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**CHARLIE TROTTER, PHILANTHROPIC CULINARY ICON,
NAMED 2012 JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION HUMANITARIAN OF THE YEAR**

New York, NY (February 6, 2012) – The James Beard Foundation announced today that **Charlie Trotter**, a multiple James Beard Foundation Award–winning chef acclaimed for both his culinary contributions and philanthropic achievements, is the recipient of the 2012 Humanitarian of the Year Award. This esteemed award is given to an individual or organization whose work in the realm of food has improved the lives of others and benefited society at large. Charlie Trotter will be honored at this year’s James Beard Foundation Awards, the nation’s most prestigious recognition program honoring professionals in the food and beverage industries, on **Monday, May 7, 2012** at Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Hall in New York City.

“We are pleased to announce that Charlie Trotter has been selected as our 2012 Humanitarian of the Year,” said Susan Ungaro, President of the James Beard Foundation. “Charlie has always demonstrated that the formula for a culinary leader is a chef and restaurateur who excels on all levels.” Ungaro continued, “Over the past 25 years, Charlie has been honored by the Foundation across multiple categories. What truly sets Charlie apart, however, are his tireless efforts in reaching the youth in his community through the culinary arts, via his own foundation and many other charitable organizations that will impact the futures of both our industry and his community.”

“To be chosen to receive this award from the Foundation is humbling,” said Charlie Trotter. “It’s long been a goal of mine to educate and expose young people to the culinary arts in as many ways possible, and I am proud to say The Charlie Trotter Culinary Education Foundation has raised \$3 million to date. This would not have been possible without all the individuals and organizations, including the James Beard Foundation, that give their personal time, talents, efforts and resources to participate in these worthwhile causes.” Chef Trotter concluded, “I believe that giving back is important in whatever you undertake whether professionally, aesthetically or, hopefully, philanthropically. If you can walk away with that as a team member then you’ve learned a lot.”

Philanthropy has been an intrinsic part of Chef Trotter’s culture and philosophy as evidenced by his ties to numerous national and international charities. In 1999, he founded the *Charlie Trotter Culinary Education Foundation*, a not-for-profit organization, working with Chicago-area youth to promote the enthusiastic quest for education and an interest in cooking and food. The foundation hosts fundraising dinners, working with staff and purveyors to donate time and resources, to allow 100% of the money raised to go directly to scholarships for worthy students entering into culinary programs and professions. The organization also hosts high school students three times each week for dinner at his restaurant to open the students’ minds to new experiences, hear from various staff members on how they pursue excellence in their careers and show them that, with dedication and focus, anything is possible. Chef Trotter has received awards at the White House from both

President George W. Bush and Colin Powell for his work with the Culinary Education Foundation and was named one of only five 'heroes' to be honored by Colin Powell's charity, America's Promise. In 2005, he was awarded the Humanitarian of the Year award by the International Association of Culinary Professionals for his overall service to the community.

Charlie Trotter opened his eponymous restaurant in 1987, spurring a movement to approach food more creatively, especially in the Midwest. He paved the way for many up-and-coming chefs and helped put Chicago's dining scene on the epicurean map. In addition to many other national and international accolades, Charlie Trotter has been recognized by a total of ten James Beard Awards, including Outstanding Service (2002), Outstanding Restaurant (2000) and Outstanding Chef (1999), Outstanding Wine Service (1993) and Best Chef Midwest (1992). Chef Trotter has also authored 14 cookbooks, documenting both his award-winning restaurant and culinary history. He has also been the subject of three management books focusing on the lessons which Chef Trotter has learned throughout his career and the professional principles he espouses for his team. In addition to his books, Chef Trotter hosted a national cooking show, "The Kitchen Sessions with Charlie Trotter," on PBS, awarded Best National Television Cooking Show by the James Beard Foundation in 2000. Chef Trotter also received one of the Foundation's great honors when he was inducted into the Who's Who of Food and Beverage in America in 1996, an award given to those who have contributed in a substantial way to America's constantly evolving culinary scene.

The James Beard Foundation Awards are the nation's preeminent recognition program honoring professionals in the food and beverage industries. The Awards celebrate outstanding achievement in each of the following categories: Restaurants and Chefs, Books, Journalism, Restaurant Design and Graphics, Broadcast Media, and special achievement awards. One of the special achievement awards, the Humanitarian of the Year, is selected by the James Beard Foundation Awards Committee, which consists of the chairperson from each individual Awards program, members of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, and members at large.

On **Monday, March 19, 2012**, the Foundation will announce the nominees for all Award categories during a press brunch at The Venetian and The Palazzo in Las Vegas, Nevada. Nominations will also be announced live via the Foundation's Twitter page <http://twitter.com/beardfoundation>. The annual **James Beard Foundation Book, Broadcast & Journalism Awards Dinner**, an exclusive event honoring the nation's top cookbooks, food journalists and culinary broadcast programs, will take place on **Friday, May 4, 2012** at Gotham Hall in New York City. On **Monday, May 7, 2012**, the **James Beard Foundation Awards Ceremony and Gala Reception** will take place at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall in New York City, during which the Restaurant and Chef and Restaurant Design and Graphics awards will be handed out, along with a number of special achievement awards including the Humanitarian of the Year. All award winners receive a certificate and medallion engraved with the James Beard Awards insignia. Tickets to the May 7th Awards Ceremony and Gala Reception will go on sale March 19th and can be purchased at www.jbfawards.com or through the Awards Box Office at 914.231.6180.

The 2012 James Beard Foundation Awards are presented with support by the following partners: Premier Sponsors: All-Clad Metalcrafters, Lenox Tableware and Gifts, Mercedes-Benz; Supporting Sponsors: The Coca-Cola Company, Delta Air Lines, Jade Range LLC, Lavazza, Southern Wine & Spirits of New York, Stella Artois®; Gala Reception Sponsors: Acqua Panna®

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About the James Beard Foundation

Founded in 1986, the James Beard Foundation is dedicated to celebrating, preserving, and nurturing America’s culinary heritage and diversity in order to elevate the appreciation of our culinary excellence. A cookbook author and teacher with an encyclopedic knowledge about food, James Beard, who died in 1985, was a champion of American cuisine. He helped educate and mentor generations of professional chefs and food enthusiasts. Today, the Beard Foundation continues in the same spirit by administering a number of diverse programs that include educational initiatives, food industry awards, scholarships to culinary schools, and publications, and by maintaining the historic James Beard House in New York City’s Greenwich Village as a “performance space” for visiting chefs. For more information, please visit www.jamesbeard.org. Find insights on food at the James Beard Foundation’s blog [Delights & Prejudices](#). Join the James Beard Foundation on [Facebook](#). Follow the James Beard Foundation on [Twitter](#).

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