meet our members

By Dame Dottie Koteski (Philadelphia)

ATLANTA



Debby Cannon, Ph.D. retired from Georgia State University's Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality in the Robinson College of Business after a 14-year previous career in the hotel and restaurant industry. Under her leadership, the school achieved international and national rankings and created the Regynald G. Washington Masters in Global Hospitality Management program.



Melissa Libby, known as a leading communications professional in the Southeast, retired Melissa Libby & Associates after 30+ years. Her media relationships, hospitality knowledge and leadership skills helped clients achieve meaningful results. Melissa serves on the Board of Trust for the University of Georgia's Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications and on the Board of Directors for the Georgia Restaurant Association.



Virginia Willis is a James Beard Award-winning cookbook author and member of the inaugural class of LDEI Ambassadors.

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BIRMINGHAM



Sidney Fry, a two-time James Beard Award-winning food and nutrition writer and editor, has a new position. She recently joined Hoffman Media, a Birmingham-based company as the editorial director of *Bake from Scratch* magazine.



Sherron Goldstein received a special honor for her years of dedication to culinary education, cooking for her community, and her service: the Temple Emanu-El in downtown Birmingham held a celebration to unveil its newly renovated kitchen, officially named the Sherron Goldstein Kitchen. Some 200 guests enjoyed a delicious meal prepared in the new kitchen.



Pardis Stitt and her husband, Chef Frank Stitt, represented Alabama well at the 2026 James Beard Award's Restaurant and Chef ceremony, which took place on June 15 in Chicago. Their restaurant, Bottega, was a finalist in the category of Outstanding Hospitality for the 2026 awards. Their Birmingham restaurant opened in 1988.

BOSTON



Marley Maron successfully completed her Master's degree and thesis in Boston University's Master of Arts in Gastronomy Program. Marley's thesis focused on the 65-year history, tradition, and rituals of the Boston Chapter's annual Escoffier dinners.



Teresa Maynard celebrated the grand opening in June of her brick-and-mortar bakery, Sweet Teez, located in Dorchester. Sweet Teez began in 2016 making delicious nut-free baked goods. In her new location she will continue to specialize in cakes cookies and cupcakes along with a café space.

BRITISH COLUMBIA



Cassandra Anderton recently joined *Vancouver Is Awesome*, a leading digital B.C. news and lifestyle publication, as foods, wine, travel, and lifestyle contributor. She continues as a craft Sea Cider ambassador, publisher/editor of *Good Life Vancouver*, a contributor to *VITA magazine*, The Growler, and several other food and drink outlets.

CLEVELAND/ NORTHEAST OHIO



Kristin Barnes, chief chocolate artist of Sweet Bean, expanded into a 3,000-square-foot space in Cleveland, tripling her earlier footprint and revived two nostalgic Cleveland candy lines. The certified chocolatier and Cleveland Chain Reaction winner is also a Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses graduate. Kristin's current footprint reflects the immense growth of her business.

DALLAS



Tiffany Derry is the Founder of Tiffany Derry Concepts and co-founder of T2D Concepts. She is a member of the inaugural class of LDEI Ambassadors.

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HAWAII



Hayley Matson Mathes is the Executive Director of the Hawaii Culinary Education Foundation, recipient of the 2026 LDEI Woman of Purpose Award, and a member of the inaugural class of LDEI Ambassadors.

ITALY



Silvia Mariani is the Founder and CEO of Making Business Happen Italy and Making Business Happen USA. She is the current president of the Tuscan Italian Chapter and member of the inaugural class of LDEI Ambassadors.

LONDON



Claire Daniels, co-founder of Rull Orchard in Devon, received three Best in Class awards at the British Cider Championship and gold awards at both, the Cornwall and Devon County Shows. Their ciders are artisan craft, sustainability, and provenance and produced from protected, traditional orchard habitats.



Sheila Dillon took the stage at the prestigious Fortnum & Mason Food and Drink Awards to receive the Special Award for Outstanding Contribution for her BBC Radio 4's *The Food Programme*. Her exceptional career in food broadcasting and journalism was also honored with the Guild of Food Writers' Outstanding Contribution Award.



Anne Dolamore, the cookery book publisher at Grub Street, was a judge for the Good of Food Writers' Awards for cookery book, drinks book and investigative book.



Clare Donovan was named Community Champion of the Year for Cooking Champions at the inaugural Women in Food & Drink Awards for her food support, education and training charity, and supporting a north London community.



Romy Gill, member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, a prestigious British honor recognizing outstanding achievement, will bring her signature warmth and vibrant flavors to The Penn, a renowned London restaurant this autumn. The menu will celebrate the diversity of Indian cuisine through regional dishes, and their stories.



Radhika Howarth was highly commended for her long-standing commitment to championing diverse voices, cultures and cuisines at the Women in Food & Drink Awards. Radhika is a London based chef, author, and host of culinary events and workshops which highlight global food cultures.

meet our members

LONDON



Hermione Ireland, managing director at Académie du Vin Library in London and publishing and hospitality specialist, saw her client, Sunny Hodge, author of *The Cynic's Guide to Wine* receive the Drinks Writer of the Year Award at the Guild of Food Writer Awards.



Elisabeth Luard, cookbook author, travel journalist, illustrator and holder of the Guild of Food Writer's Lifetime Achievement Award was a presenter of an award at the Guild's event.



Lucy Vincent (L) and **Natalia Middleton** (R), of prison food charity Food Behind Bars, received the Fortnum & Mason Impact Award. The judges recognized their extraordinary work transforming food into prisons across England and Wales and their commitment to creating a more humane, healthier program.

MEXICO



María Gómez-Laurens is the Hotels and Venue Sourcing Expert at HelmsBriscoe. She is the former President of the San Diego Chapter, LDEI International President 2015–2016, and a member of the inaugural class of LDEI Ambassadors.

NEW YORK



Bobbie Lloyd has been involved in all aspects of the restaurant and bakery business. She is the chief baking officer for Magnolia Bakery and a member of the inaugural class of LDEI Ambassaadors.

PHILADELPHIA



Rose Levy Beranbaum's memoir, *Ma Vie en Rose (My Sweet Life)* (83 Press), comes out September 15. In addition to her intimate stories, she thoughtfully includes time capsules of the evolving golden age of the food world interwoven with her career.

SACRAMENTO



Ann M. Evans (R) and **Georgeanne Brennan** (L) announced the publication of *Market Memories Cookbook: Celebrating 50 Years of the Davis Farmers Market*. The book has 92 seasonal recipes, guest essays by founders of markets, and 100 watercolor illustrations created by Ann and Georgeanne who say, "Farmers Markets are universal, and we are thrilled to celebrate them through this book."

SAN FRANCISCO



Carolyn Wente is a Fourth Generation Winegrower and Chairman Emeritus of the Board, recipient of the LDEI Grande Dame Award, and co-founder and member of the San Francisco Chapter. Carolyn is currently a member of the inaugural class of LDEI Ambassadors.