

LES DAMES D'ESCOFFIER ANNOUNCES 2023 LEGACY AWARD RECIPIENTS Culinary Professionals Earn One-of-a-Kind Apprenticeships

Leading non-profit groups help women advance their careers in culinary, hospitality, event management and wine making

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, USA, June 28, 2023
/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Les Dames d'Escoffier International \(LDEI\)](#), a non-profit organization of women leaders who work together to elevate women in the fields of food, beverage, and hospitality, is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2023 Legacy Awards. Six women from across the United States were awarded career-transforming opportunities presented by LDEI and [The Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and Culinary Arts](#).

Grace Aguilar
The Supply Chain Award
Hosted by Carol Huntsman and the Austin Chapter of LDEI
Grace Aguilar is a Honduran-American and Louisiana native chef who is spreading her unique take on both of her cultures. Her goal is to not only to satisfy taste but to also tell the history within every dish. This is displayed in her first digital cookbook, Little Taste of Home.

Aguilar will work alongside fishermen, chefs, and Quality Seafood, a top seafood distribution company, to get an inside look at the boat-to-table seafood supply chain.

Emma Cromedy
The Catering & Event Planning Award
Hosted by The Pier Sixty Collection



Chef Emma Cromedy of Charleston, South Carolina will work at New York's Pier Sixty

Emma Cromedy is a professional baker. She owned and operated The Southern Cake Queen, Charlotte, North Carolina's first mobile dessert truck, from 2011 to 2017. Today she lives in Charleston, South Carolina and works with Carolima's Lowcountry Cuisine, a full-service catering company, where she launched Carolima's Dessert Boutique.

Cromedy will be embedded with the management team from New York's premier catering and event company, The Pier Sixty Collection, to learn more about the business side of catering and event management.

Cassandra Loftlin

The Food Journalism Award

Hosted by the St. Louis Chapter of LDEI

Cassandra Loftlin is a chef, educator, recipe developer, food journalist and food advocate. The Augusta, Georgia resident writes for ARK Republic and Black Farmer's Index, the largest, free comprehensive directory of Black Farmers, including traditional and non-traditional growers, row crop farmers, ranchers, vegetable and fruit producers, grains and nut harvesters, beekeepers, fisherfolk, oystermen, foresters, foragers, vintners, and more.



Austin's Chef Grace Aguilar will work in seafood supply chain management

“

LDEI's Legacy Awards provide opportunities for women in the professional food world to develop their careers in ways Julia Child could only dream of when she was starting out.”

Todd Schulkin, Executive Director of the Julia Child Foundation

Loftlin will work alongside journalists and food advocates in St. Louis to realize her goal to use food journalism as a tool to explore community and culture and a tool to inform and educate people about the issues surrounding food justice.

Tara Meineke

The Wine & Hospitality Award at Wente Family Estates
Hosted by Grand Dame Carolyn Wente

Tara Meineke is the co-owner and operator of M Cellars Winery located in Geneva, Ohio. She owns a vineyard in Grand River Valley where she cultivates European Vitis

Vinifera grape vines including Pinot Noir, Riesling, Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Saperavi and Petit Verdot and produces award-winning wines.

Meineke will work alongside Grand Dame Carolyn Wente and her team at Wente Family Estates

to learn more about the intricacies of producing excellent wines.

Shari Shobe

The Culinary Entrepreneurship Award
Hosted by the Philadelphia Chapter of LDEI

Shari Shobe is an award-winning chef living and working in Detroit, Michigan. A professional caterer, Chef Shobe has an extensive clientele throughout Michigan, specializing in private chef events for high-profile clients and professional athletes. She also created the Chef Shobe Spice Drive that gathers and donates spices to area food banks.

Shobe will work alongside some of Philadelphia's top female chefs and restaurant owners to gain mentorship and counsel from other culinary entrepreneurs.



Ohio Winemaker Tara Meineke will intern at Wente Family Wineries in California

Meghan Sigurdson

The Hotels & Hospitality Management Award
Hosted by Hermitage Hotel and the Nashville Chapter of LDEI

Meghan Sigurdson's first restaurant industry job at age 15 was working at a summer hot dog stand which she relished, moving into restaurants and, eventually, hotels after graduating from college. As an executive with Kimpton Hotel & Restaurant Group and based in Washington, D.C., Meghan excellent and gained considerable hospitality experience, which led to her current role as Director of Food & Beverage Operations for The Cardinal Hotel & Katharine Brasserie & Bar in downtown Winston Salem, North Carolina.

Sigurdson will round out her hotel operations experience by joining the management team at Hermitage Hotel in Nashville, learning all facets of luxury hospitality.

The LDEI Legacy Awards were created in 2009 so women can gain first-hand knowledge and professional training to advance their careers, whether they have four years of experience or 40.

LDEI President Jennifer Goldman said, "Mentorship is at the core of LDEI's mission, and we are thrilled to partner with The Julia Child Foundation to offer these unique experiences. As a

member of Les Dames d'Escoffier and a culinary and media trailblazer, Julia Child paved the way for many of us in the industry and we are grateful for the support of her foundation."

"LDEI's Legacy Awards continue to provide opportunities for women in the professional food world to develop their careers in ways Julia Child could only dream of when she was starting out," said Todd Schulkin, Executive Director of the Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and the Culinary Arts. "The Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and the Culinary Arts is proud to support this important mentoring program, which we think Julia would call 'a triumph'."

The awards are supported by Les Dames D'Escoffier International, LDEI chapters, individual members and their companies, The Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and Culinary Arts and by the Timothy S.Y. Lamb Foundation. For more information on the LDEI Legacy Awards and to get to know the winners, visit www.ldei.org/awards.

Les Dames d'Escoffier International (LDEI) is an international organization of women leaders who create a supportive culture in their communities to achieve excellence in the fields of food, beverage, and hospitality. The organization's 2,600 members in 44 chapters in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France, and Italy provide leadership, educational opportunities, and philanthropy. LDEI chapters raised and donated more than \$525,000 to community non-profits and philanthropic organizations in 2022. For more information, visit www.ldei.org and follow LDEI on Instagram and Facebook Les Dames d'Escoffier Int'l and on LinkedIn.

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