As we move into a more usual lifestyle and LDEI Chapters resume normal activity, I encourage everyone to plan their participation in San Antonio October 14 to 17. What a grand reunion of old friends and the emergence of many new friendships this will be. The program is shaping up to be extraordinary. Blanca Aldaco and Nancy Fitch, Conference Co-Chairs, have led an amazing team of San Antonio Dames to develop exceptional events, educational sessions, speakers, and of course great food and beverage. Don’t miss it!

The other topic that keeps my mind active these days is philanthropy. Les Dames d’Escoffier Chapters have long been great factors of scholarships and culinary and hospitality-related nonprofits. The LDEI presentation of the Legacy Awards, Grand Dame Award, M.F.K. Fisher Prize, and the new Woman of Purpose Award heighten the awareness of the impact that Dames have for women in our industry and communities. My goal is to increase the public awareness of the philanthropy of Dames. The increased visibility will allow us to attract more sponsors, event attendees, and grants.

When I review surveys of members about our wonderful organization, a frequent concern we hear is our lack of public awareness. I must say that I have often shared that concern and still hold it as a needed improvement project. Philanthropy, I am convinced, is the route to awareness and recognition of Les Dames d’Escoffier and all that we do. This increased visibility will allow us to share our scholarship and philanthropy. This information will allow us to share with the world the many accomplishments and contributions. I also ask that each of you begin to consider, not only events, but also grants as fundraising tools for your philanthropy. During the June Board Meeting, a new LDEI committee was formed. Grants Education and Support, Ingrid Gangestad will chair the committee for 2021-2022. If you have expertise in grant writing, please consider contacting Ingrid about support of this committee.

Another committee approved by the Board at the June meeting was the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. The purpose of this committee is to provide guidance to LDEI on diversity in membership and leadership, recommend activities for LDEI to support increased equity for all women, assist in making LDEI events and activities welcoming and inclusive, and helping us ensure that our organization’s philanthropy has some contribution to underserved women. This committee is in formation stage only and more information will be available soon.

LDEI Board Second Vice President Erin Murray has launched a new monthly newsletter, The Monthly Fear. This will keep Dames more informed regularly about our organization. Thanks so much Erin. And welcome to our new contributor, Kendra Thatcher.

Our website, the public facing portion, is getting a facelift. Third Vice President Liz Barrett is leading that project. Look for a more accessible and stylish new site, which will also offer LDEI easier maintenance. When I review surveys of members about our wonderful organization, a frequent concern we hear is our lack of public awareness.

In this issue, you will also read about the Seattle Dames led an amazing team of Seattle Dames to a reunion of old friends and the emergence of many new friendships this will be. The program is shaping up to be extraordinary. Blanca Aldaco and Nancy Fitch, Conference Co-Chairs, have led an amazing team of San Antonio Dames to develop exceptional events, educational sessions, speakers, and of course great food and beverage. Don’t miss it!

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Les Dames d’Escoffier International

**Find your spark and change the world**

**NOMINEES FOR THE INAUGURAL WOMAN OF PURPOSE AWARD**

Twenty-one Dames of exceptional character have been chosen as nominees for the Woman of Purpose Award, sponsored by Les Dames d’Escoffier International in partnership with YETI. Each Dame was nominated by a chapter or individual Dames, in the hope that she will be honored as the first recipient of this prestigious, inaugural award.

Championed in 2020 by Cleveland Dames Ber Shaffer (LDEI’s Immediate Past President) with the support of the LDEI Board and a strong committee of Dames, the vision of the Woman of Purpose Award has become a reality. Ber defines the nominees as “bold women doing extraordinary things to make the lives of those around us better. Each and every one ... is making a positive impact, both locally and globally, incorporating the important and complex realms of sustainability, food justice, and public health into their everyday commitments to humankind.”

To select a winner, the awards committee reviews a letter of nomination for each Dame plus a personal, biographical sketch detailing the core of her purpose-filled work. The following profiles include a précis of each nominating letter and bio. We wish each letter could have been pruned in their entirety, but they would have filled more than 25 pages in the issue (about 35,000 words). The enthusiasm for this context is boundless! The driving force behind these women can be characterized as competence, unwavering commitment, killer confidence, and compassion. They believe in a bigger purpose that isn’t exclusive to their own personal desires and ambitions. Congratulations to the nominees—each one a modern-day heroine; a game changer, an advocate, a social responsibility, and a role model who inspires us and leads by example.

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**Access to Quality Food for All**

The food recovery and hunger relief work of Aubrey Alvaraz embodies the highest qualities we aspire to as Dames. Not only is Aubrey a role model and inspiration for our community, she stands out as a national leader in innovative food recovery efforts and an agent of change in reducing food waste and increasing food equity and sustainability in Iowa and beyond. Aubrey was instrumental in developing the CheckOut app, which connects food from donors to recipients in need. Recognizing that transportation is key to getting recovered food to people who need it, Aubrey’s organization launched a food recovery transportation program in 2018. In 2020, these services became vital when the pandemic caused job losses and school closings, and a land-based hurricane (derecho) swept through the Des Moines area knocking out power and destroying crops. Eat Greater Des Moines provided over 1.5 million pounds of food to hundreds of organizations within and beyond the traditional emergency food system. Aubrey personally raised money and awareness of the derecho devastation further east in Iowa. Aubrey and her organization have championed clearing to harvest fruits and vegetables that would otherwise be left behind. Her leadership helped the Greater Des Moines Chapter embrace the practice to find hundreds of pounds of apples and pears for a November Wine & Pie Drive-By fundraiser. Aubrey serves on 11 additional nonprofit boards, associations, networks, or task forces that are all tied to food rescue, hunger relief, healthy kids, social justice leadership, and sustainable agriculture.

Growing up in Iowa, with a farm literally in my backyard, I understood the importance of growing food but was sheltered from the intricacies of the larger food system. Pursuing a master’s degree in public administration at Drake University, I became acutely aware of the challenges our food system faces and the fact that they did not arise by chance. Hunger, waste, climate change, health disparities, the loss of small farms—these intertwined problems are each a direct result of policy and decisions. While my curiosity and education sparked my passion for social impact and systems change, my superpower is my ability to make connections, move ideas into action, and not get derailed by challenges. I focused on building relationships with those working throughout the food system, learning from their expertise about what was working and where there were areas for improvement. My natural curiosity opened my eyes to the many disconnects within the food system as it currently exists.

My drive to find answers is really how the focus of my work and Eat Greater Des Moines were formed. Through my work, I examine these systems every day. Among the many responsibilities I have, my most important role is to encourage others to ask why and why not and then to put their ideas into action.

By empowering people and organizations to recognize their ability to build a just and equitable food system that serves everyone—from those growing and harvesting the food to those consuming it—we will create real, lasting change. As the late Nelson Mandela shared: ‘It always seems impossible until it’s done’.

**Jerilyn Brusseau (Seattle Chapter)**
Co-Founder, PeaceTrees VietNam
www.peacetreesvietnam.org

**Friendships are Born Around the Table**

Jerilyn Brusseau is a charter member of the Seattle Chapter. She has set herself apart by making a positive impact in the global food community: in the U.S. with beloved brands like Cinnabon, Roland Foods, and Cairnspring Mills; across the Pacific, through her work with PeaceTrees Vietnam—the NGO (Non-Government Organization) she co-founded with her late husband in 1995. Jerilyn has tirelessly labored to “heal the wounds of war” while finding ways for the people of Vietnam to meaningfully contribute to the global food system. Jerilyn has elevated food justice through the Healthy Gardens for Healthy Children program. Work started by clearing the land of unexploded bombs and mines by PeaceTrees Vietnam’s CDI (Civilian Demining and Ordnance Disposal) teams. PeaceTrees Vietnam also partnered with wholesale spice distributors to begin the Black Pepper Farming Project to provide farmers with a sustainable income. Costco purchases the black pepper directly from their Kirkland Signature Ground Black Pepper.

While much of this work has been done in the Quang Tri Province of central Vietnam, the positive outcomes in women’s lives have been felt around the world. Jerilyn’s leadership and passion have expanded culinary education through Culinary Diplomacy Delegation Trips and Seattle’s Global Culinary Initiative.

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**Aubrey Alvaraz**
(Greater Des Moines Chapter)
Co-Founder & Executive Director
Eat Greater Des Moines
www.eatgreaterdesmoines.org

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**Friends of PeaceTable**

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It was January 1969, and I was standing in my kitchen when I heard the news. My brother, U.S. Army helicopter pilot Lieutenant Daniel Cheney, was shot down and killed while saving the life of his fellow pilot in the Vietnam War. In that moment I knew that someday ordinary American families like mine must find a way to reach out to the Vietnamese people, to honor their tragic losses as well as our own. I did not know how or when, only

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**Les Dames d’Escoffier International**

SUMMER QUARTERLY 2021

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**next page**
In 2005, Vietnamese women opened their kitchens to welcome Damens and women food professionals launching the PeaceTrees Vietnam Culinary Diplomacy program. The trip is chronicled in the 2008 LDEI summer Quarterly. Friendships are born in the kitchen and around the table; they create memories for a lifetime, because food builds bridges like nothing else can.

Maria Campbell, a certified executive chef and a culinary educator, is co-founder and creative director of Cook’s Who Care—a nonprofit that serves and supports the food and beverage industry. She has been a member of the LDEI Philadelphia Chapter for 3 years. This past year during the pandemic, Cooks Who Care and their numerous restaurant and nonprofit partners have provided over 800 meals to people in need of the intangible necessities of the pandemic and the resulting business shut-downs were negatively impacting people working in the restaurants around Philly. Many were out of work; others were still working but afraid of what the future might bring. She called on her connections, raised money, and created a way to uplift people by sharing meals. What Dana does is not easy work. With a small handful of volunteers, she picks up and distributes 100 meals one day each month to restaurant employees at small businesses. Maria doesn’t ask people about their need, but works under the assumption that all who work hard in this business could use a boost from a good meal.

In 2015, while working as a culinary instructor, I became inspired to break the cycle of the burnout culture I was taking root with my students. As a result, along with my husband Scott who is also a chef, Cooks Who Care was born. This group, which we run together, serves the hardworking people of the food and beverage industry and around Philadelphia with the goal of eventually achieving a national reach. We call ourselves the “Well-Being Concejto” for our industry. Our mission is to connect people to the resources they need to thrive both on and off the job.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit last year, people were out of work and struggling to make ends meet. Our Jump Out of the Levee Committee launched a campaign with the goal of serving 100 staff meals each month to people who spend their days caring for others.

As of February 1, 2021, we served 630 meals, delivered to staff members at 42 locations. We opened an Airbnb for homeless establishments. In addition to our start-up funding, we raised $14,700 to keep our work going. We now serve 222 people per week! LDEI’s Philadelphia Chapter to serve 100 meals to employees in Philadelphia’s Foodtown & Kensington neighborhoods. We plan to continue this work as long as we see a need.

Over the past year, I have worked to forge paths to resiliency for people of the food and beverage industry. As Woman of the Year 2011, I called My Benefit Advisor, which has agreed to work with us to facilitate valuable options on affordable healthcare options for food professionals. As Cooks Who Care, we emphasize the importance of Community to support our community is critical to reveal their hardships—too demoralized and down on their luck. By sharing pooled resources, we can encourage the enthusiasm of focusing on what we can do tomorrow.

It’s strange to write your own essay on being a Woman of Purpose, so let me preface by saying thank you for recognizing this woman who is taking action to change how we see, think, use, access, and food daily. The Cook’s Nook has been the catalyst for bringing to our neighbors in need—services and restaurants that have no grocery or market, but maybe a convenience store is available. At the end of the day, any business should reflect the values of the owners and participants. When I was inaugurated into LDEI, it was a great honor for me to be recognized for my own values and principles, which are also woven into the company. The Cook’s Nook has been a one-of-a-kind opportunity to create the most sustainable, equitable, and engaged. During the pandemic, we held numerous events and realized the potential to bring equity to our food system. We must work to improve food choices and will involve health and diet across the UK. I’m about to launch my own business to an online format, and as a community to take back the dialog, we are marching forward.

The Ethos of Good Nutrition
At heart, Sara Danesin is a caregiver, whether she is nursing or sharing her passion for food. Becoming a head nurse at the Royal Free Hospital in London last year allowed her the opportunity to step away from nursing for a while and take her love of food to a professional level. As the lead nurse in the COVID-19 ICU at the Royal Free Hospital in London last year, she was nursing or sharing her passion for food and nutrition. Daniel, who started as a culinary incubator to hone the skills of people who are working in the hospitality industry, is not just the co-founder and creative director of Cook’s Nook, but really to create a community that would demonstrate the ways food+beverage impacts all aspects of life and business, and are in fact, inextricable. Our Food system is at the center of the American dream—COVID-19 has been on the slate but was hurried into existence by the need to find a solution for the new populations who would experience sudden food insecurity in March 2020. The Cook’s Nook focuses its impact on food insecurity across a variety of audiences—from the chronically food insecure; emergency-driven food insecurity; to those looking for improved health-outcomes in their community. Our meals are high-quality, seasonally driven, and balanced with disease avoidance knowledge. Our meals are available to meet people where they are—in our 13 zip codes in the city that have no grocery or market, but maybe a convenience store is available.

The coalescence of these different careers, both in healthcare and the food industry, is not just the co-founder and creative director of Cook’s Nook, but really to create a community that would demonstrate the ways food+beverage impacts all aspects of life and business, and are in fact, inextricable. Our Food system is at the center of the American dream—COVID-19 has been on the slate but was hurried into existence by the need to find a solution for the new populations who would experience sudden food insecurity in March 2020. The Cook’s Nook focuses its impact on food insecurity across a variety of audiences—from the chronically food insecure; emergency-driven food insecurity; to those looking for improved health-outcomes in their community. Our meals are high-quality, seasonally driven, and balanced with disease avoidance knowledge. Our meals are available to meet people where they are—in our 13 zip codes in the city that have no grocery or market, but maybe a convenience store is available.

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Recipe for Success: Empowering the Homeless

Angie DuPree, food activist and Charleston Chapter president, believes everyone deserves the dignity of a roof over their head and food in their belly. At One80 Place, South Carolina’s largest provider of homeless services, Angie and her team run The Zucker Community Kitchen, a robust food rescue program; and a culinary job training program. Angie doesn’t want any food or person to go to waste; thousands of pounds of food rescued weekly are turned into nutritious meals that feed body and soul. Angie built the successful, enterprise that will break ground in the fall. She partners with sponsors and organizations that share the values and willingness to see purpose in every single life. One80 Place and Angie’s project take food that is wasted by society and people that are undervalued and turn them into success stories every day.

Aligning myself with women who have a passion and purpose in helping people is a powerful experience. My personal mission is to reduce homelessness through focused culinary skills training and job placement in the food and beverage industry. At One80 Place, I’ve worked very hard to develop my program and train each person by communicating, listening, building lasting relationships, and ultimately teaching skills that would change their positions in life and give them the tools to get entry level positions in the industry. I advocate on behalf of the trainees with each employer; support of partners for sustainable, non-toxic work environment, benefits, and increased opportunities. I’ve met some of the most resilient, humorous, competent, and kind-hearted people in the entire world through this work. Often, I find I am the student, and they are the teachers. It’s as if every moment in my life has led me to the doors of One80 Place and to this position. I know I have found a place where food justice is a view of the food system that sees healthy food as a human right and addresses structural barriers to the industry. Anything that shines a positive light on the culinary program and One80 Place, shines a light directly on my heart. We are in the business of humanity. We pick up others that have been left behind with nowhere to go. We shine up their souls a little and take their hearts. I do have a hard dream to sell to the trainees; the food and beverage industry has very long hours and offers little pay. But I tell each one, if you can find the right kitchen and become a part of it, you will never be homeless or hungry again. The industry is full of love, unyielding compassion, limitless creativity, and yes, hard work. But the truly remarkable people are endless.

Tiffany DERRY
(Dallas Chapter)
Co-Founder, T2D Concepts, LLC.
www.t2dconcepts.com

Be Bold . . . Strong . . . Kind . . . Loving. Be the Change!

Tiffany Derry’s work consistently makes a difference for so many in the hospitality industry and in the various communities she serves in. People know Tiffany from her restaurants and her appearances on Top Chef. Hungry investors, Bar Rescue, and Cutthroat Kitchen. Warm, giving, funny, and sassy, Tiffany is a friend, mother, and entrepreneurial woman with a purpose and the drive to be an example for others to follow. Tiffany lobbed into Washington to get a new U.S. farm bill passed in 2013. She continues this work by speaking to the public about food waste systems, the benefits of the farm act, and how we can help the environment with the intelligent use of resources and ensure that no one goes hungry. In 2017, when Hurricanes Harvey and Irma pounded Texas, Tiffany sprang into action and helped feed over 1,000 people displaced by the storm in her hometown of Beaumont. She helped feed over 1,000 people displaced by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Tiffany is an example for others to follow. Tiffany lobbied in Washington to get a new U.S. farm bill passed in 2013. She continues this work by speaking to the public about food waste systems, the benefits of the farm act, and how we can help the environment with the intelligent use of resources and ensure that no one goes hungry.

I knew my purpose was to be in the kitchen from an early age. Growing up on my family’s farm in the South, farm-to-table eating wasn’t a trend; it was just how we lived… As a black female, I didn’t have many role models who looked like me. I faced racism and setbacks, but my love for food and passion for serving others kept me going. I climbed the ranks through the male-dominated culinary world… now, I own a purpose-driven restaurant group, T2D Concepts, which operates Room Chicken Shack and Room Southern Kitchen in Texas. Appearing on national TV shows provided me the platform and means to spread knowledge about issues I’m passionate about—food education and policy, waste reduction, gender and racial inequity, culture, and more. I’m also committed to educating about crucial topics on the future of food and our environment. I’m a firm believer in knowing where your food comes from and I continue to spread the word. I work with the U.S. Embassy and as a James Beard Foundation ambassador to fight for sustainable food policies and advocate for equitable food access.

In 2013, the federal government’s farm bill expired, which was set to be renewed but hadn’t updated since 2008. I worked with the James Beard Foundation and fellow chefs to look for a new, helpful bill to be passed. After five years of hard work and diligence, we got the bill passed for a better future for farms, healthy food, food education, and food access. I continue working in the name of food to ensure that people have enough, that food is going to the right people, and that the government keeps learning about everything food can do for a community.

Laura Betti
(San Francisco Chapter)
President, Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAE)
www.sagecenter.org

Growing Roots Through Sustainable Agriculture

Sibella Kraus has been deeply involved in sustainable agriculture and education for more than 30 years. In the early 1980s, she organized The Tasting of Summer Produce festival in Oakland, California, to educate urban residents on the bounty of local produce and connect small, local, organic farmers with distributors and restaurant buyers. This was the beginning of the farm-to-table movement. Sibella served as forager for the renowned Chez Panisse. Founder Alice Waters described her as a key communications link between the restaurant’s kitchen and its farmer suppliers. “Sibella taught us all to treasure the farmer,” Alice said.

Realizing the challenges of farmers, Sibella helped organize the nationally renowned Ferry Plaza Farmers Market in downtown San Francisco. She wrote a weekly column in the San Francisco Chronicle on California farms and agricultural issues. In 2001, Sibella created SAGE, which is a network of partners with a mission to revitalize urban-edge, sustainable agriculture and connect local food supply chains. Under her guidance, SAGE completed several feasibility studies for the development and reemployment of food manufacturing in the greater Bay Area.

Sibella is a deep, committed, and experienced thinker in the world of sustainable agriculture. She continues to find ways to address immediate and urgent food systems problems, while looking ahead at systemic changes needed to make the system resilient, sustainable, and equitable. Sibella is a founding member of LDB San Francisco. Jerry Di Vecchio, another chapter founder, succinctly sums it up her work “…And [Sibella] just keeps going, solidly rooted in productive soil.”

As a thought leader and project creator, and as part of a growing network of committed people, I’ve helped strengthen connections between healthy farms, healthy food, and vibrant communities in California and across the country. My work is characterized by my ability to envision innovative approaches and bring together stakeholders—often unlikely allies—to realize visionary projects. Over my 40-year career, I made many poises in order to seize opportunities, push boundaries, and catalyze alliances. Throughout, the common thread has been the intersection of sustainable agriculture, equitable food systems, culture, sustainability, and community resilience.

Two projects I am currently leading at SAGE exemplify this innovative, collaborative, and intersectional approach. The 100+ Jobs to Feed People and Sustain the Planet project is designed to inspire students and job seekers about future-oriented food, agriculture, and environment jobs. Another SAGE-initiated project seeks to develop a regional agricultural plan for the nine-county Bay Area. As much as I develop policy and conceptual frameworks, I’m equally drawn to creating on-the-ground projects. The realization of the Sunol Water Temple Agricultural Park is especially dear to my heart. Inspired by European urban-edge agricultural parks, I conceived of the Sunol AgPark as a place-based project to provide land access for beginning farmers (many are immigrants), natural resource stewardship opportunities, and public education for nearby communities. In the Framework for New Rural, I make a case for cities to embrace surrounding agriculture as a foundation for synergetic rural and urban connectivity. I am fortunate and grateful to be part of a movement of extraordinary, dedicated people—once alternative and now in the forefront—working toward sustainable agriculture, diverse regional food systems, healthy food for all, resilient communities, and the very future of our planet.

Sibella Kraus (San Francisco Chapter)
President, Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAE)
www.sagecenter.org

Recipe for Success: Empowering the Homeless

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Shanita MCAFEE-BRYANT
(KANSAS CITY CHAPTER)
Executive Director & Founder
The Prospect: An Urban Eats
www.theprospectkc.org

Changing Prospects for the Better

Chef Shanita McAfee-Bryant has gone from cooking on the line in her own restaurant to leading an innovative food business. The Prospect, to teach others not how to cook, but how to have a successful career in the food industry. The 16-week culinary training program helps under-resourced but highly motivated community members develop the skills and training program helps under-resourced but highly motivated community members develop the skills and training to break the poverty cycle and put them on the path to success. As a mother of three, Shanita charted her own path into food and agriculture and farming. The rewarding work of farming and cooking allowed her to communicate that our food work doesn’t happen in isolation. Working together we can do all the good we want to do. I've spent a lot of time thinking about my own vocation. I had a string of women mentors who were theologians or worked in churches and were committed to social justice. When I went to divinity school in New York City, of all places, I got obsessed with agriculture and farming. I had this immense access, privilege and resources of relationships coming back to my hometown after living away for several years. I have to work with what you have. I am a woman, mom, chef, and certainly a Dame with a "purpose."

Nancy Matheson-Burns
(NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER)
President, Dole & Bailey, Inc.
www.doleandbailey.com

Food Hubs Support Local Food Systems

Nancy Matheson-Burns has spent the better part of her life being a trailblazer in New England and nationally. Dole & Bailey, a food hub and farm gate for chefs, is USDA organically-certified, non-GMO project verified, certified humane, animal welfare approved, and ISO 9001:2015 certified. The company is one of the few certified, women-owned, USDA federally inspected establishments in the United States. Nancy was the first woman and youngest president of the National Association of Meat Purveyors.

Dole & Bailey has employed adults with disabilities for decades. Nancy, a kind, humble, and compassionate woman, served on the Board of Directors for NuPATH in Massachusetts, an organization that helps people with disabilities lead fulfilling lives. The American Culinary Foundation awarded Nancy the Humanitarian Award in 2018. Nancy's commitment to connecting chefs with local sustainable foods led to the creation of farm-to-table venues and the Northeast Family Fisheries. The word "sustainable" wasn't used as universally as it is today, but Nancy used it, and she mentored everyone to see the vision of the future. Joe and Lucas Henderson of Chapel Hill Farm said, "Dole and Bailey, through Nancy's leadership, is at the forefront of a movement, reshaping the culture of food distribution and consumption to support and sustain local food systems.

"Mary Dymond, Iron Chef America, remarked, "...her strong, female leadership and support of other female-owned businesses exemplifies the best in the business." Nancy served as LDEI Boston President and is a founding member of LDEI New England.

I am humbly and honored to be nominated for the inaugural LDEI Woman of Purpose Award. I am especially thankful for valuable relationships and connections built through the LDEI Green Tables Initiative—a project that aligns with the spirit and heart of Dole & Bailey. My family business has been an essential part of the North East’s agricultural heritage for four generations. High on the columns of Boston's historic Faneuil Hall, you can still read the Dole and Bailey name—a reminder of our roots and the heart of our mission in New England. Over the last year, we, as a company and team, have a skilled and highly motivated community to discerning customers, but things look a little different. Now a woman-owned food hub as well as artisanal butcher, we are best known for superior-quality meats and seafood, efficiently connecting the best sources of quality food to chefs, retailers, and regional food-consumer. Food is my love language. Growing, harvesting, and purveying authentic, clean, healthy food is visceral and emotional. Every encounter to strengthen a food system is an opportunity to love and serve with passion. Since buying my brother out three years ago, I have thoroughly enjoyed developing an intimate team that is passionate about continuous improvement, energized by recent challenges, and fueled by love of this industry.

Those who know me understand the responsibility I feel to leave this legacy poised to sustain Dole & Bailey and its regional supply for future generations. We are poised to focus on shaping food systems—identifying opportunities and unexplored niches, then finding solutions and sharing our "recipes" with community and enthusiasts who will come together to grow, cook, and share nourishing food. regional on-line consumers.

The Power of Food in Building Community

Tallu Schuyler Quinn
Founder, The Nashville Food Project
www.thenashvillefoodproject.org

Ten years ago, Tallu Schuyler Quinn founded The Nashville Food Project, a nonprofit dedicated to bringing people together to grow, cook, and share nourishing food for people facing poverty and alleviating hunger. In one decade, her project has witnessed a tremendous growth. What began as a modest church kitchen, a few volunteers, and a truck delivering sandwiches and bottled water to homeless camps has morphed into multi-pronged, interrelated initiatives. In 2020, TNFP partnered with over 70 organizations. A robust food recovery program kept 220,000 pounds of food from the landfill last year; over 200,000 meals were served. In early 2020, TNFP recovered over 28,000 pounds of meat from a meat conference at Opryland, providing protein for meals program for over a year. TNFP’s agriculture program includes a multi-acre Community Farm—home to chefs, retailers, and regional on-line consumers.

An additional garden, Growing Together Cities, is creating a network of gardens to reach The Cages, the U S. to the Cages, in growing food for supplemental income. Tallu’s vision is radical and achievable: good food can foster more than a good health; it imbues a sense of belonging and purpose.

The [TNFP] programs are built on the strengths of those who participate and not their deficits. Many program participants, while they lack much in life because of an unjust economic system, have incredible strengths, knowledge, and experience that can contribute to a more meaningful community. To me, that’s such a core tenant in the spirit of service.

Food access is the primary lens we’re constantly thinking about. We use a partnership model for distributing all the produce from our gardens as well as the meals that leave our kitchens. It’s so important for me to communicate that our food work doesn’t happen in isolation. Working together we can all do better.

I’ve spent a lot of time thinking about my own vocation. I had a string of women mentors who were theologians or worked in churches and were committed to social justice. When I went to divinity school in New York City, of all places, I got obsessed with agriculture and farming. I had this immense access, privilege and resources of relationships coming back to my hometown after living away for several years. I have to find my way to this. The Nashville Food Project

In closing, I was diagnosed with this disease, glioblastoma multiforme. It is terminal. It’s a grade 4 cancer. It is a devastating diagnosis. I am 41. So this has me thinking about my life and legacy in new ways. I feel like I’ve spent my adult life trying to create this community... and take care of community—my community... and be a vital help. I’ve thought of myself as helping shepherd that. Not being in charge of it or leading it but just shepherding it.

Sometimes we think about life as one direction thing, as linear. But in the last 10 months after being diagnosed, I see so much community that continues to come back to me and my family in this hard time. And that’s the beauty of it. It’s about community—it is a circle. There was this one thing that was not only imagined, but practiced. We have to do the work of imagining what could be possible and then do our part to make it real.” Tallu Schuyler Quinn

Many people believe winning Food Network’s Cutthroat Kitchen in 2014 propelled me forward, but it was because I had a family that needed me to work, build a top business in his chosen field, and always take care of community... and take care of community—my community... and be a vital help. I’ve thought of myself as helping shepherd that. Not being in charge of it or leading it but just shepherding it. We have to do the work of imagining what could be possible and then do our part to make it real.” Tallu Schuyler Quinn

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The ‘bringing people together’ part has been a harder claim to make good on during this pandemic. The most important takeaway I could hope for you, is think about nutritious food as a basic human right; not something that is only for people who can afford to access it.

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**Fostering Sustainable Tourism**

**Araceli Ramos**

Araceli Ramos is a true example of vision, leadership, and energy, and she is making an important impact in global sustainability. Araceli is employed by Casa Cuervo, the leading manufacturer and distributor of tequila, the distinctive Mexican alcoholic beverage made from the sap of agave (called maguey in Mexico), a genus of desert plant. Casa Cuervo is also the oldest existing producer of tequila. Araceli was one of the main collaborators for Mexico’s La Ruta de Tequila (“The Tequila Route”). She created Mundo Cuervo, a trip to the iconic city of Tequila, the birthplace of the spirit that bears the same name. In addition, she founded La Ruta de la Caña Para-guaya and La Ruta de la Leche Chilé.

Araceli is devoted to helping Latin American countries and providing opportunities for hundreds of people to showcase their products. The financial impact of thousands of visitors benefits locals with the creation of jobs and opportunities. She is very well respected in Mexico as well as many countries in South America. Araceli was keynote speaker at the First International Congress of Public Relations organized by the Latin American Association of University Degrees in Public Relations. She served as advisor, secretary, and president of the Association of Professors in Public Relations (RELAP). Araceli is a woman of purpose; her vision and hard work have helped many countries boost global tourism. We are proud of Araceli Ramos. Saludos!

I am humbled to be nominated for LDEI’s Woman of Purpose Award. I am the proud President and a founder of Las Damas de Escoffier Mexico. I began my career in public relations, eventually becoming Director of Public Relations in the Ministry of Culture and the Government of the State of Jalisco, Mexico. I later moved to the position of Hotel Public Relations Manager and then Manager of Groups and Conventions for the Hotel Camino Real (Guadalajara).

I founded La Ruta de la Caña Paraguay (“The Route of Caña in Paraguay”). This route focuses on Paraguay’s national drink, which could be compared to rum. Caña is the fermented, distilled mosto (juice) or honey of sugar cane. Working with the producers of Caña Paraguay, I created a program to bring many guests to Paraguay to enjoy the culture, traditional alcoholic drinks, and delicious cuisine.

In Chile, I founded La Ruta de la Leche (“The Milk Route of Chile”) working alongside the government and producers. We introduced local families, and schools can visit beautiful farms and haciendas to learn about Chile’s dairy products. I encouraged families around these farms to become a hospitality hub and attract tourists by opening small beds and breakfasts to showcase Chile’s delicious cheese and, of course, bread and fine wines. I am currently working with the country of Colombia to create La Ruta del Café (“The Route of Coffee and Rum”).

As a full-time professional pastry chef, she dedicated immense amounts of time and knowledge so they can make choices to feed themselves and their families. It wasn’t always a problem of food access or resources. Instead, I saw how disconnected people were from their food, where it came from, how it nourished them between the physical, and, of course, how to cook it.

My purpose includes empowering people by reconnecting them to their food. They can take control of their health and well-being, and helping people build their skill sets and knowledge so they can make healthy, positively impact their health… I encourage people to explore their cultures to find ways food justice. Our goal was to empower kids—on the importance of food sustainability, nutrition, and local agriculture. As a visionary, she’s making tackling issues of sustainability, food justice, and public health. As a woman of purpose, her community. I say “my community” because I’m a boots-on-the-ground advocate who works with people with lives across socio-economic strata. I firmly believe we are all able to practice the "each one, teach one" philosophy to affect change in our individual spheres of influence.

**Overcoming Barriers Between People & Food**

**Chef Asata Reid**

Chef Asata Reid has dedicated her career to making a positive impact in the world by tackling issues of sustainability, food justice, and public health. As a visionary, she’s making incredible strides toward improving the food system and the health of our children. She is hard-working, compassionate, intelligent, and creative, bringing joy and justice to her work.

Asata has a Masters of Education and a Masters of Public Health, giving her expertise in nutrition and diabetes education. She sits on the board of a Social Justice organization and Green Tables Committee. Through the medium of her business, Life Chef, Asata uses her expertise in cooking and the health of our children. She is an advocate for local food, and empowers kids, but use real people, real role models, to do it. And by giving chefs an avenue with which to share their skills, we empower them too. We help chefs realize that they play an important role in supporting sustainable communities and championing food sovereignty.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we’ve been taking virtual field trips to visit local educators and food producers through live web-based Q&A sessions. Highlighting farmers as the heroes they are is one of my absolute favorite aspects of working with Growing Chefs. We introduce the chefs as role models and spark the kid’s interest in food, cooking, and the culinary industry. We find that kids’ relationships to food changes significantly through Growing Chefs programs.

I’ve maintained my career as a pastry chef—my first and true passion—and helped launch a successful social enterprise chocolate shop that offers vulnerable women mentorship-based job training. I challenge myself, and my work to own a sustainable source ingredients locally, educate diners about the bounty in their backyards, and influence my colleagues to do the same.

Asata Reid is an educator for Small Bites Adventure Club, a women-owned, Atlanta-based business dedicated to helping every child discover, eat, and love fruits and vegetables. She partnered with Ted Turner’s Capital Planet Foundation to provide free cooking classes live-streamed into children’s homes. Her new book, “Cook to Feed a Kid: A Parent’s Guide,” is aimed at helping parents navigate roadblocks that arise in creating healthy eating habits. Through her work with Georgia Organics, Asata is actively involved in the food justice movement within schools and communities. She has spent countless hours educating and empowering our community to live healthier lives, and she has no plans on slowing down any time soon.

In learning to serve others, I have indeed found my purpose. I started a culinary career over a decade ago, because I saw the struggles that people had while trying to feed themselves and their families. It wasn’t always a problem of food access or resources. Instead, I saw how disconnected people were from their food, where it came from, how it nourished them between the physical, and, of course, how to cook it.

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Children who appreciate and know who grew their food, and can participate in preparing it. Identify and amend barriers that stand between people and their food. We have developed an innovative and coordinated product tastings for a high level of world leaders, CEOs, diplomats, and royalty in Europe and Asia. One of my biggest achievements for Cuervo has been the creation of Mundo Cuervo an unforgettable trip on the Jose Cuervo Express to the city of Tequila to learn the secrets of the tequila-making process.

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**Empowering Kids in the Kitchen**

A chapter member since 2014, Merri Schwartz received a scholarship from the BIC magazine to train at the Valrhona Chocolate Institute outside of Lyon, France. In 2005, she founded the Growing Chefs Society. As a full-time professional pastry chef, she had the idea to educate the most influential—the children—on the importance of food sustainability, nutrition, and local agriculture. Growing Chefs piloted their unique Gardening and Cooking Program at two Vancouver elementary schools in 2017. Fast forward to 2019 when the program ran in 80 classrooms with 275 volunteers and then to 2020 when the pandemic closed the schools. Without missing their start date, Growing Chefs moved their programming to digital lessons with 3,000–6,000 views each.

Growing Chefs impacts food justice by empowering kids and families to grow and cook their own food, particularly in underserved schools and communities. Too many kids don’t know where food comes from or have access to healthy, whole food. Growing Chefs is on a mission to change that; it is Merri Schwartz’s love letter to chefs, farmers, educators, and to the next generation.

Over the past 16 years, I have joyfully dedicated immense amounts of time and energy to grow this fledgling project into the flourishing charity it is today. From the very beginning, Growing Chefs was dedicated to food justice. Our goal was to empower kids—on the importance of food sustainability, food justice. Our goal was to empower kids—
I remember the day my life’s purpose was revealed to me. It was in New Orleans at my first conference for Women Chefs & Restaurateurs (WCRA). The opening session was immaculate... There were women from all over the world and that was impressive, but there were only about 10 women of color in a room of 100 people. The moment I sat down, I knew that more women that looked like me should be in these spaces.

A year later, I would receive the WCRA educational scholarship and begin culinary school, after having been in social work for many years... To my disappointment, there were not many women or women of color in professional kitchens. A lot was wrong... So many during my matriculation. It was then that I knew my purpose would involve opening doors for them... Creating safe spaces for women where they previously had never been closed and creating more diverse kitchen spaces. All of these happenings and a host of others led me to found SheChef Inc., a professional networking organization and social enterprise that provides mentoring to women chefs in color in food, beverage, and hospitality spaces. SheChef Inc. has been a safe haven to many women in the industry; it is the only space where Diverse covered industry opportunities for our members such as internships with The Food Network, America’s Test Kitchen, food network and many more. My amazing life path has allowed me to do so many things for others. I am a two-time ovarian cancer survivor who is learning every day how to fight the disease and live in my purpose. As a leader it is paramount that now, more than ever, we can make a difference and put an end to food insecurity.

An economic impact study conducted by the College of Business at the University of Alabama in 2019 shows the Market contributes over $2 million to the greater Birmingham economy and has had an economic impact of over $100 million. Leigh continually looks for ways to impact the income and health of all people. Through the Market itself, cooking demos, SNAP program, and special events, she makes it possible for people to learn to eat well and live healthy, active lives.

The efforts I’ve made to promote LEDEI, its members, mission, and the importance of women in the food and beverage industry offer a snapshot of how I approach my work as executive director of The Market at Pepper Place. Supporting farmers and food producers, educating the public about eating seasonally and healthfully, focusing on food equity and access, and creating community and joy through fresh food are what I work to achieve every day. The Market Board, staff, vendors, and fans are all ambassadors of this vision, and I am proud to lead them, set an example, and spread the word.

To help launch our chapter’s Mentorship Program, I connected female market vendors with Mentorship Committee members, relationships that have been successfully making an impact for two years. In the Market’s newsletter and on The Market’s digital platforms, my team and I regularly promote the importance of eating locally grown food, supporting local producers and businesses, and becoming an advocate for the good things produced in our state. Food equity and public health have become a major focus since I joined this team. Our Market is in a state ranked third for diabetes and seventh for obesity, nationally. To encourage lower-income residents to come and shop, I launched a program to accept SNAP (food stamps) with Double Bucks and provide food vouchers for seniors, all critically needed during COVID-19. We collaborate with the Society of St. Andrew to collect and sell produce to the end of each Market, which is donated to local food pantries. Team up with Blue Cross Blue Shield, we launched a Wellness Days program, now in its fourth year, offering free blood sugar and blood pressure testing, nutrition tips, recipes, and fitness demonstrations.

Last year, when COVID-19 forced businesses to shut down, our team devised a way to continue operating so farmers and food producers were able to sell their goods and the public could access fresh food. Our traditional walk-through Market was transformed into a contactless, pre-order drive-through that served as a national model. Our vendors weathered the pandemic and discovered a new revenue stream. My greatest joy has always been bringing people together through food, and I hope that by providing more opportunities for women that LEDEI, our market community, and society as a whole will survive and thrive.
Linda Triesch, RD, LD, CDE  
Registered Dietitian Nutritionist  
Time Dollar Community Connections  
www.satimedollar.org

It Takes a Community to Impact a Community

Linda Triesch is passionate about good nutrition. As a Registered Dietitian, she advises people on what they should eat to achieve healthy weights and specific health goals. Linda is also a Certified Diabetes Educator with knowledge and skills in adult weight management, recipe nutrition analysis, and menu and recipe development. She is also a culinary instructor with media experience. Many San Antonio families are struggling with food insecurity, especially during the pandemic. Food-insecure people don’t always eat healthily or have access to healthy foods. This can place people at higher risk for nutrition-related diseases such as obesity and diabetes.

To help combat this problem, Linda has been a longtime volunteer at San Antonio Time Dollar Community Connections, a nonprofit where she promotes healthy living through classes focused on good nutrition. Families in the community learn how to grow and prepare wholesome foods, cost management, and how to stretch meals.

Linda is a director and San Antonio Time Dollar Chapter member since 1997. A great mentor and communicator, she served on several Board positions including co-president. She observed that the chapter’s Green Tables initiative had many responsibilities and suggested that a co-chair be added. Linda worked to ensure it will fill the position. San Antonio’s Green Tables initiative is more efficient and thriving.

I’m a proud fifth generation San Antonian and have always loved the diverse cultures of my city. I grew up in a close-knit family. I went on to become a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist since 1981 and became a Diabetes Care and Education Specialist in 2005. My undergraduate and dietician program was at the University of Texas at Austin. Training as a diettian included clinical nutrition and quantity food service management.

When I was a diabetes clinician at a local hospital, our department had an outpatient Diabetes Management Education class. When I worked in diabetes, I’ve come to cope with their diagnoses, eat healthfully, monitor blood sugar, and maintain an active lifestyle. I especially enjoy running nutrition education demonstrations in the healthy eating classes. The clients were predominantly Hispanic, so our education was culturally appropriate. When I sensed they were relieved to know they did not have to give up the foods they were accustomed to. And I’m happy. I’m very interested in the experiences and skills have continued into my philanthropic work as a Dame. Our chapter began supporting Time Dollar Community Connections in 2007, shortly after LDEI launched Green Tables. Time Dollar’s mission to build communities through food for basic needs; their vision is to teach nutrition, gardening, and budgeting through comprehensive math education for adults.

I was Green Tables co-chair for the past six years and a liaison with the director of Time of all at work with inter. We helped fulfill their vision by providing supplies for the Junior Master Gardening classes, plants, and maintaining the backyard community garden, and distributing turkeys and side dishes during the holidays. I also teach or teach two classes in the spring and two in the fall, making certain we addressed diabetes care and management because a large population of persons with diabetes is present in our area.

I assisted for guest Dame chefs, caterers, and restaurants to present classes in a small living room with a 32-inch round table. We typically had 20 to 30 people. The committee secured fresh produce, the star attraction, from local farmers markets; great effort was taken to keep cultural preferences intact.

This year, we have a new co-chair, but I will continue to mentor and educate the clientele. Time Dollar has enriched my life, and I am sure it will continue to be in the hearts of our San Antonio Dames.
Dames Dietitians Take the Lead

By Dottie Kotski
(Philadelphia Chapter)

The City of Philadelphia, and the presence of dietitians in leadership, has a significant legacy with Les Dames d’Escoffier International. It’s the location of Pennsylvania Hospital—the nation’s first hospital—and it was the home of America’s first dietitian, Sarah Tyson Rorer. Emma Sewell Weigly’s book, “Sarah Tyson Rorer: The Nation’s Instructress in Cookery,” 100 years ago, tells the story of how women from home economics before they were identified as professions. Mrs. Rorer produced a staggering number of cookbooks, cookbooks, and articles over 34 years. Nearly 780 articles appeared in periodicals such as Table Talk, the premier culinary magazine of the 1890s and Ladies Home Journal, the first quality magazine with a circulation of one million.

For 20 years, 1883-1903, Mrs. Rorer conducted the Philadelphia Cooking School where women from different economic, social, racial, and even geographical statuses learned cooking methods. She also developed a one-year course, in which some of the city’s first domestic and home economists received training. Many doctors eventually attended her classes too. Mrs. Rorer was cited as the first American dietitian, identified as the pioneer by the American Home economists received training.

In 2012, the 104-year-old American Dietetic Association. In that position, she had the opportunity to help her colleagues in dealing with external organizations, government agencies, all of the 50 state Academies and their members, specialized affiliates and sub-groups within the national organization. Connie explains, “My presidency further enhanced my skills to hear and process member concerns, to lead, motivate, and engage with the board to ensure that the strategic plan reflected the direction the organization needed to go and how the organization needed to position for success. I also learned patience.” Connie wisely says that we all know that world changes slowly, and so do organizations. However, she characterizes such periods as an opportunity to develop tolerance—for good change requires planning, perseverance, and support.

**CLAIRE BOASI**
(Philadelphia Chapter)

The Philadelphia Chapter of Les Dames d’Escoffier was created in 1984 under the leadership of registered dietitian Claire Boasi for FADA, MS, RD, a former New York Dame. In 1985, Philadelphia and four other chapters met the first necessary requirement under the rules of incorporation to become Les Dames d’Escoffier International (LDEI). Where and when was LDEI’s first annual Conference? Yes, it was Philadelphia in 1988. And who was the first international president from 1987 to 1989? Claire Boasi, of course! Alice Foreman recalls, “As president, Claire wanted more chapters to be formed and assertively encouraged both me and Jerry Anne Di Vecchio to create chapters in our respective cities, Seattle and San Francisco.”

Claire had been handpicked and recruited in 1970 by the president of Campbell Soup to join the company as a member of the corporate leadership team. She established goals, objectives, and processes that would contribute to the firm’s profits, products, and quality image. At this time, the trend for food companies was to focus on one’s career. Campbell had a philosophy of being diverse, an international president from 1987 to 1989, Claire Boasi, of course! Alice Foreman notes, “As president, Claire wanted more chapters to be formed and assertively encouraged both me and Jerry Anne Di Vecchio to create chapters in our respective cities, Seattle and San Francisco.”

Claire Boasi had a background and knowledge of food and nutrition professionals and represented over 112,000 credentials practiced over the last two decades. The role of a dietitian has moved from a supporting role into primary role, particularly in healthcare. Dietetic professionals are proactive clinicians, leading to provide quality improvements, employ preventive initiatives, and positive outcomes.

The creation of the Food & Culinary Professionals Dietetic Practice Group (DPG) was a shot in the arm for registered dietitians and members of the organization to make a place for themselves in the food and culinary world. The practice group was established 22 years ago by Mary Abbott Hess and about 20 other founders who sought advanced food knowledge and to elevate their food and culinary skills to truly become identified as food experts as well as nutrition experts. The group, which currently has about 1800 members, offers almost 200 hours of continuing education yearly including online education, seminars, conferences and international food tours. This elevated food knowledge has created new professional opportunities for dietitians within the Food & Culinary Health, publication and communication industries. I would like to introduce nine committed and passionate registered dietitians with whom I had the pleasure to interview. Each has a career with a different orientation; all are influential leaders who share a vision of excellence in food, nutrition, and dietetics practice.

**CONNIE DIEKMAN, M.ED., RD, CSSD, LD, FADA**
(ST. LOUIS CHAPTER)

**Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Board-Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics**

Connie Diekman’s career has been diverse, starting as a registered dietitian in a research study, then providing nutrition consultations to businesses, government agencies, fitness facilities, and ultimately, to the campus of Washington University in St. Louis. While at the university, she worked with the dining team to provide a menu that offered enjoyable, better-for-you options, and she provided consultations to the athletes and to students through student health in her capacity as a specialist in sports dietetics. She notes that until she moved through her career, she never realized how well the broad census of dietitians had prepared her for various positions. Obviously, it included the pure sciences of biology, pathology, organic and inorganic chemistry, biochemistry and applied sciences, but also management of teams and classes in behavior change and psychology. Later, she believed she gave her the skills needed to provide leadership, to change concepts, and offer support to organizations. Connie asserts that the skills learned may have been food and nutrition focused but the skills easily translate to business, industry, and even community organizations. These acquired skills enhanced what she was able to contribute to the St. Louis and Missouri Heart Associations, her children’s high schools, her high school and college alum associations, and the St. Louis LDEI Chapter. She identifies that registered dietitians have a strong grounding in behavior change, people skills, and management skills to enhance all those with whom they interact.

One of Connie’s greatest rewards was her election to the presidency of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, formerly known as the American Dietetic Association. In that position, she had the opportunity to meet and assist the dietitians and dietetics practitioners with whom I had the pleasure to interview. Each has a career with a different orientation; all are influential leaders who share a vision of excellence in food, nutrition, and dietetics practice.

**GINNIE BARRINGER, MS, LDN, CDCES, BCADM**
(North Carolina Chapter)

**Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist (CDCES) Board-Certified in Advanced Diabetes Management (BCADM)**

Ginnie Barringer has two vastly different careers before becoming a dietitian: first a commercial interior designer and then a specialty catering chef. After earning her culinary degree, she enrolled in a master’s degree program in nutrition and completed a dietetic internship at Artium Health. Her early career positions in this outpatient setting included providing medical nutrition therapy to patients, toddler to adult, and assisting with various nutrition research studies, one titled “Mediterranean-American Diet Heart Study,” that would become the basis of her nutrition recommendations today. In her current position at Novant Health Heart & Vascular Institute in Charlotte, Ginnie’s medical nutrition therapy skills focus on assessing patient needs and assisting them with managing weight, blood sugar, cholesterol, and blood pressure. This is done within the context of their food preferences, sometimes and food allergies. She recommends appropriate calorie, protein, vitamin, and mineral intake but also assists with food preparation challenges that individuals and families encounter. She promotes healthy eating patterns such as the Mediterranean diet and plant-forward meals, and she advocates planning meals, grocery shopping, and cooking more at home. Her culinary background was especially useful during COVID-19 because many people were cooking more at home. Ginnie advises that, “active listening, empathy, and meeting the patient where they are” is key to helping patients move in a healthy direction. Her example is, “When presenting an ideal eating plan to someone who doesn’t cook or have the means to purchase foods or has a family member that buys or cooks unhealthy foods, many patients will struggle to succeed.” She advises, “If you listen carefully, read between the lines, and ask the right questions, you can help them immensely with just one simple, but thoughtful tip.”

In her community, Ginnie participates in the American Heart Association “Kids Cook with me” program for tweens. This culinary training program culminates with an iron chef-style competition. She is active in the nutrition and dietetics profession. As a former president of the Charlotte Dietetic Association and is current president of the Metrolica Association for Dietetic Educators. Volunteering as a preceptor for nutrition students at Winthrop University, she always strives to incorporate her culinary expertise and knowledge into teaching these future dietitians.

Ginnie believes the pairing of her culinary experience with her nutrition background has enhanced her role as a dietitian and diabetes specialist. “Teaching patients how to incorporate practical culinary skills and sound nutrition tips while still recognizing and respecting cultural preferences is key to helping people achieve better health,” she adds. Clearly, this why she is so passionate about her profession.

**SUMMER QUARTERLY 2021**

**LES DAMES D’ESCOFFIER INTERNATIONAL**

*For more information on Les Dames d’Escoffier International, please visit their website.*
Kitty Fawaz, RDN, LDN (Nashville Chapter) 

The delivery of medical nutrition therapy (MNT) in hospitals in Atlanta and Nashville has been the focus of Kitty Fawaz’s career. MNT is a forward, proactive shift, initiated by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, which enhances the presence of clinical dietitians, improves patient nutrition care, and better patient outcomes. Acute care hospital settings commonly utilize a multidisciplinary approach; this patient focus promotes rapport among the disciplines and recognizes the important role of everyone. Kitty continually interacts with colleagues to discuss patients’ progress and makes appropriate recommendations and is often contacted by a pharmacist, speech therapist, nurse/practice, social worker, physician and/or physical assistant for her food and nutrition knowledge, skills, and counseling techniques, care plan, and delivery of care.

Kitty relays that she recognized that leader- ship skills are critical in dietetic mana- gement positions, but began to realize their importance in the clinical arena. She identi- fies some of the dietetic leadership needs as: an engaged environment, capability to develop and share ideas, collaboration, positive commu- nications, collaborative problem solving, evidence of trust, and shared goals that focus on the well-being of the patient or client. She believes it is critical for the leader to have good people skills, acknowledge the importance of everyone’s role, and demonstrate respect towards others.

At St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville, Kitty’s area of expertise was caring for patients with heart disease, diabetic eye disease, and post coronary artery bypass surgery. One of her most rewarding and gratifying experiences was creating the hospital’s Heart Healthy Cooking School Program. She reminisces, “With the effort from the executive chef and dietetic nutrition staff, the Cardiac Rehabilitation Department, my vision became a reality. Because of its success, the marketing department created a ‘Heart Healthy Cookbook’ and produced a Heart Healthy cooking show, which although not for the hospital’s cooking program was disseminated after 18 years, Kitty Fawaz has another outlet in the community to promote heart-healthy eating since her family currently owns and operates Cafe Mediterranean in Nashville and in the city whose menu and food reflect their Lebanese heritage.

Lauren Brañain-Rodriguez, MPH, MS, RDN (San Francisco Chapter) 

Public Health Nutritionist, Spokesperson/representative for corporations, nonprofit organizations, and communities

The first position of Lauren Brañain-Rodriguez was with Highland Hospital in Oak- land, California. She provided nutrition consul- tation to mostly low-income, high- and medium-risk clients, and in-service training to the medical and nursing staff on clinical signs of malnutrition and nutrition and pregnancy outcomes. After that, she was at the San Francisco Women and Children (WIC) Program and Stanford University’s Student Health Center where she worked with students, including those on nutrition, eating disorders, and other health concerns. While at Stanford she did medical research with the local CBS affiliate, KPIX, providing two regular segments per week on nutrition and health. She has also done commentary for National Public Radio, and translated nutrition and health education materials to Spanish, the National Institute of Mental Health, the California Medical Association, and many others.

Lauren has also taught nutrition courses at City College of San Francisco, UC Berkeley Extension, Saint Mary’s School of Nursing, and Universidad Complutense in Nica- ragua.

Her longest position was 23 years with the San Francisco Department of Public Health in the Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Section. Initially she did staff training and wrote nutrition materials. She then managed a program providing community- based nutrition education to low-income San Francisco residents with diverse needs. She was the primary contact, five sub-contractors, and a $1.4 million annual budget. Vegging has been a constant to Lauren.

Among her contributions: offering her lan- guage skills to the San Francisco chapters of the American Heart Association and the American Diabetes Association Speaker’s Bureau; supporting residential gardens as a California Master Gardener; and serving on the board of the Heart of the City Farmers Market, which distributes over $1.5 million in food assistance annually. It is the nation’s largest farmers market program accepting SNAP, CalFresh and is certified as a USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Lauren states that every position she held over 37 years in the field of nutrition and public health was unique. She culminates her experience by saying “I relish the privilege to participate in the integration of nutrition and dietetics into public health education settings and to witness the public’s embrace of the importance of healthy eating in maintaining and regaining good health.”

Lauren Swann, MS, RD, LDN (Philadelphia Chapter) Owner of Concept Nutrition, Inc., advisor to corporations, government agencies, and trade associations

Lauren Swann became a registered dietitian through the traditional and required pathway. She obtained a degree in Medical Dietetics at How- ard University, which incorporated the compulsory profes- sional training in a coordinated undergraduate program, she joined the dietetic profession at Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia. Her career as a dietitian began as a practical dietitian at Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia. Her career as a dietitian began as a practical dietitian during a period of rapid expansion when she was enrolled in Boston University’s Master’s Pro- gram in Nutrition Communication, which had an unconventional but captivating curriculum. Lauren’s first “non-traditional” dietetics position was Consumer Communications Specialist for Kraft Foods; then she was promoted to Labeling Compliance Specialist where she learned on-the-job about branded food labeling and government regulations. Lauren explains, “I wanted to go into dietetics because I knew food influ- ences every health issue from there; I preferred nutrition communications because I wanted to work on influencing the well population at-large and not just the chronically sick; I love working for Food, Inc..” She has always enjoyed be- ing responsible for the technical accuracy of any effort to influence good eating choices because she believes that good eating choices are the first step in the development of a healthy lifestyle. She has the opportunity to keep her education current and has been a speaker at numerous professional events.

Lauren concludes that although she did not stay in clinical health care very long, she is ever grateful for the dietetic foundation, which definitively established a valuable perspective over the course of her career.

Lisa Dorman, MS, RD, CSSD, CCMS, LMHC, FAND (Atlanta Chapter) Culinary Medicine Specialist Board-Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics

Lisa Dorman, known interna- tionally as ‘The Running Nutri- tionist’, has been a health care leader to athletes, like Autism, Alzheimer’s, and the public, and the press for many years now. She has been a global, integrated, culi- nary sports nutrition practice and corporate consulting business working with Olympian athletes, and luxury resorts like Ritz Carlton, Sandals, and Norwegian Cruise Lines. A certified chef, Lisa is experienced in areas of sports, fitness, catering, ServSafe and Food Service at The Federal Correctional Institution, to creating innova- tive culinary food programs for Sandals Resorts in the Caribbean.

In addition to Lisa’s stated credentials, she is certified as a USA Track & Field coach, as a USA Triathlon Coach, a Reiki practi- tioner, and horticulturist. She served as the nutritionist for the 2008 U.S. Sailing Team in the Beijing Olympics and as a nutrition expert for the Zumba’ Plate, program. She is currently Chief Ambassador for Fullfit Fresh’ Sprouts, and a Culinary Wellness Consultant for Chico Bahamas Weddings. Lisa penned eight published books and was a former nutrition editor for SelfFor Magazine. Her expertise encompasses designing, writing, and speaking about delicious dishes, menus, and diets. She travels worldwide sharing the gospel of good food, fresh tastes, and plant- based meals. Her passion for food, fitness, and emotional balance, and enthusiasm for life to its fullest has been called contagious. Lisa’s recipes are inspired by collaboration, with top chefs, restaurants, spas, and wellness-focused programs. She has been on the Forbes’ 2018 list as one of the world’s most powerful women. Lisa has managed the food programs for the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games, and as the food consultant to the Mitsubishi Motors Corporation’s fleet of vehicles.

Lisa cites that her entire career and success as a business owner and nutrition, health, and sports professional is the result of the hard work she has invested into her thirty-plus years in practice. Everything leading up to this point, she says, including the recent launching of her organic, vegan, gluten free, superfood snack line CHICKPEA Purpose Driven Energy Bites™ required a willingness to take on new challenges while continually learning, engaging, and collaborating. Lisa fondly mentions Dr. Nancy Willman, Past President of the American Institute of Nutrition and Dietetics, who emphasized to students the importance of leadership and giving back. Lisa followed that advice.

Mary Abbott Hess, LHD, MS, RD, LD, FAND (Chicago Chapter) President, Hess & Hunt, Inc. Nutrition Communication Services, Partner, Culinary Nutrition Publishing

Many know Mary Abbott Hess as a past president of The American Dietetic Association (ADA); as a former Chairman of the Board of the American Institute of Wine & Food; and as the founder of the Food & Culinary Professionals Practice Group. She taught over 1000 nurses and dietitians and authored eight books, most fo- cused on professional education or improving one’s health through positive food practices. An important part of her life has been service as a volunteer within communities and profes- sional organizations for her recognition in publications and leadership, Mary received a Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Sim- mons College for her recognition in food, health, and the public’s embrace of the importance of healthy eating in maintaining and regaining good health.”

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Her publications and presentations speak extensively on the influence of flavor on eating behavior. Growing interests in these concepts led her to earn certificates at La Varenne in Paris and the German Wine Academy, engage in international food tourism, and join local cooking classes. Her vision evolved to improve the food expertise and culinary skills of dietitians while improving the nutrition expertise of chefs and others in the food industry.

As an outcome of a project of The American Institute of Wine & Food, Mary participated in Revisiting the American Table: Creating a New Alliance of Taste and Health, the following philosophy was crafted, “In matters of taste consider nutrition and in matters of nutrition consider taste. And in all cases consider individual needs and preferences.” Following the conference, Julia Child, Mary, and a physician toured the country for two years to promote that philosophy with guidance related to nutrition, physical activity, food preparation, food safety, and education balanced with cultural sensitivity and food enjoyment.

Twenty years ago, Mary joined the Board of Managers of the Peden McCormick Boys & Girls Club of Chicago. Since then she has volunteered to teach club members basic cooking skills and expose them to healthy foods. For over a decade, Chicago Chapter Dames have joined her in teaching cooking and gardening classes at the club, and at the national Food Manufacturers Association (Dallas Chapter), Mary, and a physician toured the country for two years to promote that philosophy with guidance related to nutrition, physical activity, food preparation, food safety, and education balanced with cultural sensitivity and food enjoyment.

While Mary Kimbrough’s career initially took a traditional route, her path evolved in unexpected directions. The first 25 years were in healthcare foodservice management. Seventeen of these years were as director of nutrition and hospitality service for the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center University Hospitals where she transformed the foodservice operation from one that focused on prescriptive diets to an operation that nourished people with good tasting, appealing, and healthful foods.

This was the very beginning of the culinary movement in healthcare; and, Mary was among the trailblazers. In fact, the International Food Manufacturers Association awarded the food and nutrition’s department a Silver Plate Award in Healthcare Foodservice.

After leaving healthcare, Mary applied her business skills to the consulting world by forming Culinary Nutrition Associates, LLC with two food-centric dietitians. In addition, she created Food Roots, which offers unique, quaffable wine and food experiences through custom tours and signature events. Currently, she is the senior director of operations and culinary innovation at Wild Hive. This position brings all her experiences to bear for clients in the food, nutrition, and agriculture arenas and empowers them to connect in a meaningful way to foodservice, retail, and ingredient audiences. She cites that, “food is such an important part of our lives, and at the end of the day, nutrition is about food. My work history illustrates that the field of and itsis is so expansive, that you can have many careers from one area of study.”

She knows that any achievement is shared. In foodservice, and really in anything, nothing gets done by an individual. It takes lots of individuals working toward the same goal. She reflects that when she started in healthcare foodservice, “We, as dietitians, and foodservice team at the medical center, had a vision that hospital foodservice can and should be nutritious, therapeutic, and healthful.”

Our job was to help people get well enough to get out of the hospital, but we were limited to putting out the best food with the service possible.” Mary recognizes that being part of a team that was transforming the expectations and quality of hospital foodservice was one of her greatest satisfactions in her career.

**MARY KIMBROUGH, RD, LD**
(Dallas Chapter)
Senior Director of Operations and Culinary Innovations at Wild Hive Marketing and Consulting

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**NAOMI KAKUCHI, RD, CD, CCP (Seattle Chapter)**
President and founder, NoCulinary Media spokesperson, coveted guest chef for cruise line food gourmandizing schools.

Naomi Kakuchi has had numerous positions including: dietitian, foodservice director, corporate director of health-care sales and marketing, food broker, and owner, chef, and educator.

As a culinary professional, Naomi has taught at many conferences, both national and international. She has served as a speaker on many panels and in multiple workshops as a foodservice expert. She has authored numerous trade articles and contributed her expertise to many books on foodservice and culinary topics. Naomi has authored numerous trade articles and contributed her expertise to many books on foodservice and culinary topics.

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**FESTA DELLE DONNE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY**

**By Margaret Happel Perry (New York)**

More than 40 members of Les Dames New York Zoomed into a sparkling kitchen on March 8 to participate in Festa Delle Donne, a scholarship, fund-raising event centered with a large layer of management cooking and internship experience allows dietitians to have a share of practical and experience even prior to their first job. She start that, “I have always promoted dietitians as one of the best-rounded professionals in healthcare due to their ability to see the whole person, patient, guest.”

Naomi was at the forefront of the Seattle Farmers Market Alliance Chef demonstration program, which consisted of three farmers markets and grew to seven urban markets with professional chef catering providing cooking demonstrations and wonderful crop highlights. Many of her dietetic internships were able to participate in conducting these shopper-friendly events. Naomi has a passion in building teams and making them more functional which emerged during the corporate team building events she offered. At times, the chef instructors incorporated setbacks for the teams to negotiate their way to a successful and delicious meal. She views cooking as an equalizer within such a group with raw ingredients and with a setting that needs communication, coordination, and collaboration.

Naomi is a Certified Culinary Professional (CCP) with the International Association of Culinary Professionals. At NoCulinary, she starred in and produced three instructional DVDs that tied the Arts of Sulze, which incorporates her mother’s and her family’s recipes. She emphasizes that the production portrays “historical traditions and rituals that keeps the table warm and inviting.”

**Festa Delle Donne International Women’s Day, Italian Style**

By Margaret Happel Perry (New York)

More than 40 members of Les Dames New York Zoomed into a sparkling kitchen on March 8 to participate in Festa Delle Donne, a scholarship, fund-raising event centered with a large layer of management cooking and internship experience allows dietitians to have a share of practical and experience even prior to their first job. She start that, “I have always promoted dietitians as one of the best-rounded professionals in healthcare due to their ability to see the whole person, patient, guest.”

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**Festa Delle Donne**

With Dona Maria May and Chef Odette Fada

**Mina Ross Cake Demonstration**

Prosecco Torte by La Marca

**MARCH 8, 2021**
5:30 PM EST

Les Dames d’Escoffier New York

**SCHOLARSHIP**

[New York]

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[New York]
Philly Soul Food
Scene: Past, Present, and Future

By Janet Chrzan, Lauren Swann, Tia McDonald, Angela Brown, and Jill Weber (Philadelphia)

Philadelphia is so much more than a cheesesteak...the city's food culture is exploding with new chefs, restaurants, farms, breweries, and distilleries. African Americans have been a vitally important—but largely unheralded—foundation of the Philadelphia food culture and are creating the farms, restaurants, and cuisine that will define the next chapter of Philly food.

LDI Philadelphia highlighted these contributions in a virtual conference in February 2021. Over three sessions, the event attracted an audience of more than 150 people throughout the United States, and it featured pioneering African American soul-food chefs, journalists and media professionals, historians, venerable professionals, and future food leaders of the food industry. The conference provided insights into two kinds of trends that chefs can embrace: inclusive programming to raise community awareness of LDEI, and how chefs are using past foodways to create new and exciting expressions of regional cuisine.

The three sessions examined the Past, Present, and Future of Soul Food in Philadelphia, providing a glimpse of upcoming trends for regional dining...and not just in Soul Food restaurants. The need for sustainable food systems and a desire to celebrate heritage foodways are driving new expectations among diners. Chefs are seizing this opportunity to change the food they offer and how they source, cook, and present new cuisines to patrons. Our Philly Future session united heritage farmways and chefs who had between 20 and 30 minutes to showcase their skills that built successful Soul Food restaurants. Present concerns that chefs can use to create innovative expressions of older foodways. Soul Food-Future highlighted the connections between Black chefs and home cooks and demonstrated the techniques and professional skills that chefs can use to create innovative expressions of older foodways. Soul Food-Future highlighted the connections between Black chefs and home cooks and demonstrated the techniques and professional skills that built successful Soul Food restaurants.

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The Program: Planning, Design, and Topics

Planning
Planning started three months before秀time with an initial committee drawn from chapter members who represented our local African American foodways. We nurtured inclusivity with a call to all members to join the effort, and team members personally contacted women who were active in Soul Food circles. The initial team proposed the three topics to the larger working committee, who brainstormed details, participants, and speakers. The committee contacted speakers and signed participation agreements a month before the event. Publicity started three weeks in advance of the first program and included local print, broadcast, online/social media, all leveraged by Dames in PR. For anyone planning a similar program, it goes without saying that you should start advertising six weeks in advance, which means starting the process no later than four or five months out.

Finally, we met with the participants for a tech-check at least one day before the event to determine the finer details such as introductions, and to make sure everyone was comfortable with the schedule and the questions for the final discussion.

Design
We decided that three 90-minute sessions would be a workable time budget, providing enough space for programming goals but not too much Zoom. We wanted the sessions to be affordable and accessible, so priced them at $10 each or $25 for all three. We thought about providing a free program, but we wanted to be able to offer honoraria to speakers and panel discussants. We aimed for a mix of talks, food demos, and panels with either one longer presentation (20 minutes) or two shorter talks (10 minutes). Time was budgeted for an introduction of the chapter, the topic, and the speakers. The cooking demos were conducted by professional chefs who had between 20 and 30 minutes to showcase a dish. These were filmed in the chefs' home kitchens with two cameras, one focused on the speaker and one aimed at the stovetop. The panel discussion was 30 minutes and brought together the speakers, chefs, and local women who were a part of the Soul Food community. Audience questions were encouraged via the Zoom chat feature during the panel discussion and moderated by the session chair.

Topics
Philly Soul-Food Past opened the stage by setting the Southern Table, exploring the history of Soul Food, and tracing its roots in Philly. It included talks by Lauren Swann and Dr. Kelley Fanto Dyer and a cooking demo of fried chicken and collard greens by Chef Angie Brown. A panel discussion included Angie, Dr. Leni Sorensen, and Delihah Winder and was moderated by Lauren Swann.

Philly Soul-Food Present examined the Soul of the Plate, looking at diversity, equity, and inclusion at the Table. Valerie Erwin discussed the importance of current Philly Soul Food. Chef Stephanie Willis provided a cooking demo of Shrimp and Grits, and the panel discussion included Val Erwin, Nana Wil stuck, Stephanie Willis, and Barbie Marshall, moderated by Jamila Robinson.

Philly Soul-Food Future took us to a healthy, sustainable, and future Philly. Tia McDonald presented on future, plant-forward, Soul-Food trends. Chef Samantha Johnson presented a plant-based cooking demo of honey cornbread with Oyster Mushroom Etouffee, and the discussion panel included farmer Laquanda Dobson and chefs Tia McDonald, Aethra Erwin, and Samantha Johnson, moderated by Lari Rubling.

Future Trends
Our Future speakers connected past foodways to current professional capacities to point the way to a reimagined and healthier Soul-Food cuisine. The Past provides the backbone for this new cuisine with heritage seeds, farm practices, and foods. Crops from Africa, the Caribbean, and African American farms offer new-old heritage products that chefs can use to create innovative expressions of older foodways. Soul-Food Present highlighted the connections between Black chefs and home cooks and demonstrated the techniques and professional skills that built successful Soul Food restaurants. Present concerns about food justice and equitable opportunities are driving an entrepreneurial boom among Black chefs and farmers eager to provide the products needed to create the next chapter of Soul Food. And the future? By drawing together these differing strands of history, Philadelphia chefs are moving into plant-based cuisines, recognizing the need to rethink the foodways of the past to safeguard health and the environment. Our speakers made clear that the newest trend in Soul Food was what might be called Heritage Health—using history to bring forward nutritious and tasty foods to build sustainable restaurants and cuisines—and communities for the future.
Table Talks with Les Dames: Celebrating Women’s Achievements

In honor of Women’s History Month, numerous chapters of Les Dames d’Escoffier International hosted Table Talks with Les Dames—a series of virtual events focused on women and their roles in the food, beverage, and hospitality industry. Table Talks included food and beverage classes, demonstrations, and tastings; thought-provoking conversations with changemakers; and panel discussions on industry issues. Events were open to the public, funds raised will benefit the philanthropic efforts of the participating chapters.

Women’s History Month acknowledges women’s historical contributions to society in every aspect of life. It is celebrated in March in the U.S., the UK, and Australia, and in October in Canada. In the U.S., it began in 1981 as Women’s History Week, then evolved into a monthlong celebration in 1987. After being petitioned by the National Women’s History Project, Congress passed public law 100-9 designating the month of March 1987 as “National Women’s History Month,” in perpetuity.

Women’s History Month has its roots in International Women’s Day, which takes place March 8 and is a global celebration of the achievements of women. It took place for the first time in March 1911, and it was officially commemorated by the United Nations in 1975. A significant parallel is the women’s suffrage events that took place in March. The National Woman’s Party, a political group dedicated to women’s suffrage was officially formed in March 1917. The first major suffragist parade took over Washington, D.C., on March 3, 1913. In 2012, President Barack Obama said, “As we make headway on the crucial issues of our time, let the courageous vision championed by women of past generations inspire us to defend the dreams and opportunities of those to come.”—Susan Slack.
Entrepreneurs Share Their Paths to Success

**MINNESOTA CHAPTER**

By Kim Ode

The pandemic’s challenges have sharpened the instincts acquired by three, successful, Minnesota food entrepreneurs. The event, “Fabulous Female Food & Beverage Entrepreneurs Share Their Paths to Success,” featured Amalia Moreno-Damgaard, founder/CEO of Amalia Latin Gourmet; Amy Brown, founder/owner of Chowgirls Catering; and Michelle Winchelster, founder/owner of Twin Spirits Distillery.

Amalia so mastered virtual presentations on Latin American food and culture, that she aims to keep this hybrid business model. Amy, with other chefs, founded Minnesota Central Kitchen, repurposing rescued food into meals for people in need, producing more than 1.3 million meals last year. The pandemic inspired Michelle to develop a series of take-home cocktail kits that, given their success, may continue.

Here are a few takeaways on their success. Amalia says, “What has worked for me is to stay focused and engaged in good things.” She means helping others, improving information, and serve as experts to others. Kristie Sigler, FleishmanHillard PR, specializes in luxury hospitality, wellness, food and beverage. Here’s a brief description of what they told us.

**SESSION #1: WHAT’S YOUR STORY**

We learned useful tips on how to discover our stories and put them on social media. Ellen, a brand visionary, has been in corporate communications over 20 years and teaches GenFood throughout March. We learned useful tips on how to discover our stories and put them on social media. Ellen, a brand visionary, has been in corporate communications over 20 years and teaches GenFood nationwide.

Riverhead, New York.

**SESSION #2: SPEAKING YOUR STORY**

We discussed how to keep Facebook posts short and visual and how to create a promotion page for events. Keep Instagram posts conversational, inspiring, and exciting. We learned how to use business accounts to promote posts and analytics in marketing. On Twitter, infuse your personality; engage more than you broadcast; be generous and promote others. Link Facebook and Instagram to Twitter for easy sharing; post several times daily. We covered Zoom etiquette for interviews. For newsletters, email is effective at acquiring customers. Constant Contact and Mail Chimp offer solid marketing analytics.

**SESSION #3: DISTRIBUTING YOUR STORY—MASTERING GOOGLE**

Google is the front door of the Internet. We learned about building brand pages, keyword searches, conversion, mastering multiple platforms within Google; search optimization; how to talk to the algorithm, and the future of digital marketing.

Even the most savvy, social media mavens among us appreciated the opportunity to learn more from this valuable course to better promote themselves and their businesses.

**NEW FOODIES LEAD POST-PANDEMIC FOOD CONVERSATION**

By Anne Brockhoff  
 *(KANSAS CITY)*

Supply chain disruptions and restaurants and other closures of COVID-19 pushed more people into the kitchen than ever. How did these challenges affect consumers’ food habits and attitudes? That’s the question answered in a March 4 Table Talk hosted by Kristie Sigler, FleishmanHillard’s North American food, beverage, and agribusiness sector leader in Kansas City, and Shelly Kessen, Senior Vice President and Partner with FleishmanHillard Sacramento.

A 2018 FleishmanHillard study identified GenFood consumers who care about the health impact of their food purchases; who learn about nutrition, ingredients, food production and processing; who read and watch media about food, share that information, and serve as experts to others. FleishmanHillard’s new survey of 2,000 U.S. consumers asked many of the same value questions and revealed some shifts.

While consumers remained mindful of food choices, many were indulging more frequently in comfort foods, as well as refined and processed foods higher in fat, sugar, and sodium. Restaurant orders fell off, but the kit experimentation, and home cooking all increased.

Making the most of basic ingredients, eliminating food waste, and reducing food insecurity all became more important as people self-isolated and local restrictions took hold. GenFood generally remained passionate about nutrition, health, and comfort. But a single question revealed an important schism within that cohort: do you eat to live or live to eat?

Twenty-two percent of GenFood fell into the first category. Meanwhile, 78 percent of GenFood lives to eat. They enjoyed learning and sharing with friends on social media, embraced technology, prioritized taste, were mindful of their own health and the planet’s, focused equally on food values and experiences, and strove to stay on-trend. Kristie Sigler says, “Not only were they easy bread bakers, they are also the people who made Ina Garten’s Con- 

puter look so good; they were the ones who kept the restaurant open for the foundation of our brand, and how to im- 

porate key, descriptive words to make it stand out. We also learned how to put this into promotional content; what a ‘call to action’ is for a blog, website, and podcast; and how to save money on posting on our social media accounts.

Eating a well-balanced, nutritious, wholesome diet was important to GenFood.

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**Down on the Farm**

**LONDON CHAPTER**

By Charlotte Pike

LDEI London marked International Women’s Day with an online discussion on the role of women in farming, with a special focus on convention brokers, role models, and women who are changing the way we think about farming. It was chaired by Sheila Dillon, presenter of BBC Radio 4’s The Food Programme. Down on the Farm heard views and experiences from England, Wales, and Tennessee.

The session started by acknowledging women’s role in farming, whose im-

riger contributions had been so often barely acknowledged until recently. The speakers, particularly Helen Benjamin, advanced their forward thinking and supportive fathers now that supply issues have improved. This event raised several hundred pounds for farms to feed Us, connecting consumers to small-scale farmers and food producers. Watch online at https://youtu.be/Dbrvy38w-

Les Dames d’Escoffier International
Food Fight Trivia Night

GREATER DES MOINES CHAPTER

By Sue Honkamp, Communications Chair

The Greater Des Moines Dames hosted a fun Food Trivia Night on a chilly evening in March. The event featured a popular game-based platform Kahoot! Joyce Lock, creator of the best-selling trivia games Foodie Fight and Wine Wars, wrote the questions for the evening’s three rounds, adapting some from her original Foodie Fight game and adding others with an emphasis on women in food. Blair Zachariassen, a certified Sommelier, emceed the event and read each round of sixteen questions, including:

• Who is Ina Garten cooking for in her tenth Barefoot Contessa Cookbook? Answer: Jeffrey.
• True or False: A bouquet garni is most commonly a mix of parsley, thyme, and rosemary. Answer: False, it’s parsley, thyme, and bay leaf.
• True or False: Silent Stroes is Rachel Carson’s 1962 book that led to the outlawing of some pesticides including DDT. Answer: False, Silent Spring.

Players were encouraged to create nicknames using their first name and their favorite food or drink. Fun names included Tai Shrimp, Sammy Cakes, Nancy Cheer-toz, and Karl Oysters. A leaderboard showed who was advancing after each question. “Nancy Cheer-toz in the lead!”

Elevated Irish: Celebrating St Patricks Day the St. Louis Way

ST. LOUIS CHAPTER

By Alyse K. Scaglione

Martha Stewart and Whitney Linzmeyer kicked off our March 9 event with some helpful Zoom etiquette followed by a magnificent lecture on the Irish presence and celebrations in St. Louis. We rolled into our filmed demonstrations; chef/Owner Grace Dimonour of Chula Vista prepared Colcannon Croquettes A Smiling, basic potato-croquettes elevated with the addition of Brussels sprouts and a whole grain mustard sauce. Fran Cardonitso, CEO of local St Louis Brewery-Schluffy Beer gave a brief look at one of her favorite golden beers, Schluffy Kolsh. Next was Darla Crask, owner of Ices Plain & Fancy, with her unforgettable “Freakshake” milkshake take on Irish coffee utilizing Five Farms Irish Cream, Jameson Irish whiskey, local Schluffy Beer, and festive toppings.

Alyse Scaglines, pastry chef at Meadowbrook Country Club, was last with an Irish adaptation of classic soda bread featuring an enriched dough with apples, golden raisins, and caraway seeds. After the demonstrations, Darla and Alyse fielded questions giving further insight on flour substitutions, how to make coffee con-centrations (or cold brew today), our unexpected topic of lively paths into the world of desserts, working with mistakes, and how to obtain Darla’s amazing nitrogen ice cream specialties.

The first twenty-five local registrants received goodie bags filled with items from our sponsors: a mini loaf of Chef Alyse’s Irish American Soda Bread, Ronnoco house-blend coffee, Schluffy’s Kolsh and Oatmeal Stout beer, Whitecap Irish Cream from Lohr Distributing, WELLBeing Brewery’s Coffee Cream Non-Alcoholic Stout, personal protective equipment from Larson’s Medical Supply, and in her portable serveware and coupon code from Natural Tableware. One hundred percent of our registrants’ contributions go to our chapter’s grant, scholarship, and philanthropic efforts. We look forward to in-person events again; in the meantime, this platform is the perfect way to keep our community connected. “Ag gia slainte agus maith ort” (“wishing you health and happiness” in Irish) from the St. Louis Chapter.

Louisville’s Bourbon Rebirth

KENTUCKY CHAPTER

By Susan Reigler, Chapter President

On Sunday, March 14, Dame Stacey Yates, who is the Vice President for Marketing and Communications for Louisville Tourism, delivered a Table Talk to about 30 virtual attendees on Louisville’s Bourbon Renaissance. Long famous for the Kentucky, Louisville has also been a center for bourbon making and has a rich culinary heritage. It was this authentic heritage that Stacey turned to in 2009 when she created the Urban Bourbon Trail as part of building a reputation for Louisville as a destination for bourbon enthusiasts. The Urban Bourbon Trail began with eight restaurants. It has since grown to more than 40. In 2009, there were no bourbon attractions in Louisville, though many distilleries within an hour’s drive of the city offered tours. When Louisville moved to position itself as a bourbon destination, Stacey and her team hosted more than 100 travel writers a year to carry more stories started to open. There are now 10 distilleries operating in Louisville as well as several hotels and restaurants specifically oriented for catering to bourbon-centric guests. For her work in building a destination identity based on the historic roots of the bourbon industry, Stacey has been invited to other cities around the world that are interested in promoting their own unique identities. She has spoken in Mexico, Canada, and France with groups from Ireland and Japan, as well as in cities across the U.S. to help give them ways to capitalize on their strengths. Follow this link for a culinary series about bourbon and Kentucky foodways: youtube.com
Talks with Desert Dames

PHOENIX CHAPTER

By Judith Baigent-King

On Sunday afternoon, March 14, the Phoenix Chapter presented a fundraising program, “Talks with Desert Dames.” Seven Dames were introduced during the event. Kim Hasaud, our cocktail guru, is the National President of the United States Bartenders Guild. She demonstrated a cocktail named “The Bee’s Knees.” Chef Danielle Leoni talked about local seafood raised in the Sonoran Desert. Arizona Desert Shrimp have a mouthsome snap and perfect salinity, they are green rated by Seafood Watch. Chef Candy Lesher discussed the nutritional superiority of Tepey Beans. The most drought-resistant legumes on the planet, they have been an integral part of native desert diets for about 6,000 years. Jill Smith, the Arizona Director of C-CAP (Careers through Culinary Arts Program) talked about mentoring high school students for entrance into the culinary world. She demonstrated a visually stunning, award-winning salad. Chef/restaurateur Tamara Stanger, named the Best Visionary Chef in Phoenix, explained the protocol of foraging and showed us how to cook cholla cactus buds. Patty Emmert is Public Relations and Marketing Director for Duncan Family Farms, a leading organic grower. She showed a video of the original farm in Buckeye where most of the baby lettuce consumed in the country is grown. Patty made a hearty salad with produce from the farm. Ann Callery Rodarte created school gardens for K through 8th grade students and discussed her “Chef in the Garden” program where local chefs help students harvest produce and teach them how to prepare the food. And James Beard chef Charleen Badman created the Blue Watermelon project, which has gardens in over 20 Phoenix schools. She is Public Relations and Marketing Director for 2nd VP Erin Tucker, Georgetown University professor, and moderated by Mary Beth Albright, food anchor at the Washington Post, the conversation touched on Carla’s cookbooks, fabric designs, food development for online sales, TV shows, podcasts, and her work with homeless children, the sight impaired, and DC Central Kitchen.

Hats were de rigueur. Needless to say, Carla, a former fashion model, set the sporty tone, sporting her long grey curls, with a rakish topknot accented by a bright pink flower. Although Carla stopped coloring her hair some years ago as part of her efforts to empower older women, her energy and little grace belies this effort, and keeps her looking young.

One of Carla’s most fascinating current projects is the TV show she is creating called Foodways of Carla Hall. She will trace a dish back in time and track its development—how it came to be—both in the USA and abroad. Given the current interest in unearthing appropriation, and Carla’s ability to connect with people and get them to share their secrets, it should be quite an eye-opener.

Carla talked about the possibilities in developing plant-based foods, podcasts, fitness videos, and marketing her food. During a post-session interview, she explained that she has “resisted forcing herself into a box... and lets things happen organically.” She decides about her activities “when opportunity and desire come together.” Another long-considered project that’s on the cu is her children’s book.

Carla talked about the support of D.C. Chef Karina Harlin who manages her online presence and website. They meet annually for lunch and project development throughout a session. Carla’s easy informality makes her broad appeal understandable. As she puts it, “I genuinely enjoy people.”

Opening the Kitchen Door: Six Women Chefs who Paved the Way

NEW YORK CHAPTER

By Margaret Hapbel Perry

LDNY co-president Jennifer O’Flanagan, program organizer Linda Pelaccio, and San Francisco’s Tanya Holland, owner of Brown Sugar Kitchen, presented a nationwide event featuring six distinguished women chefs, National recognition, accolades encountered, hard-won victories—the evening was a narrative with which we all identify. Sara Moulton, Food Network host, encountered chauvinism at cooking school, at her apprenticeship in France, and in 1981 when trying to get a job in New York City. Her message: Keep your eye on the prize! ‘Rebecca Charles’ made her chef bones’ in the 1980s and 1990s. Rebecca is summoning Maine to reopen Pearl Kennebunk and Oyster Gellar. At first denied both leases and loans, Rebecca became the first woman underwritten jointly by the Small Business Administration and Chase Bank. Her advice: Work out your business plans, for slow personal gain. Use profit to maintain hard-earned wisdom: Initially be prepared to cook cholla cactus buds.

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CARLA HALL

Would Cleopatra Have Been a Dame?

ATLANTA CHAPTER

By Suzanne Brown

When I first read the title of this discussion, I thought, “Are you kidding?” Antony and Cleopatra, one of the best-known plays by William Shakespeare and portrayed by Elizabeth Taylor in the 1963 movie, Cleopatra, was anything but a woman with culinary skills. She did, however, exhibit the traits of a powerful, dynamic woman. A trailblazer, Cleopatra did appreciate fine wine. She and Mark Antony started their own drinking club called Inimitable Lives, meaning “so good or unusual as to be impossible to copy.” But that’s not the most important part of the discussion. Cleopatra, along with many trailblazing women such as members of LDIE, was the last active ruler of the Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt. Among her many talents and accomplishments, Cleopatra built up the Egyptian economy, established trade with many Arab nations, and was a savvy politician.

Presenter Deirdra Cox, founder president of Community Sustainability Enterprise (CSE) talked about characteristics of a successful woman and compared these traits to Dames. Some of these included being: passionate, self-aware, emotionally forward focused, innovator, courageous, resilient, creative, fearless, excellent communicator, tenacious, high energy and many more action-oriented description.

Using her own background to illustrate characteristics of a trailblazer, Deirdra spent some 30 plus years working in community relations in the banking industry. Utilizing connections with federal banking regulators and working through the Community Reinvestment Act, Deirdra facilitated the opening of a branch bank in Meadow Creek High School in Gwinnett County. A branch bank, in a high school, was opened to support the entire community with services not attainable any other way. Summing up, Cleopatra may not have been a Dame since she didn’t build her career in food, beverage, or hospitality, but she was definitely a dynamic woman, striving toward her business goals with great zeal and passion.
A Conversation with Alpana Singh

CHICAGO CHAPTER

Known for her signature wit, infectious enthusiasm, and motivational stories, Alpana Singh made history in the wine world. At 26-years-old, she became the youngest woman and the first ever Southeast Asian to attain the title of Master Sommelier. (The exams pass rate is approximately 3 percent.) Alpana’s accolades include Chicago-area restaurateur and host of the Emmy Award-winning restaurant review TV show, Check, Please! On March 16, the Chicago Chapter invited attendees to pull up a seat and spend time getting to know Alpana. The dynamic conversation was moderated by LDEI Third Vice President Liz Baret, who is a certified specialist of wine. Alpana shared insights on building a personal brand and offered tips on how to accomplish goals and stay motivated. She talked about the importance of mentorship and paying it forward.

Alpana’s rise to success has been meteoric and inspiring, from her first restaurant job at 12 selling roses to restaurant dinners in her hometown Monterey, California, to becoming a successful entrepreneur and inspiring, from her first restaurant job to attaining the title of Master Sommelier. At 26-years-old, she became the youngest woman and the first ever Southeast Asian to attain the title of Master Sommelier. (The exams pass rate is approximately 3 percent.) Alpana’s accolades include Chicago-area restaurateur and host of the Emmy Award-winning restaurant review TV show, Check, Please! On March 16, the Chicago Chapter invited attendees to pull up a seat and spend time getting to know Alpana. The dynamic conversation was moderated by LDEI Third Vice President Liz Baret, who is a certified specialist of wine. Alpana shared insights on building a personal brand and offered tips on how to accomplish goals and stay motivated. She talked about the importance of mentorship and paying it forward.

Alpana Singh

A Taste of Nashville: Sorghum, Beer, Biscuits, and Ice Cream

NASHVILLE CHAPTER

By Nancy Vienneau

Four Nashville Dames shared their seemingly divergent, yet very connected culinary passions. In her way, each is upholding legacies of the past while shaping the future. “For generations, sorghum sweetened the South,” says Sylvia Ganier of Green Door Gourmet (greendoorgourmet.com). Sylvia wanted to bring back a cherished—and fading—Southern legacy. Two years ago, she planted a 15-acre field; canes are pressed for their juices that are cooked down into syrup; the syrup is used for flavorings. To bring back a cherished—and fading—one this summer.

Sylvia Ganier

Charlotte Miller

A Salute to Two Famous “Big Easy” Cocktails

NEW ORLEANS CHAPTER

By Beth D’Addono

During Prohibition, New Orleans had the reputation as the wettest city in America. When drinking booze was against the law, 1920 to 1933, federal agent L. E. B. J. E. J. was sent around the country to see how long it would take to get a drink. Not if, but how long! In New York, it took him 14 minutes. In New Orleans, it took 35 seconds; he got off the train and into a cab—the cabby reached under the seat and pulled out a pint. That’s just how we roll in New Orleans, a place where walking tails (walking while drinking) and to-go drinks are not just encouraged, but perfectly legal. This is just one bit of liquor lore.

Elizabeth Pearce

The famous Hurricane was created with rum at Pat O’Brien’s bar in 1937 when whiskey was hard to come by. The glass is shaped to resemble a hurricane lamp. Original Hurricanes had three ingredients—Cajun rice, lemon juice, and passion fruit syrup. Elizabeth has a theory about why people love the local libation—even now that it’s made from powdered mix. New Orleans doesn’t feel like any other city in the world. Pat O’Brien’s offers the quintessential New Orleans experience—its famous drink becomes a totem, capturing all the things New Orleans can represent in a glass.

Lokelani Alabanza

Famous “Big Easy” Cocktails

The Sazerac Cocktail

The Sazerac is New Orleans’ official cocktail and is upholding the city’s reputation as the wettest city in America. Pat O’Brien’s offers the quintessential New Orleans experience—its famous drink becomes a totem, capturing all the things New Orleans can represent in a glass.

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Four Nashville Dames shared their seemingly divergent, yet very connected culinary passions. In her way, each is upholding legacies of the past while shaping the future. “For generations, sorghum sweetened the South,” says Sylvia Ganier of Green Door Gourmet (greendoorgourmet.com). Sylvia wanted to bring back a cherished—and fading—one this summer.

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The Health Benefits of Fermented Foods

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PARIS AND SEATTLE CHAPTERS

By Norma Rosenthal

When two DEI sister chapters collaborate on programs, you can be assured that an outstanding and informative learning experience will take place. On March 22, the Paris and Seattle planning committees brought together four prominent Dame panels to discuss “Fermented Foods in the USA & France and Their Health Benefits.”

Seattle food and nutrition educator Martha Marino led the fun and engaging discussion. The forum was launched by Seattle’s Julie O’Brien, who infuses foods with fresh ferments at Trofyo Kitchen. Her mission is to produce fresh ferments packed with crunch, tang, and zest, and she spoke about the interesting ways consumers can incorporate these extraordinary foods into their daily meals. Immunologist and gut microbiome specialist Wil DePaolo, PhD, based at University of Washington Medical Center, discussed his focused research on intestinal disease and nutrition.

Wage Equity and the New Restaurant Paradigm

SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER

By Kimberly Novelle Charles

The premise of the San Francisco Chapter’s March 24 event was to discuss the coast-to-coast rethinking of the restaurant industry’s wage equity model with a focus on “whole employee development” and why wage equity matters. Already an issue before the onset of the pandemic, many restaurateurs have been experimenting with ways to create better pay parity between the front and back of the house.

The moderator was Kimberly Belle of the hospitality consulting firm, Talk & Roe. Representing two different business models, one an independent, and early-to-adopt “farm-to-table” restaurant in Menlo Park, California, owned by culinary visionary Jesse Cool, and the other a multiple restaurant and hospitality empire headquartered in New York, founded by Danny Meyer, the event explored the unique approaches these entities developed given their philosophies and legal frameworks.

In California, where base minimum wage is around $15.50, Jesse developed the Heart of House fair wage model for her team of 14 people; the staff is cross trained, having everyone be familiar with all facets of how the restaurant is run. She divides gratuities by the number of hours everyone works and apportions proceeds accordingly, creating an equivalency of $25–32 an hour. She calls her approach thoughtful dining versus fine dining and considers herself to be staff versus customer oriented first and foremost.

Patti Simpson, the Chief People Officer at the Union Square Hospitality Group shared that USHG focuses on the virtual cycle of hospitality as outlined in Meyer’s book Setting the Table; each employee is valued from dishwasher to sommelier. As New York law doesn’t allow for shared tips and can’t impose a service charge legally, USHG originally experimented with “hospitality included” by raising menu prices by 20 percent. The concept was difficult for guests to grasp, and the onset of the Shelter in Place program called for a new model. Now the company shares one percent of sales for each shift among the whole team and focuses on issues such as benefits and company culture.

Patti stated, “Always think about the engine of any company, the beating heart of the restaurant is the entire team.”

Jesse and Patti are experimenting with different tactics to reach wage equity in their business, but share a common goal of expanding public awareness of these issues and inviting diners and industry leaders alike to get curious about how tips and wages are distributed in the restaurants they visit and run. The event raised $700 for the chapter’s scholarship fund. The full session (90 minutes) is available here for viewing:

Voyage to France in a Glass

PARIS CHAPTER

By Rosa Jackson

Two leading drinks experts in Paris came together for a sharing, quenching Table Talks event on March 25, Drinking French, the bestselling book of famed blogger David Lebovitz has inspired his popular, live IGTV Apéro Hour on Instagram. Forest Collins runs the website and podcast 52 Martinis, which focuses on France’s cocktail and spirits scene. During the lively chat, David and Forest discussed and demonstrated their favorite French-inspired cocktails. Forest began with pastis, the anise-flavored alcoholic, second only in popularity to whisky in France. She suggested mixing it with equal parts fresh lime juice and simple syrup before adding five parts water and ice, creating a refreshing, not-too-potent drink that can be served in a pitcher. David noted that absinthe, the Swiss precursor to pastis, was banned for a long time in France not because of the hallucinatory effects of wormwood, but because a toxic copper derivative was being added.

Forest and David discussed gentian-based liqueurs such as Suze and Salers, whose tongue-curling bitterness becomes an asset when mixed with tonic water or added to a cocktail, such as the Yellow Cocktail and the Boulevardier, and why wage equity is so important. They also discussed gentian-based liqueurs such as Suze and Salers, whose tongue-curling bitterness becomes an asset when mixed with tonic water or added to a cocktail, such as the Yellow Cocktail and the Boulevardier, and why wage equity is so important. They also discussed gentian-based liqueurs such as Suze and Salers, whose tongue-curling bitterness becomes an asset when mixed with tonic water or added to a cocktail, such as the Yellow Cocktail and the Boulevardier. Forest began with pastis, the anise-flavored alcoholic, second only in popularity to whisky in France. She suggested mixing it with equal parts fresh lime juice and simple syrup before adding five parts water and ice, creating a refreshing, not-too-potent drink that can be served in a pitcher. David noted that absinthe, the Swiss precursor to pastis, was banned for a long time in France not because of the hallucinatory effects of wormwood, but because a toxic copper derivative was being added.

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Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Practices

AUSTIN CHAPTER

By Jennifer Cheng

Panelists: De J. Lozada, Lorena Legarreta, Jennifer Cheng, and Kendall Antonelli

The Austin Chapter is on a journey to ensure that all women in the food, beverage, and hospitality industries feel welcomed and that they belong at our table. The chapter sent out a survey to record our demographics, creating a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging committee (DEIB). We worked with an outside consultant to craft an Austin Dames Equity Statement. Bringing in an outside expert was absolutely key—while we are dedicated to our mission, we are not and will not be DEIB experts without necessary formal training. Led by Lorena Legarreta, the committee outlined these goals: to keep representation a priority as we grow our membership and encourage board participation; to reframe our grant structure and evaluation process to ensure that recipients reflect our membership’s diversity; to set up a series of trainings to promote understanding of DEIB concepts; and to build stronger connections within our organization and community.

We applaud our Austin Chapter members for growing with us. DEIB work requires learning and growth, including being open to hear multiple opinions. We encourage each other to be vocal. We work together to find consensus. The intentions of our group are good, that banishes us when we inevitably make mistakes. We own our limitations, and we aspire to be better, together. DEIB work is greater than our committee, chapter, or organization. It’s a lifelong personal journey that requires constant dedication to listening, learning, and checking yourself. We hope to inspire and empower each individual to help grow empathy and knowledge across our industry to help change business culture as a whole. To quote a portion of our Equity Statement, “Together we will build an inclusive culture of belonging by offering everyone support throughout their personal journey that requires constant dedication to listening, learning, and checking yourself.”

Coffee in Mexico: A 200-Year Tradition

MEXICO CHAPTER

By Susan Slack (Charleston)

Coffee in Mexico is a 200-year-old tradition of taste, culture, and climate. Verónica Castro’s knowledge of her country’s coffee industry and its rich history was evident during the Mexico’s Table Talks presentation. A publicist by trade, Verónica has a degree in Mexican history from Panamericana University, Mexico City. With a deep passion for the world of coffee, she began promoting and selling the Diamante brand in 2017. Mexico’s first coffee plants traveled from Cuba to the mountainous Coatepec region in Veracruz in the 18th century. Coatepec is considered Mexico’s coffee capital. Plants from Yemen were established in Michoacán, and Guatemalan plants were grown in southermost Chiapas. Verónica said, “Ninety-four percent of Mexico’s coffee production takes place in five states: Veracruz, Chiapas, Puebla, Oaxaca, and Guerrero. However, coffee is found in 15 states across Mexico.”

Coffee is one of the main drivers of Mexico’s economy. In the late 19th century, the U.S. was the main importer of Mexican coffee, purchasing between 65 and 87 percent of total exports. Mexico is the world’s 10th largest coffee producer and the top source of Certified Organic and Fair Trade coffee. Early cafés were centers of intrigue and gathering places to drink coffee, discuss literary and political affairs, gossip, and read newspapers. Verónica said Café de Mánique, Mexico’s first coffee house (1790), was also first to battle the chocolate traditions of taste, culture, and climate. Verónica Gourmert.

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By Susan Slack (Charleston)

Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Practices

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

By Jennifer Cheng

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Panelists: De J. Lozada, Lorena Legarreta, Jennifer Cheng, and Kendall Antonelli

The Austin Chapter is on a journey to ensure that all women in the food, beverage, and hospitality industries feel welcomed and that they belong at our table. The chapter sent out a survey to record our demographics, creating a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging committee (DEIB). We worked with an outside consultant to craft an Austin Dames Equity Statement. Bringing in an outside expert was absolutely key—while we are dedicated to our mission, we are not and will not be DEIB experts without necessary formal training. Led by Lorena Legarreta, the committee outlined these goals: to keep representation a priority as we grow our membership and encourage board participation; to reframe our grant structure and evaluation process to ensure that recipients reflect our membership’s diversity; to set up a series of trainings to promote understanding of DEIB concepts; and to build stronger connections within our organization and community.

We applaud our Austin Chapter members for growing with us. DEIB work requires learning and growth, including being open and vulnerable to difficult conversations— we completely understand why members are asking, and their willingness to hear multiple opinions. We encourage each other to be vocal. We work together to find consensus. The intentions of our group are good, that banishes us when we inevitably make mistakes. We own our limitations, and we aspire to be better, together. DEIB work is greater than our commit- tee, chapter, or organization. It’s a lifelong personal journey that requires constant dedication to listening, learning, and checking yourself. We hope to inspire and empower each individual to help grow empathy and knowledge across our industry to help change business culture as a whole. To quote a portion of our Equity Statement, “Together we will build an inclusive culture of belonging by offering everyone support throughout their personal journey that requires constant dedication to listening, learning, and checking yourself.”

Coffee in Mexico: A 200-Year Tradition

MEXICO CHAPTER

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By Susan Slack (Charleston)
Les Dames d’Escoffier International

CHAPTER PROGRAMS

Nichole Bendele (San Antonio)

ANN AIBOR | ATLANTA | AUSTIN | BIRMINGHAM | BOSTON | BROWN | BRUSSELS | CLEVELAND | CHARLESTON | CHARLOTTE & THE WESTERN CAROLINAS | CHELSEA | CHICAGO | CHICAGOLAND (DALLAS) | COLUMBUS | DELAWARE | DETROIT | DFW | GEORGIA | GREAT LAKES | GREATER PHILADELPHIA | GREAT WASHINGTON | HOUSTON | IRELAND | LONDON | LOS ANGELES/ORANGE COUNTY | MIAMI | MARYLAND | MINNESOTA | MONTEREY BAY | NASHVILLE | NEW ENGLAND | NEW YORK | NORTH CAROLINA | OREGON | PALM SPRINGS | PARIS | FRANCE | PHILADELPHIA | PHOENIX | PORTLAND | SACRAMENTO | SAN ANTONIO | SAN DIEGO | SAN FRANCISCO | SAN MARCOS | SAVANNAH | SAVANNAH/COASTAL GEORGIA | SEATTLE | SONOMA | SOUTH FLORIDA | ST. LOUIS | WASHINGTON, D.C.

AUSTIN

Denise Clarke

Nonna’s Austin joined forces with Good Work Austin, Texas Food and Wine Alliance, Whole Foods Market, World Central Kitchen, and other local groups to make and deliver thousands of meals to nonprofit groups, local hospitals, childcare centers, and others without power and water during the February winter storm that hit Texas. The Austin Chapter hosted an LDEI Table Talk called “The Importance of Nutrition in Crisis & Inclusion” led by Dames Lorena Legareta, Kendall Antonelli, Jennifer Cheng, and De J. Leoda. The Austin Dames Coffee Break series included discussions about “Funding Your Business,” “Yes and Own of CPG,” and “Negotiations.” Austin Dames held their 17th holiday dinner for the unschooled in partnership with the University United Methodist Church, a zero-waste kitchen.

BIRMINGHAM

Martha Johnston

Birmingham Dames are continuing to volunteer at the Central Alabama Community Food Bank on a regular basis as well as evaluating additional food bank programs. A team has been formed to develop a foods and nutrition curriculum for residents at The WellHouse, a safe haven for victims of human trafficking. The Scholarship & Grants Committee has selected recipients for our 2021 Awards Program. They will all be recognized at an outdoor reception at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens in April. Our annual fundraiser, Southern Soiree, will be on Sunday, October 3, 2021. Fundraising and planning are underway.

BOSTON

Amanda Arrigo-Witte

It is a time of renewal, rebirth, and new beginnings. As we welcome the spring days and warmer temperatures, Boston’s Les Dames d’Escoffier Chapter has been busy planning its 59th Annual Dinner to welcome new inductees and celebrate the existing membership. After a year of Zoom events, the Boston Chapter has been dreaming, planning, and imagining ways we can safely be together for this annual tradition. In addition to the Annual Dinner planning, the Boston Dames have hosted an educational, digital wine tasting class and a cooking class with Trisha Perez Kennedy. The chapter has also continued to host its regular event “I’ll Be Damed.” This is an opportunity for the chapter to learn about specific members and their remarkable careers and lives. Most recently, “I’ll Be Damed” highlighted Anne Hopkins, Sally Ekus, Katia DelRio Gacancio, and Pat Mozersky.

CHARLESTON

Sinead Fallyor Slack

Our virtual, spring business meeting was hosted by Vice President Helen Mittenough. The chapter voted to adopt the local charity, Amor Healing Kitchen, which provides nutritious, plant-based meals to Charleston-area residents facing serious health challenges. The connection between good food and health is powerful; good food can be a tool to aid in recovery from major surgery, medical treatments for cancer, and from the pervasive heart stroke, or COVID-19. Teens volunteer a vital role in preparing the food, empowered by adult mentors, they learn culinary and leadership skills. Ninety percent of the clients receive the program for free. Executive Chef Dan Ellsworth of GigPro hosted the program. His success at helping those in need was a highlight of the evening. Our virtual February event doubled as a fundraiser for our chapter and featured Arlene Coco, a Louisiana native who entertained us with a cooking class featuring gumbo, Southern flavors, and Torched Bananas with Salted Caramel. We learned about the history of Mardi Gras, parade culture, and enjoyed the New Orleans-style jazz playlist. In March, we were proud to host a virtual “Table Talks,” inviting fellow members around the globe as Minnesota entrepreneurs Amalia Moreno-Damgaard, Founder/CEO of Amalia Latin Catering; and Michelle Winchester, Founder/Owner of Twin Spirits Distillery hosted an insightful discussion on starting and sustaining a woman-owned business along with their unique stories.

MINNESOTA

Amy Brown

We started the year off healthy with a virtual January meeting featuring Jenny Beren, a Twin Cities-based food and nutrition educator. She was joined by Kate Shafrin, a doctor of integrative medicine and professor at the University of Minnesota. We discussed the basics of the role of food, nutrition, and cooking in preventive health care and how they are working to change the way health care understands and integrates food to prevent disease and promote overall wellness. Our virtual February event doubled as a fundraiser for our chapter and featured Arlene Coco, a Louisiana native who entertained us with a cooking class featuring gumbo, Southern flavors, and Torched Bananas with Salted Caramel. We learned about the history of Mardi Gras, parade culture, and enjoyed the New Orleans-style jazz playlist. In March, we were proud to host a virtual “Table Talks,” inviting fellow members around the globe as Minnesota entrepreneurs Amalia Moreno-Damgaard, Founder/CEO of Amalia Latin Catering; and Michelle Winchester, Founder/Owner of Twin Spirits Distillery hosted an insightful discussion on starting and sustaining a woman-owned business along with their unique stories.

PHILADELPHIA

Deanna Segrave-Daly

Inspired by our traditional winter, in-person potluck this year, we decided to make meals for local food service workers as a thank you for all they have done and endured during the pandemic. Led by Dallas Dames Lauren Davis, Dames reached out to Chef Amanda Campbell, owner Cooks Who Care; assisted by our VP Jacqueline Kelly; by Lynn E. Hixson who hosted the assembly; and with lots of help from Dames Long Island who expanded this project over the next few weeks, we were able to provide thousands of meals by Deanna Segrave-Daly of Guittard Chocolate Company and Chef John Durfee. Each session featured a historical talk, a lively cooking demo, and thought-provoking panel discussion. In addition to Dames Lauren, Angie, Tia, Barbara Marshall, and Lori Robling, local Philly experts and guest speakers included Kelley Fanto Deetz, Leni Sorensen, Deldall Winner, Valerie Erin, Stephanie Willms, Jalina Robinson, Naima Wilmott, Samantha Johnson, Laquanda Dobson, and Alethea Erin.

SAN ANTONIO

Karen Haen

San Antonio Dames welcomed spring with a Sunday evening dinner under the stars and on the lawn of the beautiful Guenther House in the historic King William area. Built in 1859, the Guenther House is on the National Register of Historic Places and a showplace of the traditions and history of C.H. Guenther & Son, which started as a flour mill in 1851. The gathering began with curated punch bowls cocktails by Bexar Tonics, featuring a few of Elie Durfee’s local and bespoke bar drinks and a delicious gin and Texas Wildflower Tonic Syrup; Pecan and Smoked Fig Bourbon cocktail; and Prickly Pear Tonic and Vodka cocktails. Guests were given a choice of boxed picnic supper from Elie Russ of Clementine and Allison Balfour of Southerleigh restaurants followed by Guenther House’s signature desserts by Donna Vaughan. Musical entertainment set the upbeat mood at the event. The highlight of the evening were Dames having the opportunity to visit, laugh, and catch up with each other, as this was the first in-person chapter event since the COVID-19 shutdown.

SAN FRANCISCO

Antonia Allegre

Just in time for Valentine’s Day, the San Francisco Chapter hosted “The Evolution of Artistry in Premium Chocolate” on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 and hosted by Amy Mynder Mel of Ghirardelli. The event featured Amy Guittard of Guittard Chocolate Company and Chef Stephen Durfee of The Culinary Institute of America at Greystone. Amy shared insights about sustainable cocoa production while Chef Durfee discussed how he approaches chocolate selection for bakery and pastry projects with his students. Amy and Chef Durfee then led a 100 filling, home-cooked, staff meals to small food businesses in two sections of downtown Philadelphia—even through a snowstorm! During Black History Month, Philly Dames Lauren Davis, Joy Brooks Johnson, Janet Charon, Mia Donald, and Jill Weber helped organize and host an impressively robust 3-part Zoom series “The Philly Food Soul Scene” covering past, present, and future roles of Black women in creating and nurturing the legacy which evolved into modern soul cuisine in Philadelphia. Each session featured a historical talk, a lively cooking demo, and thought-provoking panel discussion. In addition to Dames Lauren, Angie, Tia, Barbara Marshall, and Lori Robling, local Philly experts and guest speakers included Kelley Fanto Deetz, Leni Sorensen, Deldall Winner, Valerie Erin, Stephanie Willms, Jalina Robinson, Naima Wilmott, Samantha Johnson, Laquanda Dobson, and Alethea Erin.

Erika Jurden, Jacqueline Kelly, Lonely Otaist, Lynne Bourbon, and Maria Campbell; working staff for Cooks Who Care. Assisted by our VP Jacqueline Kelly; by Lynn E. Hixson; host, Mary Martini and her husband at the Sunday picnic dinner. L-R: Diana Adelson, DeAnna Arias, and Bianca Alladio visit at the picnic. John Brooks; Kimberly Maalund; and Victoria Burchfield enjoy cocktails pre-picnic; Pat Morrison; Mary Martini and her husband in the background.
the audience through a tast- ing of two single-origin dark chocolates and a semisweet chocolate. The event con- cluded with a video capturing Chef Stephen’s creation of a chocolate tart with choco- late glaze. In 1989, Dame Toni Allera launched the Symposium for Professional Food Writers in Napa Valley. That conference continued 22 years, mostly at The Green- brier, yielding about 200 cookbooks, etc. In 2014, Toni established the Symposium for Professional Wine Writers at Meadowood/Napa Valley; its 17th year was held virtually in May. That’s 39 years of success for writers.

SOUTH FLORIDA Stephanie Misiew

Our popular Cocktails and Conversation series resumed in January and February. It continues to be an engaging and fun way to get to know our fellow Dames. February’s collaborative “That’s Amore” event celebrated Valentine’s Day Italian style. Travel specialist Elizabeth Montana took us on a virtual tour of Italy’s most romantic destinations while South Florida Dames dazzled with a cooking demonstration from Barbara Bryer featuring Caico e Pepe with black truffles while Angela Santarelli introduced us to notable Italian wines. Gina Natoli wrapped up with a Limoncello masterclass featuring her family’s recipe from the Amalfi Coast. South Florida Dames Denise Courshon and Julia Johnston headed up a collaboration with the New Orleans Dames on a fabulous Lundi Gras (“Fat Monday”) celebration where people dressed up in the spirit of the occasion. March featured an informative, three-part Digital Marketing series taught by Ellen Marchman that was perfect for developing our digital strategies in this post-COVID world. A Passover Zoom celebration featured Carole Kotkin and her granddaughter, Julie Hirschhorn, who taught a Flourless Chocolate Cake cooking class. An Easter Zoom followed featuring an Egg Strata cooking demonstration by Maude Eaton and a shower for soon-to-be mother of twins, Amy Sedeño.

Seattle Green Tables Mentors Women Entrepreneurs Through Spice Bridge

By LESLIE MACKIE (SEATTLE)

Seattle’s LDEI Green Tables Committee held its recent meeting via Zoom and on sight at Spice Bridge Global Food Hall located in Tukwila Village, about 20 minutes outside of Seattle. Spice Bridge is overseen by Food Innovation Network (FIN), a program of the nonprofit, Global to Local. Spice Bridge is home to FIN’s Food Business Incubator Program, which helps women of color, immigrants, and refugees living in broader South King County, Washington state, to start and grow thriving businesses.

The incubator program provides one year of mentoring, with assistance in obtaining required permits and licenses, preparing a basic business plan, developing a menu and tasting presentations. During the second year, the entrepreneurs work three days a week as vendors in the Spice Bridge Global Food Hall. Participants have access to a commercial prep kitchen, locker, and walk-in, along with the use of retail food stalls. It is an opportunity to work out the kinks for their own brick and mortar businesses during year three with a below-market rent for the year.

We toured the facility with Dame Kara Martin, program director for the Food Innovation Network. With great delight, we met three of the food vendors. We were enticed with fried, stuffed chicken wings and lemongrass paste, spiced meatballs from Theary Cambodian Food, and we enjoyed empanadas with chimichurri sauce from Seatango.

The biggest compliment to Kara Martin is that many of the entrepreneurs can quit auxiliary jobs and focus on the profession they love of cooking and serving their community at Spice Bridge.

Seattle Green Table Committee has made Food Innovation Network a focus for 2021. We held our June Chapter meeting at Spice Bridge Global Food Hall and worked with the entrepreneurs to prepare an array of regional dishes for those present at the meeting. In addition, we plan to work with director Kara to set up a mentorship program with the 13 entrepreneurs currently in the program.

Our annual Summer Supper event for Green Table awareness will take place at the FIN farmers market. We will tour farms and meet the farmers that receive training from FIN followed by a simple supper with fresh produce purchased at the market and prepared by our committee.

Someday, we hope to welcome these ladies as members of our chapter!
Cleveland/Northeast Ohio

Bev Shaffer was recently honored by the Alzheimer’s Association in recognition of her continued commitment as an ambassador, fundraiser, and Board member.

Greater Des Moines

Nichole Aksamit was promoted from executive editor to editor-in-chief of Allicipes magazine.

New Orleans

Emily Vanlandingham launched her new business, Farmstand Live, on April 24; a series of drive-in, live music concerts that supports restaurants, farmers markets, and musicians to help rebuild New Orleans post-COVID-19 cultural economy.

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AUSTIN

Kendall Antonelli was awarded the Henry McMahon Children’s Advocacy Award in May by the Kids Living Well partnership of nonprofits in Central Texas. She designated mental health challenges by telling her own story of depression. Kendall served on the Austin Child Guidance Center Board and as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Texas Walls Chair.

Liz Berry has opened Cactus Moon Lodge, a boutique event and retreat space in Sipping Springs, Texas.

Joi Chevalier organized the Virtual Conference on Food Resilience, Equity, and Access with more than a dozen panels on how private and public organizations can work together to get food in the hands of people who need it, both during the pandemic and beyond.

Sonya Cote has opened Store House Market, a farm fresh foods in Bastrop, Texas.

Kati Luedcke, owner of Killa Wasi, has opened Neighbors, a dog park and coffee shop in South Austin.

Dr. J Lozada, with Soul Popped Gourmet Popcorn has helped create the National Association of Black Food Manufacturers to promote opportunities for growth and leadership for Blacks in the consumer package goods and food manufacturing professions.

Marium Parker with the Texas Food and Wine Alliance was featured in the April issue of Austin Woman Magazine, sharing women mentors who have shaped her career.

Rae Wilson with Wine for the People was featured in a women winemakers’ story in Wine Enthusiast. Photo: Marshall Tidrick.

BIRMINGHAM

Cristina Almanza has been promoted to Buffalo Rock-Pepsi Corporate Business Development Director, Om Premise, Coffee, Tea, and Allied Sales. Cristina was also featured in the Birmingham Business Journal as a member of the 2021 Blackwomen Mentors. The Torreon, Mexico native moved to Alabama and became a proud USA citizen in 2017.

The Houston Chronicle’s Andrea Snyder, chef creative officer at Urban Cookhouse, announced the reopening of Urban Cookhouse location after being closed for the last year due to COVID-19.

Cheryl Slocum was named senior food and features editor at Allrecipes Magazine, part of the Meredith Food Group. This James Beard award-winning writer has been a senior food editor for Cooking Light (Time Inc.) and Country Living (Hearst). She recently created content for numerous other publications and clients. www.Allrecipes.com

CHARLESTON

Johnny Caldwell received the Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET) Level 1 Award in Spirits.

CHARLOTTE

Avery McMillan is the author of “Sweet Home South Carolina,” a cookbook titled, “Food Enthusiast.”

Cincinnati

Carolyn Johnson has been promoted to Culinary Producer for Season 5 of Delicious! by Food Network.

Robin Grifﬁn has been named Vice President of Chafers & Events for the International Food & Beverage Technology Association (IFBTA).

Cokie Money, founder of Cokie’s Hot Little Biscuits, announced a SCETV/PBS 10-episode lifestyle documentary and culinary series titled, “Heat She Will Roll.” It focuses on balancing her roles as a woman, mom to three daughters and business owner in what was an unpredictable year. www.calliesbiscuits.com/pages/how-she-rolls

Belinda-Smith Sullivan’s newest cookbook is Southern Sugar (Georgia) (Hardcover).

Her new cookbook, "Louisiana Creole Cooking: The Food of My Ancestors," will probably only be used one time. www.Allrecipes.com

Cengage Learning

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SAN ANTONIO
Heather Nazen, ex-ecutive chef, Di-Anna Arias, vice president of sales and culinary vision at Don Strange of Texas; and Lainey Berkus, owner of successful food and community/rela-tions consultant, are part of the stunning, new luxury hotel, Estancia Del Norte, which transformed a piece of San Antonio history into a modern space for cel-ebiration. It was designed to showcase the vibrant traditions of Mexico, Spain, and Texas. www. estancia-delnorte.com/

Lori Horn’s Dough Pizzeria Napoletana was featured on an episode of Guy Firey’s Dinner, Drive-in and Drive, Take-out. It featured a Triple-D Family reunion and Dough prosciutto sugo pizza and Calabrian chicken wings with Dough- gnulosa Dressing and Dipping Sauce and Calabrian Chili Davola Wing Sauce, which are available for shipping nationwide. www.doughpizzerana.com

NEW YORK TIMES AND ON THE TODAY SHOW: www.kawashington.com

KELLY KONEN
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SAN FRANCISCO
Maryam Ahmed is excited to announce the launch of Maryam + Company, a consult-ing firm that connects brands with their community through creative programming and cu-rated experiences. We of-fer strategic, long-term project management such as product and concept launches, year-round event series, and high impact brand programs for hospitality businesses. www.maryamahmedco.com

SEATTLE
Deba Wegner’s company, Recipe for Success, assisted long-term client Mayur Foods with their opening of a second grocery store located at Redmond Town Center. She also worked in a public relations and branding capacity with the new owner and manage-ment team of Caffe Vita Coffee, Seattle’s legacy coffee company.

SOUTH FLORIDA
Natalia Levey, restaura-tor, chef, and founder of Hi Hospitality Group, opened the new Asian eatery KOJO, the latest culinary destination in downtown Sarasota in February after only two and a half months of construction. KOJO marks the company’s second concept after the popular-winning Italian seafood restaurant, Speaks Clam Bar.

Stephanie Miskew, certi-fied sommelier, launched her popular “Empower Your Palate” virtual wine tasting series. Classes focus on demystifying the world of wine and help-ing students hone their tasting skills and identify the wines they truly love. Class schedule and top-ics are available on www. theglassousgourmet.com

Jacqui Pressinger, director of strategic partnerships for the American Culinary Federation, was a judge of the 2021 World Food Championships, the biggest food competition experience in the world. She pits chefs and home cooks on a level playing field against each other to fight for the $50,000 prize. www.worldfoodchampionships.com

Patty Ruiz, creator of The Mad Table, is a culinary instructor, private chef, recipe and menu developer, and food stylist. Patty announced registration for her summer 2021 Kids Culni-nary Camps; one for ages 6-11, and another for ages 12-15. www.themadtable.com/events/

UPCOMING IN THE FALL ISSUE:
	- Introducing LDEI Woman of Purpose
	- The M.F.K. Fisher Award Winner

SUMMER QUARTERLY 2021
P.O. Box 4961
Louisville, KY 40204

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 ChapterPrograms@ldei.org.

Include:

• CHAPTER
• NAME
• Maximum 50 words for each Dame about personal honors or ac-
ccomplishments, but not about new product introductions or other promotions. Please include a website URL, if applicable. Press

pictures and cookbook covers are NOT accepted.

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

CHAPTER PROGRAMS (Editor, Nichole Benede)
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da, PR, or other purposes to help achieve the organization’s aims.
By Karen Haram (San Antonio)

Whether you’re in the market for margaritas, mariachis, masa, mentors, mixology, or music, you’ll find it at October’s LDEI Conference, deep in the heart of Texas.

One of two U.S. cities designated a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, San Antonio offers an unmatched blend of tradition and innovation. We’ll welcome you with a unique brand of Texas hospitality, served in picture-perfect fall weather against a backdrop of the meandering River Walk and the historic Alamo.

Festivities start with a boat ride on the San Antonio River that will take you to the Arneson River Theater for an evening of merrymaking complete with signature food and drinks from San Antonio restaurateur Dames.

From our speakers, you’ll learn about the six flags that flew over Texas and the UNESCO designation, sustainability, wine, food as medicine, cocktail mixology, culinary education, food photography/videography and much more.

The host hotel, the Hotel Contessa, which sits on the inviting River Walk, puts you center stage to take part in all this historic city has to offer, whether it’s a leisurely walk on the shaded river, a visit to a western museum, or shopping for the perfect molcajete or blinged-out boots.

It’s hard to find a more energetic, enthusiastic group than the 80+ women who make up the San Antonio Chapter. Join us for a party that attendees will be talking about for years to come. See you October 14-17, 2021, in San Antonio at Creative City With a Mission: Fiesta of Flavors!