around. Her company offered her opportunities to travel and learn all along the way, including the participation in three restaurant openings throughout the nation, one new concept transition, and many other taskforce stints helping with coverage and structure wherever she could.

It was the build-up of her reputation that allowed her the opportunity to relocate to Winston Salem, N.C. at the start of 2022, where she currently oversees the food and beverage operation for The Cardinal Hotel and Katharine Brasserie & Bar in the heart of downtown.



Go Local: Hometown Culinary Tours

By CATHY BRANCIAROLI (PHILADELPHIA)

Want to take your background in hospitality or as a chef to a new level? Or just feel entrepreneurial? Try getting involved in managing culinary tours in your local area. We spoke with several Dames who did just that and have not looked back.

According to Dame **Gaetane Palardy** (British Columbia) of Island Gourmet Trails in British Columbia, being a tour guide combines three passions: food, travel and education. She was a former chef (like others interviewed for this article) and has been running her business for over a dozen years. Several of the other Dames have been running their businesses for more than 20 years and are the most senior in their area, which speaks to the persistence that is needed in running an entrepreneurial business.

Another incentive, according to Dame **Donna del Rey** (Sonoma) who owns Relish Culinary Tours in Healdsburg, Calif., is being powered by the profound joy that comes from sharing the culinary wonders of the region with guests.

Donna said that she started her business more than 20 years ago when farm to table was a new concept and that she enjoys sharing the ways people eat in Sonoma County. "It's so rewarding to create and share great food to bring people together," she said. Other tour guides echo her remarks.

Dame **Gina Natoli** (South Florida) of Boca Raton said that she feels her role as a culinary tour guide is to make people feel comfortable and have fun while exploring a new neighborhood by using food. "I love guiding culinary tours because food connects us," she says. "What better way to explore a neighborhood than by using your stomach? Food tours are a wonderful way to visit a city because they are low impact environmentally and they help small businesses."

All the tour operators said that a key to their success has been partnering with other local food businesses. Most of them are sole proprietors but several employ other chefs or guides in running their businesses, some as many as 15 part-time employees. Dame **Alison Zinder** (Paris) positions herself as a gastronomy guide and runs the operation as a one-woman show while also working part-time as head of academics at a hotel and a restaurant management school in France.

What are the keys to success in running a culinary tour business? Several of our Dames said that it's been a solitary journey in running their own business. They talked about developing relationships with other entrepreneurs, creating experiences that clients will not soon forget, and being able to contribute to the local economy. According to Dame **Megan Bucholtz** (Denver) of Local Table Tours in Denver, Co., "my business has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars over the last 13 years to local restaurants—my business directly contributes to the local economy."

And, how do clients react to the experience? Well, that depends. Most tourists react depending on their background and expectation, they said. **Alexandra Leaf** (New York) of Manhattan says that her tours provide a perspective visitors often don't get as to local neighborhoods which make the tours very personal and meaningful. This is mainly because the spaces and shops visited are small and intimate. "They also learn a great deal about New York's history besides food information," she says. Alexandra feels that food tours are a wonderful way to visit a city, saying they are low impact environmentally and they help small businesses by bringing attention (and business) to these places.

Overall, everyone agreed and said that tourists enjoy "experiences" and love food so it's a winning combination, one they hope to keep operating for the future.

Who doesn't love artisanal ice cream! These young epicureans discover their new favorite dessert shops with Alexandra Leaf in NYC.



Explore trails less traveled and sometimes you'll find delicacies like these wild edible mushrooms. Go with a pro, like Donna Del Rey, to ensure you won't come home empty handed.

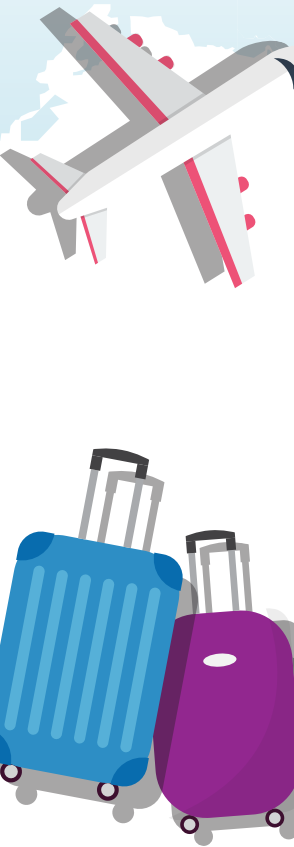
Alison Zinder brings the cuisine of Paris to life for her tourists. Photos: Alison Zinder and Jennifer Wang Photography.



There's nothing like hitting up the "it" places in Miami's night life! Gina Natali's got the "in" and you're invited.

TAKE A TOUR. SUPPORT A SISTER.

We all get asked by friends and family—sometimes the occasional stranger—"I'm going to this or that city, where should I eat? What should I do?" Next time put them in touch with an expert Dame! Here's a short list of Dames from various chapters offering fantastic culinary tours!



- CANADA**
 - British Columbia**: Gaetane Palardy, Gaetane Palardy Solutions (GPS) Culinary Tours
- UNITED STATES**
 - Sonoma**: Donna Del Rey, Relish Culinary Adventures
 - Denver**: Megan Bucholtz, Local Table Tours
 - Cleveland**: Barbara Abbott, Canton Food Tours
 - Nashville**: Karen-Lee Ryan, Walk Eat Nashville
 - Boston**: Michele Topor, Boston Food Tours
 - New York**:
 - Alexandra Leaf, Chocolate Culinary Tours of New York City Inc
 - Liz Young, Culinary and City Tours, LLC
 - Philadelphia**: Jacqueline Kelly, StrEATS of Philly Food Tour
 - South Florida**: Gina Natoli, Miami Culinary Tours
- MEXICO**
 - Mexico City**: Ruth Alegria, Mexico City Tour Guide
- FRANCE**
 - Paris**:
 - Alison Zinder, Paris on the Edge
 - Caroline Conner, Lyon Wine Tastings



Have an authentic travel experience wherever you go

By BETH D'ADDONO (NEW ORLEANS)

I've been a food and travel writer since 1991, before the days when our phones ruled the world. Back in the day, getting around took some figuring, beyond just putting an address into a GPS.

Those conveniences have certainly made it easier to tour efficiently and tick attractions off a destination bucket list.

Now I don't know about you, but sometimes I get sick to death of looking at my phone. When I travel, whether it was a recent jaunt to Mexico City, a wander about Calabria, or a quick assignment in Las Vegas, I yearn for connection, community and authenticity. There's nothing wrong with being a tourist, but I try to always remember to be curious, let the experience unfold without too much micro-management and be open to surprises, which so often bring joy.

Here are a few bits I try to practice, whether I'm traveling for work or play.

ASK THE LOCALS. It's obvious, but keep it in play. From Uber drivers to tour guides to the guy with his dog on the next bar stool, the wonders never cease.

MANNERS ALWAYS. Of course, a given, but we don't have a reputation as Ugly Americans overseas for nothing. Try to blend. I try to pay attention to local customs and not act entitled to have things work like they do at home. The time I went out by myself for dinner in Bucharest was a lesson I won't ever forget.

READ THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER ONLINE BEFORE YOU GO. You won't believe the intel you'll find from reading what's happening on the ground in advance of your trip.

EAT WITH ALACRITY. Food informs everything, as we all know. I can eat salmon and veggies at home. As I write this, I'm salivating over nduja with pasta, the Calabrian version of carbonara. And the street food in Mexico City. Heck, I'm always hungry.

FINALLY, CONNECT WITH DAMES! One of the best things about being a Dame is our automatic connection, the common ground we share. I always try to either consult a local Dame in advance or schedule a meet up while I'm in town. Recently, this meant a wonderful brunch at the James Beard Award winning woman-owned Mexican restaurant El Naranjo in Austin with Beth and Mike Pav. Beth knew the chef! It also meant getting great local intel from Dame **Jill Smith** at Larder + Delta, a Black owned restaurant near her house in Phoenix. Jill introduced me to her friend Paul Ford, whose family business Big Red's supplies hot sauce to the restaurant. I made an intro between Paul and Dame **Nina Compton**, and they are working on a program together. All because of our wonderful Dames network.

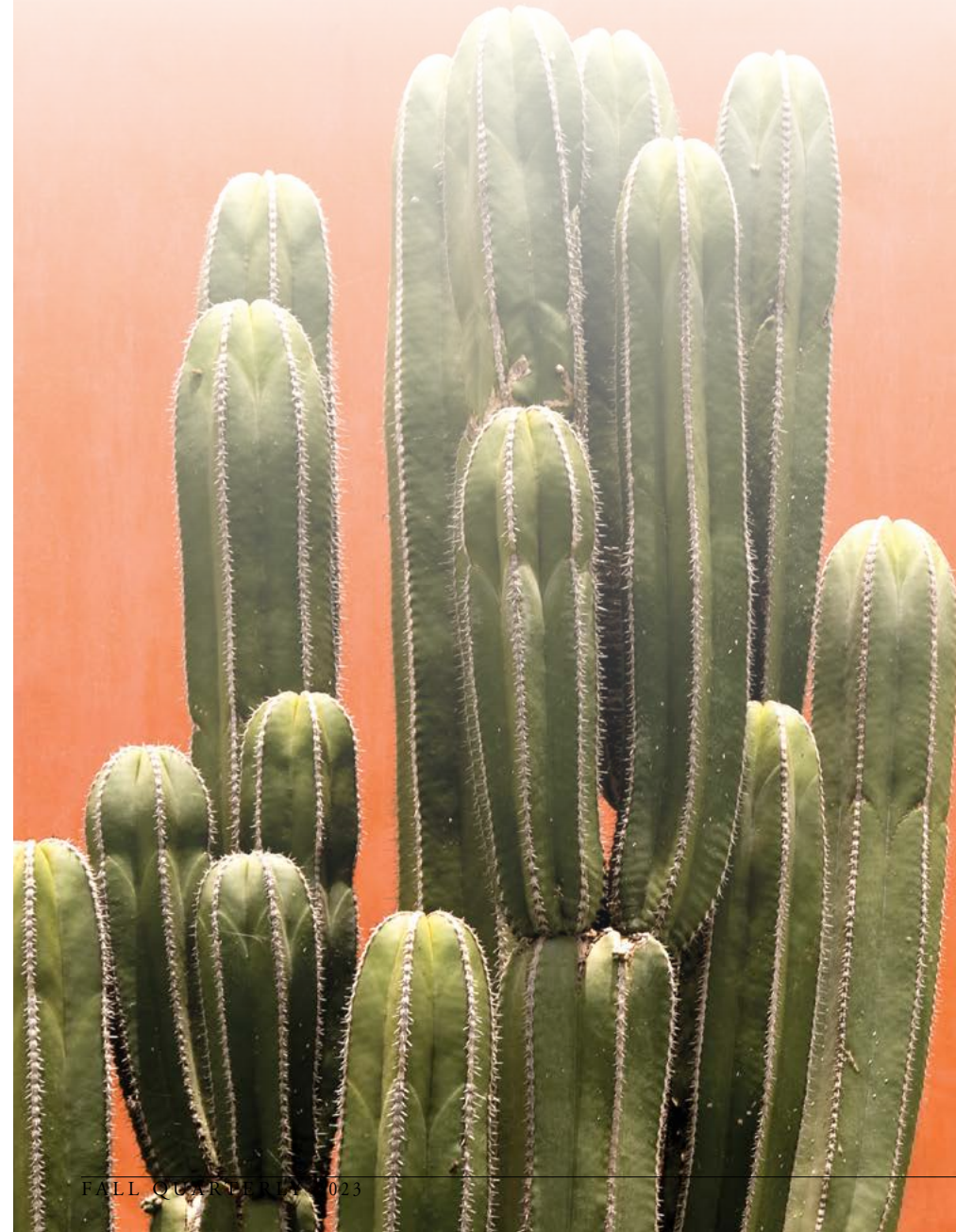


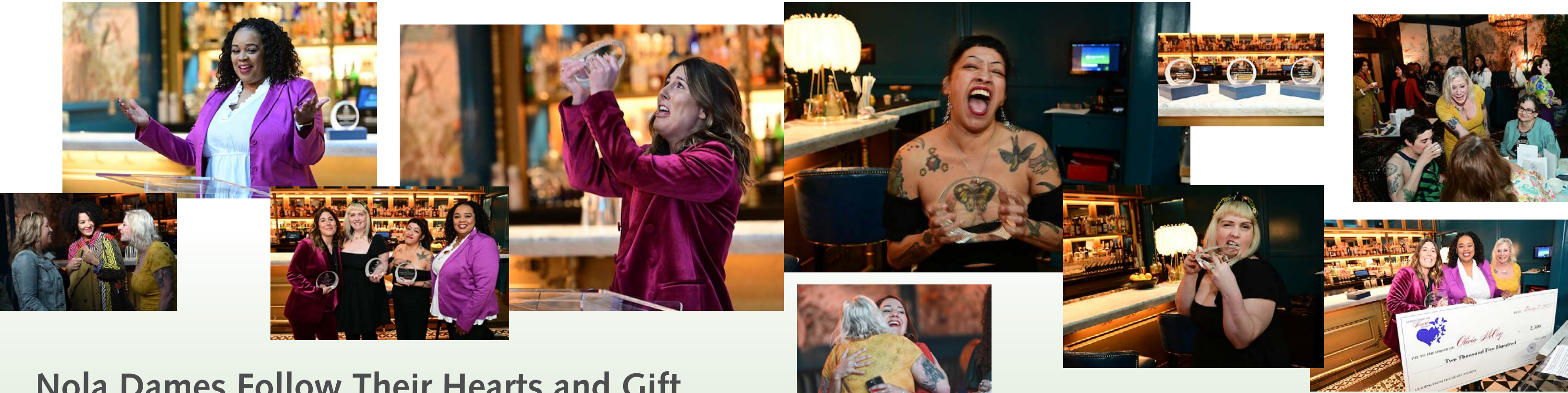
"Caroline Nabors, a founding New Orleans Chapter Dame now in Mexico City, told me that Licoreria Limantour was the best cocktail bar in North America. She was right. One bite of a cinnamon-laced BeaverTails street pastry in Quebec City is never enough. Pasta in Tropea in Calabria is the stuff of dreams. "



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Nola Dames Follow Their Hearts and Gift Community Leadership Awards

By EMILY VANLANDINGHAM
(NEW ORLEANS)

Right before the pandemic, a few years after starting our chapter, we had decided to focus on our mission: to raise funds and redistribute them back into our Greater New Orleans community in the areas of hospitality, sustainability, food justice and/or public health.

We had originally set out to create an education-based scholarship for non-Dames, in which the recipient had to be enrolled in an accredited degree program. However, things didn't go as planned.

After creating, planning, funding, and advertising the scholarship in the local newspaper, by word of mouth, and through our social platforms for well over a year, no one applied. Not one application was submitted, and we were heartbroken.

In the end, during the pandemic, we gifted the funds that we had set aside for this award to the Louisiana Hospitality Foundation. One of our members, our current Treasurer **Jen Kelley Killian**, was the Executive Director and was able to

give those funds to a hospitality worker in need through the foundation. Jen has since moved over to the Aarón Sánchez Impact Fund as Executive Director.



After the pandemic, the board decided to go back to the drawing board to change a few components of the scholarship's design.

We first considered the challenges around asking for applications. The academic world is vast, with many scholarships available and widely advertised through more direct institutional channels which make it easy for students to apply. So, we opted to move from an application-based to a nomination-based process. This engages our community in a different way and enables others to collectively think *who do I know that really deserves this recognition?*

Next, we moved from a scholarship format to an award format. By soliciting nominations to recognize work already being done by women within our community and then giving them a monetary award for that work, we would be giving them a chance to reinvest those funds into potentially even more positive outcomes.

And so, our chapter's newest initiative, the Leading from the Heart Awards, was born in 2022. The name seemed perfect for our vision: to recognize women in our industry who show strong leadership through their work.

We had a total of 24 nominations and set up a small judging committee of members which included **Kim Lewis, Jillian Duran, Dee Lavigne, Liz Williams, Jen Kelley Killian, Beth D'Addono, and Emily Shaya.**

We began our chapter in 2016. After seven years of actively fundraising through various events, our first gala (normally held every two years), and a grant from The Goldring Foundation we were able to give away three awards of \$2,500 each.

Beth D'Addono, then President and current Immediate Past President, hosted the first annual awards breakfast ceremony in January 2023 in the Peacock Room of Hotel Fontenot. Tickets were \$30 per person, and the event sold out.

The first three winners were Restaurateur Amanda Toups of Toups Meatery, Chef Cristina Quackenbush of pop-up Milkfish and founder/president of Good Trouble Network, and Founder Olivia McCoy of

New Orleans Dames change course to keep their mission. In 2023, the chapter awarded three leadership awards to outstanding women in their community. The first annual Leading from The Heart Awards were given to Olivia McCoy, Cristina Quackenbush, and Amanda Toups. At an awards ceremony held last winter, each woman was recognized with a beautiful award and gifted a check for \$2,500 to help aid their ongoing efforts.

WeHelp Nola.

Amanda Toups is deeply embedded in the New Orleans community. When the pandemic hit, Toups and her husband Isaac provided free meals to hundreds of displaced hospitality workers, families in need, and local hospitals. She is a supporter of The Leona Tate Foundation for Change, which educates audiences on the history of school desegregation and its role in the broader Civil Rights Movement in New Orleans. She also works closely with José Andrés' World Central Kitchen. Toups raises funds during Breast Cancer Awareness month and recently donated proceeds, earmarked for women battling the disease, to the Louisiana Hospitality Foundation. Amanda will use the funds to continue feeding displaced hospitality workers and support disaster relief efforts through her work with World Central Kitchen.

A fearless mother and grandmother as well as a talented chef and non-profit leader, Cristina Quackenbush is known for Filipino restaurant and current pop-up, Milkfish. But her passion is the Good

Trouble Network, a non-profit that leads monthly fundraisers featuring local chefs to support causes related to racial justice, prison reform, reproductive rights, and accessible housing. During the pandemic, she started assembling dinner boxes featuring renowned local chefs to raise funds for causes including the Innocence Project of New Orleans and the ACLU of Louisiana. Cristina plans to use the grant to offset the cost of the Holiday Bakes Box and the materials necessary to produce future boxes.

A long-time service industry veteran, Olivia McCoy saw an immense need for access to mental health services within the hospitality community and industry. In February 2020, she founded WeHelp NOLA, a local, woman-owned and operated organization that provides free mental healthcare and wellness services to service industry workers in New Orleans. WeHelp partners with local restaurants that pay about \$10 per employee, per month, for a membership that gives their staff access to therapy and wellness services—all free of charge to the employee. Cur-

rently, WeHelp NOLA is partnered with 49 hospitality venues in New Orleans and, since launching, has provided more than 3,000 free therapy sessions to workers. She will use the grant to provide more than 83 free therapy sessions to service industry members in New Orleans.

"These leaders help make our community healthier, happier, and more equitable through their efforts," said Beth, co-founder of the New Orleans Chapter. "These women are creative and inclusive thought leaders, mentors, and collaborators who have a track record of credibility, trust, and personal integrity."

"We were impressed with all of the nominees' efforts to uplift women, but these three women set themselves apart as trailblazers," said Dee Lavigne, Vice President of Philanthropy and director of the Deelightful Roux School of Cooking at the Southern Food and Beverage Museum.

Our 2023 fundraising efforts will determine our ability to give three \$2,500 awards again in 2024, but we are planning to award at least two.

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From frames to carrot top garnishes, nearly everything seen and tasted was recycled, reclaimed, and reborn. The event was hosted by Ellen Kassoff and husband/business partner Chef Todd Gray.



GREEN TABLES:

Washington D.C.'s 'Waste Not' Supports Food Insecurity Initiative

BY LANI FURBANK AND ELLEN KASSOFF (WASHINGTON D.C.)

Nearly forty-percent of food in the U.S. is never eaten. Wasting food wastes all kinds of resources, contributes to greenhouse gas emissions, and exacerbates food insecurity. But by embracing seed-to-stem cooking and diverting food waste into compost, we can help reduce methane emissions and produce an invaluable resource—often referred to as *black gold*—for growing food and maintaining healthy soil.

In February, the D.C. Chapter's Green Tables initiative offered a program to help tackle this issue. *Waste Not: How composting and zero-waste cooking can green your kitchen (and save you some green)* was organized by Dames **Ellen Kassoff** and **Lani Furbank**, and hosted by Ellen and Chef Todd Gray at their D.C. restaurant, Equinox.

Ellen and Chef Todd welcomed Dames

and guests by sharing their sustainability journey at Equinox. The event included a tour of Equinox's composting system and a live cooking demo with Chef Todd, focusing on dishes that use valuable ingredients that would otherwise go to waste. Dishes like Basura Tempura is a tempura appetizer made with vegetable scraps. Equinox's team also provided tastings of scrappy snacks and beverages such as Carrot Top Pesto, Salmon Skin Chips, and House-made Limoncello.

To round out the afternoon, Dames and guests heard insights and actionable tips from a diverse panel discussion of sustainability experts: Jeffrey Neal, the founder & CEO of **Loop Closing**, Lela Singh, the retail and social media manager at **Teaism** Tea Shop, and Caroline Howe, Aspire program coordinator in Innovation & Equitable Development at the **D.C. Department of Small & Local Business Development**.

Through the lens of a restaurant facility, more than 60 Dames and guests got to

understand a bit about composting on a commercial scale and learn how to rescue food waste through various programs (such as **Zero Waste D.C.**) and turn it into tasty dishes. This helped guests appreciate the magic of compost and find the motivation to do it at home.

The event also raised funds for the D.C. Chapter's grants and scholarships program in support of the advancement of women in the food, beverage, and hospitality industries. The silent auction and raffle of sustainable lifestyle goods raised more than \$1,300.

D.C.'s Green Tables Initiative, chaired by Lani, will continue to focus on sustainability in our region's food system during the upcoming year, including a plastic-free kitchens workshop at the chapter's flagship culinary forum, *Bringing It to the Table: Talk. Taste. Transform.* in September. There are plans in progress for future Green Tables programs about oysters, restaurant sourcing, and local truffles.



THE BROCK CIRCLE: *More Meaningful Than Ever Before*

BY DEBORAH MINTCHEFF
(NEW YORK) IMMEDIATE PAST
PRESIDENT & STEPHANIE JAEGER
(BRITISH COLUMBIA) TREASURER

It has been our pleasure to serve as this year's Brock Circle Co-Chairs along with committee members **Toria Emas** (Chicago), **Nancy Fitch** (San Antonio), and **Hayley Matson-Mathes** (Hawaii). We have been a fully engaged committee with the clear, important goal of figuring out the most valuable and effective ways to employ this year's available Brock Circle funds to benefit you, our members.

When the Brock Circle was founded in 2012 by the LDEI Board of Directors, the goal was to secure the long-term fiscal health of LDEI by recruiting 100 Dames to pledge \$10,000 over a ten-year period, with the principle being held in a carefully watched investment account. A system of checks and balances remains in place with the LDEI Board of Directors receiving regular updates on our investment accounts. To date, there are 65 Brock Circle members and chapters. We are grateful for these members for their commitment to support LDEI in such a generous and meaningful way. Last year, the LDEI Board of Directors voted for the principle to remain intact and to allow forty percent of the interest from the previous year to be available to be spent for the organization's strategic needs, leadership tools, interactive meeting/webinars, and Conference enhancements.

This year, the Brock Circle committee wanted to take full advantage of *all* the available Brock Circle funds. The approval process for funds is straight forward. Proposals are submitted to the Brock Circle committee. If a proposal is approved, it is then sent to the LDEI Board for review. A proposal must then be passed by a super majority of the board to become a reality. To date, we have awarded \$5,000 for a Louisville Conference keynote speaker and another \$5,000 for our recent very-well received Gallup webinar "Culture: How We do Things Around Here." To wrap up the year, we are working on a follow-up Gallup webinar, which will be presented in early fall. Thank you for all the positive feedback!

The benefits of becoming a Brock Circle member are the following:

- permanent status as a member of the Brock Circle
- recognition at the LDEI Annual Conference, including a Brock Circle ribbon on credentials
- a limited-edition insignia pin given as a Brock Circle member
- listing in LDEI publications such as the *Quarterly*
- use of the Brock Circle logo on one's own printed and digital communications
- annual Brock Circle updates
- mention in the Brock Circle members list

This year, Dame **Emily Snyder**, a formidable former member of the New York Chapter and chapter president and new member of the South Florida Chapter joined the Brock Circle. This is what she shared about becoming a Brock Circle member:

*"As a young working 'girl' in New York City, I was always enamored with the sophisticated members of Les Dames. My mother had been a founding member and LDEI President so I literally grew up hearing about Grand Dame **Carol Brock** and her incredible group of savvy women who were at the top of their game in food, wine, and hospitality. Imagine being invited to those original gatherings back in the 80's and 90's as a guest of my mom in the glamorous world of Manhattan! It was so inspiring that I literally moved to N.Y.C. to pursue my own career in hospitality and was initiated into the New York Chapter in 2004.*

Carol was always there to support me but, most importantly, her incredible creative ideas never ceased. Her constant phone messages—left on my home phone answering machine, no less—included ideas about 'A circle of Dames' because in New York at that time we had a Dame who owned San Domenico restaurant, a Dame running the new Arts and Craft Museum, and me as a Dame overseeing sales and marketing for the brand-new Mandarin Oriental hotel. She was right, we needed to create a Circle of Dames, and now we have the Brock Circle! That was the visionary she was!



Dame Emily Snyder with LDEI Founder, Grande Dame Carol Brock.
Photo Courtesy Emily Snyder.

I have many memories of sitting with Carol at events listening to her speaking in that elegant New York accent of hers. No one spoke like that anymore, and I always felt it was out of a movie from a bygone era. When I left for London in 2016, I had to say farewell to her at the Les Dames holiday party and knew it would be the last time I would be with her. I had tears in my eyes knowing she was truly an icon for all of us and such a special inspiration for me.

So I joined the Brock Circle this year in honor of Carol and in honor of my mom, both trailblazers in working for the recognition of women in food, wine, and hospitality."

For more information on the Brock Circle and its members, sign into the Members Only section of the LDEI website at www.ldei.org, and click on the Brock Circle icon at the bottom left. For more on how to become a Brock Circle member, email Greg Jewell at info@ldei.org.



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CHAPTER PROGRAMS *Nichole Bendele (San Antonio)*

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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.

AUSTIN *Lindsey LeRoy*

Austin Dames hosted a happy hour event on June 20 to celebrate Pride. Taking place at Wine for the People in Central Austin, owner and Dame **Rachel Wilson** and her partner, Anne Spalding, offered Wine for the People's current wines alongside savory bites from Farmhouse Delivery, The Steeping Room, Dai Due, and Chef **Brandy Gibbs**. Sweet bites from Lick Honest Ice Creams and a pastry colab between Abby Jane Bakeshop x Sightseer Coffee, and non-alcoholic beverages from The Steeping Room and Aplós Hemp-Infused Non-Alcoholic Spirit. Proceeds from the event also benefitted Equality Texas, who spoke about their mission "to secure full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Texans." It was a great evening to celebrate! To kick off June 2023, members and non-members gathered at Still Austin for an evening of Oysters, Martinis and Texas Mariculture. Dame **Carol Huntsberger** from Quality Seafood told us all about oysters from Texas Oyster Ranch which were paired with a special martini from Still Austin.



Austin Dames gather for Pride happy hour at Wine for the People; Dame Carol Huntsberger from Quality Seafood.

BIRMINGHAM *Martha Johnston*

Birmingham Dames gathered at the Botanical Gardens in late May to award \$38,000 to entrepreneurial grant and scholarship winners. President **Leigh Sloss-Corra** lauded the ceremony as being the culmination of the year's hard work raising funds. **Anna Theoktisto**, Grant and Scholarship Chair, introduced the five entrepreneurial award winners, four

On May 21, Birmingham Dames gathered at the Botanical Gardens to recognize the 2023 grant and scholarship winners. \$38,000 was awarded to students and entrepreneurs. Dame Lindsey Noto, the culinary specialist at Sysco, gave Dames a tour of the Sysco warehouse in Calera. They toured the huge (mostly refrigerated) facility and learned about the wide range of services beyond food distribution that the company offers.



four-year college scholarship recipients, and three scholarship winners from two-year culinary institutions. A Champagne reception followed on the patio of The Garden's Café.

In June, **Kathy G. Mezrano** gathered Birmingham Dames for a planning session focused on their 2023 Champagne & Fried Chicken Fundraiser scheduled for Sunday, October 1. Members shared their ideas, chose committee assignments, shared their thoughts on making this event bigger and better than ever.

Dame **Lindsey Noto** welcomed Birmingham Dames and guests for a tour of the Sysco warehouse in Calera and the company kitchen in May. Guests learned about the company's partnership with food rescue initiative Feed-BHM and The Community Food Bank of Central Alabama as well as value-added business resources offered.

Dame **Clara Darling**, Samford Food Labs and Wellness Kitchen Director, led an Indian Cuisine Cooking Class for Dames and guests. A former entrepreneurial grant winner collaborated featuring her tea company.

BOSTON *Lucille S. Giovino*

There's one event that remains a constant: our yearly Escoffier Dinner, namely our 61st Dinner which was held this year at The Country Club in Chestnut Hill. We presented Dame **Kristen LaCount** our Dame of Distinction Award. Kristen is the first woman GM and COO in the Club's 140 years of existence, certainly well deserved. And, what could be more rewarding than spending an afternoon at the Newton Food Pantry where Dame **Denise Daniels**, the Pantry Manager, gave us a tour and placed us at various stations to pass out the freshest produce, frozen meats, canned and dry goods, and a variety of breads, all donated by top notch purveyors for those in need. The volunteer event was topped off with a \$1,500 donation to the Pantry. Alas, we needed a little fun solely for our Dames which was our second luncheon and polo match at The Myopia Hunt Club. President **Anastasia Nickerson** presided as hostess guaranteeing cool weather, a delicious buffet, perfectly chilled white and



Boston Dames 61st Annual Escoffier Dinner; Boston Board Members present donation to the Newton Food Pantry.

pink wines, and finishing with a tempting sweets tray. All this under a colorful tent for dining, chatting, and, yes, keeping an eye on the polo players. We wished the day would never end!

CHARLESTON *Susan Slack*

Chapter Dames gathered on September 12 for their first business meeting of the 2023-2024 year at The Peninsula of Charleston on Upper King Street. Dame **Paige Crone** hosted the event. **Amanee Neirouz**, the chapter's outgoing president, gave her thanks and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to lead the chapter for a year. She said, "This chapter is full of so many talented and wonderful people that make it such a joy to be a part of." She complimented the chapter's recent, successful fundraiser adding, "While the money that we raised was great, it was the participation that, to me, was our biggest success."



Robin Griffith is incoming president of the Charleston Chapter.

To complete the Board transition, she passed the "whisk" to new president **Robin Griffith**, who introduced each new Board member then laid out a strategy for the coming year. The new Board members include Vice President **Rhonda Mitchell**, Secretary **Amethyst Ganaway**, Treasurer **Mary Kay Gill**, DEI Ambassador **Julie Shaffer**, and Member-at-Large **Isabella Macbeth**. Outgoing Board members include **Helen Mitternacht** (Past President) and **Belinda Smith-Sullivan** (DEI Ambassador).

CHICAGO *Mariam Parker*

Dames Who Read dive into Lessons in Chemistry. A baker's dozen of Chicago Dames had a great evening at the latest Dames Who Read event, focusing on Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus. Organizers **Judith Hines** and **Kathy Ruff** coordinated a spectacular table with potluck dishes inspired by favorite TV chefs. Delicious bites and bits of the book included chemistry lab beakers, post-it notes, and pencils for our hair. Dames **JeanMarie Brownson**, **Shannon Kinsella**, **Anup Singla** and **Judith Hines** shared their own experiences doing live TV cooking segments.

Chicago Dames gathered on June 12 for the Annual Meeting and a delicious and exotic dinner prepared by Dame **Tigist Reda** at her award-winning Ethiopian restaurant, Demera. Dames were welcomed with a cocktail featuring Ethiopian Honey Wine. President **Shannon Kinsella** passed the gavel to new President **Liz Barrett**, who announced plans for an exciting 2024 fundraiser: a four-day trip to Chicago in June 2024 entitled Sweet Home Chicago! Dames then sat for a shared Ethiopian dinner, traditionally eaten using Injera bread, and wines specially paired by Dame **Veronica Hastings**. The evening closed with a special Ethiopian coffee ceremony served by Demera servers in traditional Ethiopian dress, preparing freshly roasted coffee to accompany dessert. It was a fun, productive and memorable kick-off to a fresh year!



Dames Who Read dive into Lessons in Chemistry. Chicago Chapter's Annual Meeting at Demera.

CLEVELAND *Beth Schreiberman Gehring*

One of the best parts about being a member of LDEI Cleveland is that we hold our meetings in truly extraordinary locations. The early days of summer gifted us with the delightful experience of both Pearl Street Wine Market and Cafe, as well as the utterly charming La Fattoria Farm nestled in the heart of Novelty, Ohio. Pearl Street captures the essence of Cleveland's finest, effortlessly blending warmth and sophistication without a trace of pretentiousness. We had a wonderful evening with members old and new, and, as always, we closed this charming cafe down with hugs and laughter. Next, we found ourselves in the heart of Novelty, Ohio, at the enchanting La Fattoria Farm. La Fattoria Farm is a charming Italian-style micro farm that is a feast for the senses. The animals are treated with the utmost care and respect, allowed to roam free and live their lives as nature intended, and to add even more delight, our very own Dame **Marla Monzo-Holmes** graced us with a delicious frittata-making demonstration using the farm's own duck eggs. Here's to the joys of exceptional cuisine and the precious moments that become cherished memories, all shared with good friends, old and new.



These were the wonderful fresh eggs that we were able to purchase that day from La Frattoria Farm; A delicious duck egg frittata made by Dame Marla Monzo-Holmes.

DALLAS *Heather Kurima*

While the summer has many Dames traveling the country and globe, we enjoyed a social meetup at Suburban Yacht Club to catch up and enjoy the tropical inspired menu and drinks. Our board is busy training the newly elected 2023-2024 board members before their retreat in August. And we are all looking forward to our owners' experience tour with the Dallas Cowboys at AT&T Stadium at the end of August. Summer is often the time to slow down, not the case for the Dallas Chapter! The Dallas Chapter gathered in May at the beautiful Beeman Hotel for our Induction Brunch. We were all thrilled to meet and get to know the 15 dynamic



Dallas Class of 2023 and Annual Business Meeting & Potluck.

new members being added to the chapter. A few weeks later, our board shared information with the new Dames at their orientation where they learned more about the chapter and how they could get involved. Later in June, we gathered at Capitol Distributing, an appliance showroom, for our annual business meeting and potluck. Besides great conversations and an update on everything the board and chapter have accomplished this year, we were excited to announce Dame **Tiffany Tobey** as the **Renie Steves** LDEI Conference Scholarship winner.

GREATER MADISON *Linda Eatherton*

Dames **Andrea Hillsey** (Square Wine) introduced our members to the Meat People of Madison, Wisconsin this July. We know 'making the sausage' is messy, but, oh how wonderful the final dishes will be! The art of meat butchery is truly one of precision and skill that can make all the difference between a great cut and one that fails to delight. This Fall our group plans to team up with the Chicago Chapter and provide Dames with a Taste of Wisconsin as part of our collective fundraising efforts.



Greater Madison Dames met up with the Meat People to learn about meat cuts, trims and more.

HAWAII *Hayley Matson-Mathes*

The Hawaii Chapter gathered August 13 at the iconic Waikiki Westin Moana Surf rider for our annual business meeting and new member induction. Dames enjoyed Afternoon Tea on the veranda, a Moana tradition from the 1900's. The meeting included a call with President **Jenn Marr** who was on Maui supporting relief efforts. Incoming President **Clare Bobo** led the meeting.



Hawaii Chapter Annual Meeting at the Moana Surf rider.

KANSAS CITY *Anne Brockhoff*

Kansas City celebrated its 25th anniversary in June at Dame **Robin Krause's** restaurant, Billie's Grocery. Founding Dames **Dianne Hogerty** and **Judith Fertig** shared the chapter's early history (other founders included Dames **Karen Adler**, **Donna Cook**, **Kathy Moore**, Roxanne Wyss Bateman, **Marilyn Cupples**, **Mariann Vandenberg** and Carolyn Wells), and all its past presidents were recognized. Dame **Brandi Moritz** and students from Northland Career Center helped prepare and serve the food, and Dame **Judy Ensminger** donated a 15-liter Nebuchadnezzar bottle (about 100 glasses worth) of AIX French rosé. It was just the thing to toast both an eventful quarter century and a future full of food, fellowship and fundraising! On that note, Kansas City Dames again celebrated the organization's French heritage in July with its Bastille Day Pique-Nique event to benefit the chapter's education fund. Each grab-and-go picnic bag included enough salads, dips, pâté, charcuterie, cheeses, bread, olives, cocktails and wine for two. The bags also included colorful French macarons crafted by Dame

Kate Smith of Kate Smith Soirée and Butterfield's Bakery & Market; a week later, Kate shared the secrets of making them in a class for Dames and friends.



The Kansas City Dames toasted the 25th anniversary event with a Nebuchadnezzar bottle of AIX French rosé donated by Dame Judy Ensminger; The Bastille Day Pique-Nique event to benefit the chapter's education fund was again a success!

LOS ANGELES/ORANGE COUNTY

Anita Lau

LA/OC Dames participated in the Los Angeles Downtown Women's Center (DWC) Cooking Club Program in July. DWC focuses exclusively on serving and empowering women experiencing homelessness, and formerly homeless women. Volunteers from the LA/OC Chapter prepared a lunch of fish tacos, black beans, corn, and fruit (as well as a vegan version) for the 150 women who rely on DWC every day.

The LA/OC Chapter Dames were treated to a mid-week soiree at Dame **Sri Divil's** client, Chef David Wilhelm's new restaurant Tavern at the Mission in San Juan Capistrano. Sri, owner of The Culinary CMO, is a veteran in the restaurant industry. Her company specializes in restaurant marketing. Dames gathered for passed appetizers and wine cocktail hour, followed by a delectable six-course tasting menu. It was a delightful mid-week soiree for LA/OC Dames.



Standing from left: Sri Divil, Dawn Blume Hawkes, Jessica Gavin, Anita Lau, Chef David Wilhelm, Tina Borgatta, Marguarite Clark, Sandra Harvey, Cecilia Fileti; Sitting from left: Kenyon Parr, Marcie Taylor, Lisa Gilmore, Alan Gibbons, Cathy Thomas, Miki Hackney. Nisie Pimanmas, Dame Nancy Eisman, Dame Shachi Mehra, Dame Veronica Reyes, Dame Anita Lau, Dame Christina Xenos and DWC's Chef Mike.

MINNESOTA *Paula Zuhlsdorf*

We enjoyed gorgeous weather to Alexis Bailly Vineyards, where we drank in the scenery along with the outstanding wines decanted by our host, Nan Bailly. Celebrating 50 years in operation, defying harsh

winters, ups, downs, supply chain challenges and pandemic shut-downs with aplomb. Dames **Brenda Langton** and **Liz Nerud** made a delectable spread of appetizers, fruits, and the best local cheeses. After networking and festivity, owner and wine maker Nan Bailly spoke about how her father founded a winery in Hastings, Minn. He said "You can live out any fantasy on the backs of six children." His dream included planting French grapes and building the winery to "look enough like a house, in case it doesn't work out." Unfortunately, he passed while Nan was studying in France, and she found herself running the vineyard. According to Nan, "It has become something I love, it's been an amazing ride for me." She produces 50,000 bottles per year and maintains a private wine club, whose members receive exclusive unique vintages Nan makes to stay creative. Live jazz on Sundays has become a wildly popular event, with up to 500 people packing the vineyard for wine, music, and community.



Minnesota Dames at Alexis Bailly Vineyards.

MONTEREY BAY *Rachel Mueller*

We had a beautiful Potluck Lunch and St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church. We met new members and connected with old Dames.



Potluck prepared by Monterey Dames.

NEW YORK *K. Tenenbaum*

The New York Chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier, orchestrated three exceptional events that left a significant impact on the culinary and beverage landscape. First, Dames **Alison Awerbuch** and **Marsha Palanci** extended their mentorship to Emma Cromedy, a prestigious

LDEI 2023 Legacy Recipient from Charleston, S.C. Immersed in the catering and events business at The Pier Sixty Collection and Abigail Kirsch Collective, Emma's experience was enriched by warm accommodations from Marsha and invaluable career advice during delightful dinners with NY Dames. A memorable food and beverage tour of NYC further enhanced her journey. Secondly, LDNY showcased its commitment to culinary education, awarding over \$75,000 in scholarships to 19 exceptional students pursuing studies in culinary arts, pastry, nutrition, food science, hospitality, and wine in New York and New Jersey. This initiative nurtures talent and inspires the next generation of culinary professionals. Lastly, the Fourth Annual Next Big Sip at the Cornell Club elevated the industry by focusing on sustainability in winemaking. With experts, enthusiasts, and professionals gathered, the event stimulated discussions on eco-conscious practices, reaffirming LDNY's dedication to promoting sustainability within the culinary and beverage community. These events epitomized LDNY's influence, fostering growth, collaboration, and a sustainable future for food and hospitality industries.



LDNY showcased its commitment to culinary education, awarding over \$75,000 in scholarships to 19 exceptional students pursuing studies in culinary arts, pastry, nutrition, food science, hospitality, and wine in New York and New Jersey. LDNY and Dames Alison Awerbuch and Marsha Palanci recently hosted Emma Cromedy, an LDEI 2023 Legacy Recipient from Charleston, S.C., where she owns a catering and baking business.

PHILADELPHIA *Alethia Erwin*

Some highlights from LDEI Philadelphia include a fun and informative (and delicious!) tour of Franklin Fountain and Shane Confectionary arranged by Dame **Betty Greene**. Our chapter had the privilege of hosting 2023 Legacy Award Winner Shari Shobe, who was visiting from Detroit. The Legacy Award provided a targeted mentorship opportunity for Shari and the Philadelphia Chapter pulled out the red carpet. We celebrated the return of Les Dames Philadelphia monthly Happy Hours! Relationships are our most valuable asset in Les Dames and these happy hours afford us an opportunity to meet, talk, advise one another, and just have fun! A special thank you to Past President, Dame **Jill Weber** and Rex at the Royal for hosting Shari Shobe at June's Happy Hour. Dame **Suzanna Foo** once again opened her home to us for our Summer Potluck. Needless to say, there was great food, great wine, and interesting conversation in a beautiful setting, contributing to a good time being had by all!

SAN ANTONIO *Karen Haram*

San Antonio Dames met and dined in May at **Lisa Wong's** fabulous new Rosario's Mexican Cafe Y Cantina where we voted to add

more than 10 new members and honor Alice (Ma) Harper with our chapter's Legacy Award. Harper, a 93-year-old restaurateur and retired Air Force airplane mechanic, opened Ma Harper's Creole Kitchen at age 61 and still runs her restaurant. Featured on Food Network with Guy Fieri, Harper believes in second chances, hiring those who have served jail time to help get them back into the community. She also serves the homeless as well and helps numerous charities.

On August 2, members gathered after work for a Happy Hour at Carriqui. We gathered again for a Summer Soirée on August 8 at the home of **Blanca Aldaco**. After finalizing plans for our September fundraiser, Dames shared their favorite appetizer and served potluck style, with wine and bubbles. The menu featured such items as shrimp salad, watermelon salad, penne pasta in Alfredo sauce, sundried tomato dip, charcuterie, enchiladas, artichoke dip, Asian chicken salad, corn salad, deviled eggs, brownies, warm peach cobbler with vanilla ice cream, and more. "Come early and stay late!" the invitation stated, and we did!



From left: Kay Shumake, Alice "Ma" Harper, Blanca Aldaco and President Nancy Fitch at the Legacy Awards presentation; Left to right: Debbie Gonzalez, Allison Balfour, Abby Kurth and Cathy Siegel gather for a Summer Soirée.

WASHINGTON, D.C. *Ellen Kassoff*

The Washington D.C. Regional Chapter had a busy, productive summer. In August, we hosted the Zoom program, Vegan Means Business: Embracing Plant Power, which delved into what's behind the vegan dining trend, how to make it work for your brand, and ways to incorporate plant-based dishes at home. The panel was moderated by **Ellen Kanner**, with panelists **Aviva Goldfarb**, Philadelphia Dames **Fran Costigan** and LDEI 1st Vice President **Kathy Gold**, plus Chef Nina Curtis. Another informative Zoom program featured Dr. **Leni Sorenson**, who spoke about the Texas roots of Juneteenth and the history of the holiday's celebrations. In person events included a World Refugee Day Pupusa Workshop held at **Ana Reyes' El Tamarindo** restaurant, a *tea-lightful* exploration of the fine nuances of tea led by **Laurie Bell**, and a fun dinner at **Christianne Ricchi's** restaurant iRicchi to welcome our new members. Our chapter gave out \$15,000 in grants to five local non-profit organizations, and awarded two women in need a total of \$20,000 in scholarships to the Culinary Institute of America.



Ana Reyes and Amy Riolo demonstrate how to make pupusas.

IN MEMORIAM

In Loving Memory: Philadelphia's Dame Linda Joyce Forristal

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Dame **Linda Joyce Forristal**, or Mother Linda as her friends called her. Linda was a former food and travel editor in Washington, D.C. and lived on the Eastern Shore of Maryland where she was a professor of hospitality and tourism. Linda was a valued member of both the Philadelphia and D.C. Chapters of LDEI where she served on the Scholarship Committee in Philadelphia. "We appreciated her service and commitment," says Philadelphia President, **Alethia Erwin**. "She will be greatly missed by our chapter and our greater community."

To see more of Linda's past food and travel interests, visit www.motherlindas.com.



In Loving Memory: San Antonio's Dame Mary Martini

Dame **Mary Martini**, a member of the San Antonio Chapter, passed away Sunday, August 6, 2023, after a brave battle with cancer. Mary was manager of the Central Market Cooking School in San Antonio for the past 22 years where her culinary knowledge influenced thousands of students. She also had a regular cooking segment on the San Antonio Living Show on the NBC-TV affiliate. Mary was generous with her talents, including contributing to the Roy Maas holiday dinner each year. She was passionate about food from her earliest years as she was raised in a restaurant in Upstate New York. Mary was a versatile cook, but her specialty was Italian food, particularly homemade pasta. Mary earned her master's degree in business administration from the University of Texas at San Antonio. Her culinary influence will be greatly missed in the Alamo City.



In Loving Memory: Dame Carole Walter, New York's Celebrated Baker and Culinary Expert

Dame **Carole Walter**, a revered and accomplished baking and culinary professional, passed away on July 11, 2023, leaving behind a remarkable legacy. Carole's passion for patisserie and the culinary arts led her to study in Austria, Denmark, France, and Italy, becoming a master of her craft. She was a sought-after guest on major network television such as *Good Morning America*, *Regis and Kathy Lee*, *Fox 5 Midday News*, and Sara Moulton's *Cooking Live*. Carole was a regular on Arthur Schwartz's WOR-AM Radio's "Food Talk" and Martha Stewart's Sirius Radio program. She authored numerous magazine articles for national publications including *Fine Cooking*, *Cooking Light*, and *Dessert Professional* (formerly *Chocolatier*). Carole's expertise and captivating presence shone brightly. Her work was recognized through prestigious awards, including the *James Beard Foundation Best Baking and Dessert Cookbook*, the International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP) Award for "Best Baking Book of the Year", and she was honored at Windows on the World for her Outstanding Commitment to the Culinary Arts in 1999. Carole's *Great Pies and Tarts* was listed on the James Beard Foundation's Bakers Dozen Essential Book List. Carole specialized in American and European pies, cakes, cookies, pastries, desserts, and breads. Carole taught more than 30,000 students over 40 years, specializing in technique and "hands on" classes. She taught at renowned cooking schools across the United States, such as the James Beard Foundation Workshop Series, Sur la Table Culinary School, World Pastry Forum, the New York Culinary Arts Center and the Institute of Culinary Education. Carole was nominated for "Teacher of the Year" in 2007 by IACP. Carole's dedication to her craft was exemplified by her Certification as a Culinary Professional (CCP). She was also a founding member of esteemed culinary chapters, including Les Dames d'Escoffier and served as President of the New York Association of Culinary Professionals. Carole Walter's impact on the culinary world will be remembered with admiration and gratitude. Her expertise, creativity, and contributions have left an indelible mark. Her passion for baking and teaching is rivaled only by her passion for her family. She was married for over 64 years to her childhood sweetheart H. Eugene Walter, who predeceased her in 2017. She is survived by her daughter Pamela Winston and son Frank Walter and their spouses Andrew and Marla, as well as four grandchildren, Neil and Jeffrey Winston; Zachary and Samantha Walter.



In Loving Memory: Dame Patty Jean Mitchell, LA/OCs beloved founder of Culinary Promotions

Patty Jean Mitchell, a Les Dames d'Escoffier International LA/OC Chapter member since 2015, passed away peacefully on September 17. The founder of Culinary Promotions, a social media marketing and strategy consulting firm, spent four years as its president. At the time of her passing, she served on the board as immediate past president.

"If food, wine and hospitality are symbolic of love, then Patty Mitchell loved with zeal," says **Cecilia P. Fileti**, who serves as secretary for the LA/OC Chapter's Board of Directors.

Patty was a networking extraordinaire. She knew instinctively when to make an introduction, linking people she was confident would become fast friends and invaluable connections. She was also kind and generous. She went to great lengths to help family, friends and fellow Dames. When she learned someone was sick or simply needed some cheering up, she'd deliver care packages—whether it be a case of disinfecting wipes during the pandemic, or a to-go meal and cocktail kit from a favorite restaurant.

And she was a wellspring of ideas. Most recently, she had been the driving force behind a soon-to-launch Les Dames d'Escoffier LA/OC Culinary Estate Sale, an event poised to be an important fundraising initiative for the chapter. In recent years, she negotiated annual fundraising partnerships with Noonan's Christmas Trees and See's Candies, and she tirelessly helped advance the causes of Les Dames d'Escoffier International. She held a wealth of experience and knowledge, and she didn't hesitate offering sage advice and sound perspective.

Her dedication to Les Dames d'Escoffier was undeniable. After joining the organization in 2015, she advanced to the post of Director of Communications and, in 2017, served on the Organizing Committee for the Les Dames d'Escoffier International Annual Conference when it was held in Newport Beach.

She then went on to serve as Chapter President from 2019 through 2022, shepherding the group through the COVID-19 pandemic and keeping it together during a time when several sister chapters collapsed. She worked hard to keep a forward momentum, partnering with organizations on Zoom events like a *Tamales & Mezcal* virtual tasting, a *Zoom Around the World* Cooking Class with Adya Indian cuisine founder and chef Dame **Shachi Mehra**, and a virtual wine tasting featuring Temecula wineries. When the pandemic lifted, she used her charm and power of persuasion to secure a wine sponsor for the chapter's calendar of events.

And she used that same charm and persuasion to recruit new members to the group.

"Her excitement and warmth touched me through her often-echoed welcoming words 'Join us.' And so, I did," notes Cecilia. "A stranger from the Midwest, she embraced me to enter the fold and relish life to try to make a difference. Thank you, Patty, for who you were to all of us and for all you did for us. You will be missed by many."



Celebrating Jewish Heritage During the High Holidays

By KENDRA THATCHER (PHILADELPHIA)

The majority of my career is spent behind the scenes. I prefer it this way. But in May 2021 I received my first opportunity to be in front of the camera as (gasp!) *talent*. The company was Prairie Street Prime (now Prairie Street Co) and they were a high-end kosher meat company. At the time, I embarrassingly knew very little about kosher cooking, and now I had to develop three kosher meat recipes? It was a welcomed (albeit intimidating) challenge. Now, nearly three years later, the company has grown to include more than just luxury meat, but kosher media—I've grown, too. I need to understand the *why* before I can get the *how* and I feel honored to have the opportunity to learn from so many exquisite Orthodox and non-Orthodox kosher chefs who have taken me under their wings. To me, the Jewish High Holidays beautifully embody the important intersection of Jewish food, heritage, and culture.

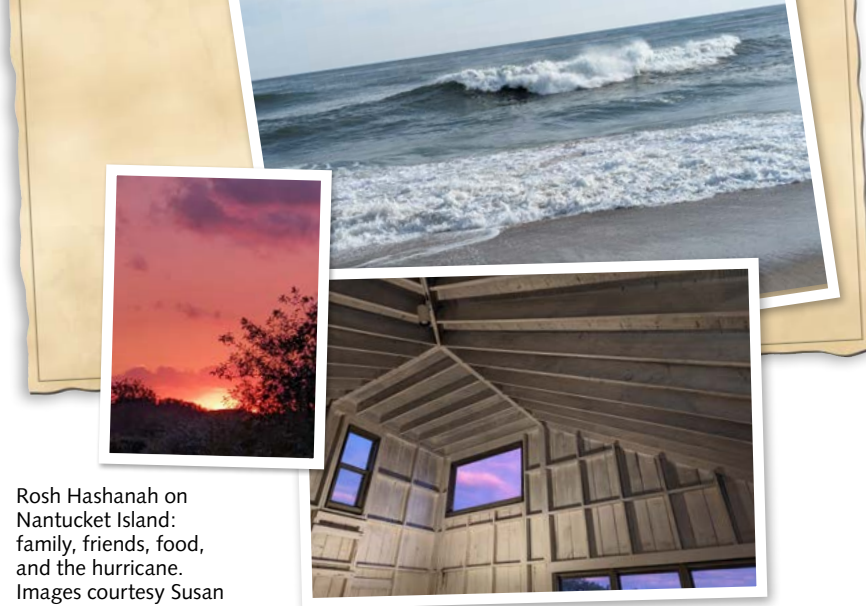


Global Culinary Initiative

The Jewish High Holidays occur in the fall (this year Rosh Hashanah began on September 15) and are a marathon of celebrating, praying, cooking, and entertaining. With an emphasis on gratitude and forgiveness, the High Holidays start with *Rosh Hashanah*, or the Jewish New Year, which is then followed ten days later by *Yom Kippur*, or the Day of Atonement. Finally a slew of festivals with the most widely observed being *Sukkot*: a celebration which focuses on giving thanks for the harvest and often takes place in a *sukkah*, or a makeshift outdoor structure. Throughout the year on Fridays many also observe *Shabbat*, or the Sabbath, to some extent—whether as a family dinner or a sun-down-to-sun-down observance—this is a time for family, friends, and reflection without distraction.

As in all cultures, food is a very important and very symbolic piece to the human puzzle—observing the High Holidays is rooted in food. During Rosh Hashanah prayers for a sweet new year are accompanied by dishes using honey, apples, and pomegranates. Yom Kippur is a fasting holiday but what you eat before and after the fast is what many look forward to the most! Before the fast, dishes that are hearty but easily digested and low in sodium will help sustain the fast. After the fast, a meal that is rich and plentiful to feed the body and soul. For Sukkot, stuffed foods—sweet and savory—symbolize both the abundance of the harvest and the sealing of ones fate for the year ahead.

Many of our Dames observe the Jewish High Holidays with their families and communities. Below are shared stories and recipes from three of our dear sisters who are dedicated to bringing understanding and enlightenment to the beauty and deep history of Jewish heritage and culture.



Rosh Hashanah on Nantucket Island: family, friends, food, and the hurricane. Images courtesy Susan Barocas.

A different kind of Rosh Hashanah

FROM SUSAN BAROCAS (WASHINGTON, D.C.)

Rosh Hashanah eve on an island at the edge of a hurricane. Quite a different experience. **Bonnie Benwick** and I were spending some time on Nantucket, came through the storm fine. It was incredibly windy with up to 50 mile an hour gusts all day and night Friday and most of Saturday it was still blowing. A good amount of rain, too. Yet, before the rain, the sunset Friday was one of the most stunning I have ever seen! The sky was on fire before deepening to nearly every shade of purple. Thanks to a good amount of cooking and Zoom, we got to virtually share the meaningful Sephardic Rosh Hashanah seder with my son and daughter-in-law, Sam and Hannah. And, oh, those incredible challahs stuffed with homemade date paste by Bonnie!

Saturday morning we were going to head to services with the synagogue here in Nantucket, Shirat Hayam, but didn't feel safe to drive or leave this rustic old house unattended after a window blew in from the wind. Luckily it didn't break and could be put back in place. So, we live streamed with our synagogue back in DC...when the computer didn't freeze from the storm. Grateful for being able to connect, but I really missed being in community close to others. Then, next day, Sunday, was an absolutely gorgeous day! It was as if the world had refreshed itself. We attended a short second day Rosh Hashanah service and enjoyed an outdoor lunch with the lovely synagogue community.

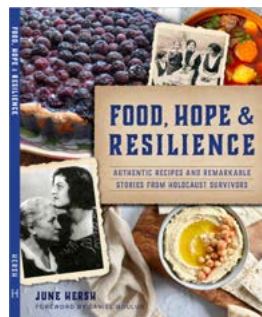
All in all, a very different Rosh Hashanah that will hopefully bring in the good and sweet year we all hope for.

Kreplach for Sukkot

FROM JUNE HERSH (NEW YORK)

Kreplach—Stuffed Noodle Dumpling
Yield: 24 kreplach
Start to Finish: Under 1 hour

Sukkot is a festival celebration that features stuffed foods of all varieties. None is more popular or associated with the harvest holiday than *kreplach*. This recipe, reprinted from my soon-to-be-released *Food, Hope & Resilience; Authentic Recipes and Remarkable Stories from Holocaust Survivors* (History Press, November 2023) is a simple and straightforward preparation sure to please. They can swim happily in broth or be fried in a touch of oil for a crispy dumpling. If you opt for the latter, try the dipping sauce as a sweet and savory accompaniment.



Ingredients for the kreplach dough

1 ¾ cups all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon salt
2 eggs
3 tablespoons corn oil
1–2 tablespoons water

for the beef filling

½ pound ground beef
1 tablespoon oil
1 small onion, grated
1 teaspoon kosher salt

for the chicken filling

½ pound ground chicken
1 tablespoon oil
3 tablespoons minced scallions
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 tablespoon soy sauce



Kreplach from June Hersh's forthcoming book, *Food, Hope & Resilience*. Photo courtesy History Press.

In a medium bowl or the bowl of a food processor, fitted with the metal blade, combine the dough ingredients, dry first then liquid, and process, adding a drop of additional water, if necessary, to create a smooth, elastic dough. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead for a minute or two. Wrap the dough in a barely damp cloth and let it rest for 1 hour.

While the dough sits, prepare the filling.

Heat the oil in a skillet, cook and stir in the ground beef or chicken, over medium heat, until nicely browned, about 10 minutes. Be sure to break up large pieces with the back of a fork or spoon.

Remove the meat from the skillet with a slotted spoon and let the meat cool for a few minutes before adding the rest of the filling. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water or broth to boil. When the beef has cooled a bit, combine it with the grated onion and salt.

For the chicken, combine the scallions, garlic powder and soy sauce with the browned chicken. On a floured board, roll the dough to ¼ inch thick; it will be very elastic. If you tug at it, it will just snap back; use the rolling pin to stretch. Using a cookie cutter or rim of a glass, cut the dough into 3-inch rounds. Have a small bowl of water standing by to dip your fingers.

Place 1 teaspoon of filling in each round and seal by dipping your fingers in the water and dabbing the edges. Fold the circle into a half moon and pinch the edges closed. Drop a few filled kreplach at a time into the boiling liquid and cook about 20 minutes. Occasionally shake the pot to be sure no shy kreplachs cling to the bottom. They are done when they happily float to the top and the dough is soft to the bite. If you cooked the kreplach in soup, do nothing more, just enjoy. If you cooked them in water, remove the kreplach with a slotted spoon and let them drain on a paper towel.

The kreplach can then be dropped into a bowl of soup or lightly fried. To fry the kreplach, heat 1 tablespoon of oil for every 8 kreplach and lightly brown, in a skillet, for several minutes. Drain on a paper towel and serve with the dipping sauce below.

Orange Honey Ginger Soy Dipping Sauce

The name of the recipe is also the list of the four basic ingredients.

2 tablespoons orange juice
2 teaspoons honey
½ teaspoon ground ginger
4 tablespoons soy sauce

Blend together and serve as a dipping sauce or light dressing.

A Dedicated Dish for Shabbat: Mexican Style Gefilte Fish

FROM PATI JINICH (WASHINGTON, D.C.)

My paternal grandmother, Bobe, used to make two kinds of gefilte fish every Friday: white or traditional and red or a la *Veracruzana*. The moment you sat down, she made you choose, “which do you want *mamele*, white or red?”

Invariably, after you chose, she'd ask, “you don't like the way I make the other one?”

She'd barge in, make room on your plate and serve you the kind you hadn't picked, right next to the one you had chosen. She'd wait for you to taste it and tell her how good the one you hadn't chosen was. Then, she would eat right off your plate.

Having come from tiny *shtetls* in the polish countryside, both her and my grandfather arrived in Mexico so very young. Mexico gave them an opportunity to start a life away from pogroms.

They worked hard and made a simple but good life for themselves. Though they were humble, and without much savings, every Friday they had a bountiful table full of food for their three grown children and their families – all together there were ten granddaughters. Nope. Not a single grandson!

Mexico also brought so many flavors to Bobe's traditional foods. At the table there was *petchah* (chicken foot jelly!) that could be garnished with a *salsa verde* cruda, *gribenes* (chicken cracklings) tucked into warm *corn tortillas* and a heaping spoonful of fresh *guacamole*, the crispiest potato *kugel*, a stew that always had falling apart meat and a soupy prune or carrot *tzimes*. To finish, it was her prized chocolate *babka* spiked with Mexican *canela*.

Yet, nothing beat her Mexican-style gefilte fish, *aka* the red one.

The red is different from the white in so many ways. The white, or traditional, is made by combining ground fish filets, white onion, carrots, eggs and matzo meal and shaping them into patties that are poached in a stock made with the head, tail, and bones of the fish. It is refrigerated, covered with this same fish stock, which turns gelatinous as it cools (a delicacy if you have the acquired taste!). It is served cold. The red has the same fish mixture, but it is poached in a thick and spiced up tomato sauce enriched with capers, green olives and mild pickled peppers. It is served hot. Everyone in my family is wild about it.

The red sauce is called *Veracruzana* because it comes from the state of Veracruz, which geographically seems to embrace the Gulf of Mexico. The *Veracruzana* sauce is traditionally served over large fish, and its flavors showcase the intermarriage of Spanish and Mexican ingredients that took place throughout the years of Spanish colonization. It was through the port of Veracruz that most European immigrants came into Mexico, like my Bobe.

One hell of a cook she was, with her treasured jar of *shmatz* in the refrigerator ready to be scooped out and used on almost anything. She was as generous in her cooking as she was in life. After my parents divorced, when I was an early teen, she would put money in my backpack or my jacket, without me noticing, every time I visited. She knew I didn't want to take it, as she didn't have any extra to give out.

I never had the chance to serve *Veracruzana*, the red gefilte fish, from my kitchen to my Bobe. She passed away, just a couple months ago, and oh man, I wish I had. She would have been so proud. She would have probably asked me, “why, *mamele*, you didn't like the white?”

My gefilte fish will always be for you, Bobe. And just so you know, I always make the red and the white. I miss you so bad.



To try Pati's take on her Bobe's Mexican Style Gefilte Fish (you know, the red one), follow the recipe [here](#). Photo courtesy Pati Jinich.

MEMBER MILESTONES *Dottie Koteski (Philadelphia)*

ATLANTA

Tiffanie Barriere is one of the prestigious guest judges on Netflix's reality series *Drink Masters*. Mixologists infuse, stir and blend high-stakes cocktails to create liquid works of art for a life-changing prize of \$100,000 and the title of The Ultimate Drink Master. She appears in episode eight, "Spice and Ice."

Toby Bloomberg coordinated the largest Georgia craft food giveaway campaign on Instagram. **Natalie Keng** and **Josalyn Holmes** were among the 25 foodpreneurs participating in the Spring Fling Georgia Craft Foods Giveaway that was sponsored by ATDC Georgia Tech.

Jennifer Hill Booker published her second illustrated children's book, *Duke Eats Ants for Lunch* published by Tallahatchie Tales. It's part of an ongoing series Jennifer is writing with her sister Erin Hill Williams. The book is inspired by the authors' summers spent at their grandparents' home in the Mississippi Delta. www.barnesandnoble.com/w/duke-eats-ants-for-lunch-jennifer-hill-booker

Shirley Hughes (Sweet Cheats), **Hope Webb** (Estrellita), **Lisa Bonet** (B&L Brands and Mile Post Wines), **Sarah Pierre** (3 Parks Wine Shop) and **Barb Pires** (Henri's Bakery) made 628 sandwiches to contribute to The Sandwich Project's 1 millionth sandwich. The sandwiches were supplied to Operation Hope, Bahai Center and Operation Peace. www.thesandwichproject.org

Natalie Keng, owner of Global Hearth and **Shirley Hughes** owner of Sweet Cheats were both highlighted in *City LifeStyles*.

Rebecca Lang launched a new online business, Rebecca Lang Cooks Curriculum of subscription-based website for high school and middle school kitchen



Tiffanie Barriere



Toby Bloomberg



Natalie Keng



Jennifer Hill Booker

classrooms. It has over 80 video tutorials covering 11 units in culinary core standards. Subscribed teachers and chef instructors will have access to unlimited student logins for 365 days. www.cookscurriculum.com

Deborah VanTrece's newest restaurant, La Panarda, is located in the Cascade Heights neighborhood of Atlanta. The restaurant's name references the multi-course feast inspired by Italian folklore; its menu focuses on traditional Italian food influenced by Deborah's time in the cities of Pescara and Siena. www.lapanardaatl.com

AUSTIN

Kendall Antonelli is now a kickback ambassador for Alvia boots with proceeds from Trinity Boot sales going to NAMI Central Texas and mental health awareness.

Jackie Letelier joined the Keveri Grills team as marketing coordinator for North America.

Dawn Orsak was interviewed for a new oral history series called *The Keepers of Kolaches: The Evolutions of Texas-Czech Baking* done for the Southern Foodways Alliance. To view photos and hear clips from the interview with Dawn and six others, you can get access on SFA's website. www.southernfoodways.org/oral-history/the-keepers-of-kolaches-the-evolutions-of-texas-czech-baking/

BIRMINGHAM

Amy Jason's Cookie Fix in Cahaba Heights was voted Best Sweet Treats winner in the Best of Vestavia Hills 2023 Awards by readers of *Vestavia Hills Magazine*. www.cookiefix.com



Rebecca Lang



Deborah VanTrece



Kendall Antonelli



Jackie Letelier



Amy Jason

Geri-Martha O'Hara and her husband, Ryan, held a grand opening at their new Big Spoon Creamery Huntsville location in June. This is their third location focused on fabulous small batch, locally hand-crafted, seasonal ice cream served with exceptional hospitality. www.bigspooncreamery.com

April McClung, owner of Emily's Heirloom Pound Cakes, held a grand opening at their new location in Pelham in May. The company produces over 5,000 packaged slices and hundreds of cakes monthly and ships them all over the U.S. Products are available on Amazon, Walmart.com and at select Sam's Club. www.emilysheirloompoundcakes.com

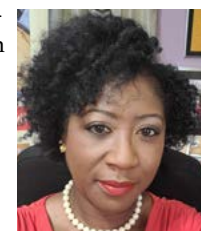
Crystal Peterson and her mom, Denise Peterson, received a Birmingham City Council Grant of \$1.3 million for the relocation of Yo' Mama's Restaurant to a 4th Avenue North location that will be a larger space with more seating and parking opportunities. www.yomamasrestaurant.com

Becky Satterfield was voted Best Chef in Vestavia Hills by readers of *Vestavia Hills Magazine's* Best of Vestavia Hills 2023. In addition, Satterfield's Restaurant was named Best Date Night Restaurant; and in Best Ethnic/Regional Cuisine, Best Margaritas and Best Cocktail Categories. Becky's other establishment, El ZunZun, took top honors. www.el-unzun.com www.satterfieldsrestaurant.com

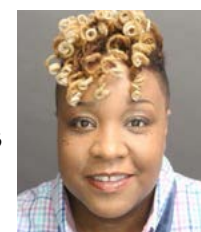
Laura Zapalowski along with Chef Chris Zapalowski reopened Homewood Gourmet at a larger and more accessible location in the heart of Homewood in May. www.homewood-gourmet.com



Geri-Martha O'Hara



April McClung



Crystal Peterson



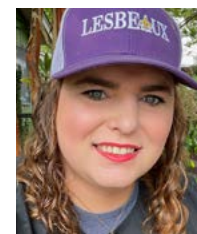
Becky Satterfield



Laura Zapalowski

CHARLESTON

Isabella Macbeth traveled to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada, in September to shuck oysters in the international championships. Taking fourth place against the men and women, she walked away with prizes and a trophy for winning the Fastest Female Oyster Shucker. Isabella is a featured competitor in a recently released documentary on oyster shucking.



Isabella Macbeth

CHICAGO

Raeanne Sarazen, MA, RDN released her first book, *The Complete Recipe Writing Guide: Mastering Recipe Development, Writing, Testing, Nutrition Analysis, and Food Styling*. www.raeannesarazen.com

Colleen Taylor Sen released her ninth book, *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Indian Cuisine*. www.colleensen.net

Anupy Singla released her fourth cookbook, *Instant Pot Indian*, featuring 70 flavorful, authentic recipes for any sized instant pot. www.indianasapplepie.com/collections/books/products/instant-pot-indian



Colleen Taylor Sen



Anupy Singla

CLEVELAND

Grande Dame **Bev Shaffer** is now reporting on restaurant news (NE Ohio), as well as food and restaurant trends for CRAIN's.



Bev Shaffer

DALLAS

Robyn Frascella, executive chef at the Tarrant Area Food Bank, earned her Chef de Cuisine certification with the American Culinary Federation.



Robyn Frascella

Grande Dame **Paula Lambert** and Dallas Mozzarella Company earned FIVE awards for their cheeses at the American Cheese Society Judging and Competition.



Paula Lambert

Iris Midler's Chefs for Farmers was named as

a top 11 Food Festival in the U.S. in the *TimeOut* guide. The events strive to help create a strong local food ecosystem by providing a festival that organically connects restaurants and chefs with local, family farmers.

Tida Pichakron's Haute Sweets Patisserie was listed in Yelp's Top 50 Asian Owned Bakeries in the U.S. and Canada.

Megan Santonicola and her husband opened their second location of Partenope, a Neapolitan-style pizzeria, in Richardson, Texas. The Santonicola's were awarded #16 Best Pizza in the U.S. by the *Robb Report*.

Melissa Tate signed a literary contract with fellow international Dame, **Sally Ekus** of The Ekus Group. Melissa cites that being an LDEI member was a pathway and opportunity to introduce herself to Sally prior to pitching her proposal. www.melissatate.com

Fana Yohannes and her husband, Chef James, opened their second Carver Park location.



Iris Midler



Tida Pichakron



Megan Santonicola



Melissa Tate



Fana Yohannes



Marissa Tapia Gencarelli



June Hersh

NEW YORK

June Hersh was named to the Advisory Board of the Catskills Borscht Belt Museum. The Museum, which just received a \$650,000 grant from N.Y. State, will pay homage to the era when the Catskills was the center of

Jewish culture and cuisine. www.juneherh.com

PHILADELPHIA

Angela Brown-Johnson has launched a new podcast *Bound by Fire*.

Jen Honovic Herczeg is the new owner and publisher of *Edible Philly*.

Kae Lani Palmisano in July became the new food editor of *Philadelphia Magazine* @philly-mag @foobooz.

Deanna Segrave-Daly, registered dietitian, shares over 100 recipes, strategies, and eco-friendly tips when it comes to shopping, prepping, cooking, and storing food at home in her most recent cookbook. **The Sustainable Mediterranean Diet Cookbook**. This is her third Mediterranean cookbook co-written with her business partner, Serena Ball. <https://benbellabooks.com/shop/the-sustainable-mediterranean-diet-cookbook/>



Deanna Segrave-Daly

Kudos to Dame **Ellen Yin** of High Street Hospitality for being named Outstanding Restaurateur at this year's James Beard Award.



Ellen Yin

SAN ANTONIO

Blanca Aldaco, owner of Aldaco's Mexican Cuisine, was honored as Restaurateur of the Year by the Texas Restaurant Association. Blanca, one of 20 finalists, was recognized for her community involvement, success, leadership and entrepreneurial spirit at the TRA's Lone Star Bash and 2023 Restaurant Awards on July 9 in Houston. www.txrestaurant.org



Blanca Aldaco

Caitlin Rads Foose's documentary about the founding of the San Antonio Chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier was chosen for showcasing in the food films category at the San Antonio Film Festival in August. Caitlin was nominated for a primetime Emmy award as Supervising Producer on "Top Chef: Kentucky" and Senior Story Producer of "Baking It". www.safilm.com

SAN FRANCISCO

Lori Regis and Amaryll Schwertner are celebrating the 20th anniversary of Boulettes Larder, located in the San Francisco Ferry Building. They are grateful for the support of long-term patrons and new guests, farmers and purveyors, their staff, and for the vibrant

legacy of Bay Area women in the culinary arts. www.bouletteslarder.com

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Najmieh Batmanglij opened Joon, an upscale Persian restaurant, in Tysons, Va. in mid-June. Najmieh, a cookbook author, cooking teacher and restaurant consultant, is a widely known expert on her native cuisine.



Najmieh Batmanglij

www.eatjooon.com

Carolyn Crow joined the staff of the Jacques Pépin Foundation as Marketing & Events Associate. The Foundation helps adults with barriers to earn employment by learning culinary workforce skills. Crow states that as a longtime fan of Chef Pépin she is excited to turn fans into donors for a great cause!



Carolyn Crow

<https://jp.foundation/>

Laura Chase de Formigny's photographs were selected from over 7,000 submissions to appear online as part of The AI-AP Archive at ai-ap.com. The AI (American Illustration) and AP (American Photography) Archive is a who's who of the industry's most talented artists and creatives.



Laura Chase de Formigny

www.laurachase.com

Carla Hall gave the opening address at the Black Women in Food Summit in Washington, D.C. while several of our other amazing members also spoke at the conference, including **Mary Blackford, Tambra Raye Stevenson, Nadine Brown, Tonya Thomas** and **Aba Kwawu**.



Carla Hall

Sara Morgan made the 2023 *Washington Business Journal's* 40 Under 40 Awards list. Sara, a new member, is the founder and CEO of Eleven Eleven Public Relations.



Sara Morgan

Sophia Maroon, founder of Dress It Up Dressing, announced the nationwide launch of her company's products at Whole Foods Markets.



Sophia Maroon

Les Dames d'Escoffier International Quarterly

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

DEADLINES Winter Issue 2024 - November 10, 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 winter issue

- *LDEI Conference 2023 coverage*

- ANN ARBOR
- ATLANTA
- AUSTIN
- BIRMINGHAM
- BOSTON
- BRITISH COLUMBIA
- CHARLESTON
- CHICAGO
- CLEVELAND/NORTHEAST OHIO
- 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.



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

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