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**JAMES
BEARD
FOUNDATION**

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**RESTAURANT VISIONARY AND CELEBRATED SOCIAL ADVOCATE AWARDED
JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION HONORS**

***LEAH CHASE NAMED 2016 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT
FATHER GREG BOYLE NAMED HUMANITARIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENT***

New York, NY (January 28, 2016) – The James Beard Foundation announced today that **Leah Chase**, renowned chef, author, and television personality has been named the recipient of the **2016 James Beard Lifetime Achievement award**, and **Father Gregory Boyle, S.J.**, founder of Homeboy Industries, has been named the recipient of the **2016 James Beard Humanitarian of the Year award**. The Lifetime Achievement award is bestowed upon a person in the industry whose lifetime body of work has had a positive and long-lasting impact on the way we eat, cook, and think about food in America. The Humanitarian of the Year 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. Leah Chase and Father Boyle will be honored at this year's James Beard Foundation Awards on Monday, May 2, 2016 at Lyric Opera of Chicago.

"We are very excited to honor these two outstanding individuals whose contributions to not only the food and beverage industry, but society as a whole, are boundless," said Susan Ungaro, president of the James Beard Foundation. "Both Leah and Father Greg have impacted the lives of so many people, and we know that their legacies will continue to inspire our community for decades to come."

Known as the "Queen of Creole Cuisine," Leah Chase is a chef, restaurateur, and TV personality from New Orleans. In 1946 she married Edgar "Dooky" Chase Jr., and together they worked in his parents' restaurant. With a shared vision they transformed Dooky Chase's, which was once a sandwich shop, barroom, lottery ticket outlet, and neighborhood gathering place, into a sit-down restaurant wrapped within the cultural environment of Creole cooking, African-American art, and jazz. In a town deeply divided by segregation, Dooky Chase's Restaurant, which is still open today, was one of the only public places in New Orleans where mixed race groups could meet to discuss strategy for the local Civil Rights Movement. The restaurant was the meeting ground for black voter registration campaign organizers, the NAACP, political activists, and countless others, and Leah Chase cooked for them all. Chase's original dishes would help pioneer the Creole food movement, and her recipes for dishes like gumbo, jambalaya, and fried chicken have gone on to become kitchen staples. Chase is also a patron of the arts, and her

collection — displayed on the walls of her restaurant — was at one time considered New Orleans's best collection of African-American art. As a writer of two cookbooks and winner of countless food and humanitarian awards, Chase was inducted into the James Beard Foundation's Who's Who of Food & Beverage in America in 2010.

"I am overwhelmed to receive such a prestigious award," said Chase. "I never dreamt of receiving such an award for doing what I love to do: cook and serve others."

The 2016 Humanitarian of the Year award recipient, Father Greg Boyle, S.J., is the founder and executive director of Homeboy Industries, the largest gang intervention, rehabilitation, and re-entry program in the world. As a Jesuit priest, Father Boyle has dedicated his life to helping those in need. In 1986 he was appointed pastor of Dolores Mission Church in Los Angeles, at the time the poorest Catholic parish in the city, located amidst two large public housing projects and the territory of numerous rival gangs. Father Boyle launched Homeboy Bakery in 1992 in the aftermath of the civil unrest in Los Angeles, and ever since former enemy gang members have worked side by side, learning both business and baking skills together. Its success created the groundwork for additional social enterprises with the Homeboy brand including Homegirl Café & Catering, Homeboy Diner in Los Angeles City Hall, and a retail presence at farmers' markets throughout the greater Los Angeles area. Every year more than ten thousand formerly gang-involved and previously incarcerated men and women come through Homeboy Industries's doors. They are welcomed into a community of mutual kinship and offered a wide variety of services, including employment opportunities, legal help, and even tattoo removal. Among a wide array of notable accolades, *Bon Appetit* named Father Boyle Humanitarian of the Year in 2007, and he was a featured speaker at the White House Conference on Youth in 2005 at the personal invitation of First Lady Laura Bush.

"I am honored and humbled by this recognition," Father Boyle said, "but also heartened, because it acknowledges, as well, a community on the margins that has long been demonized. This award, then, imagines a circle of compassion outside of which no one is left standing."

Established in 1990, the James Beard Awards recognize culinary professionals for excellence and achievement in their fields and further the Foundation's mission to celebrate, nurture, and honor America's diverse culinary heritage through programs that educate and inspire. Each award category has an individual committee made up of industry professionals who volunteer their time to oversee the policies, procedures, and selection of judges for their respective Awards program. All JBF Award winners receive a certificate and a medallion engraved with the James Beard Foundation Awards insignia. There are no cash prizes.

The Restaurant and Chef Award semifinalists will be announced February 17, 2016. Nominees for all award categories will be revealed on March 15, 2016. The James Beard Foundation Book, Broadcast & Journalism Awards will be held at Pier Sixty at Chelsea Piers in New York City on Tuesday, April 26, 2016. The James Beard Foundation Awards ceremony and gala reception will be held at Lyric Opera of Chicago on Monday, May 2, 2016. During the JBF Awards event, which is open to the public, awards for the Restaurant and Chef and Restaurant Design categories will be handed out, along with special achievement awards including Humanitarian of the Year, Lifetime Achievement, Who's Who of Food and Beverage in America, and

America's Classics. A gala reception will immediately follow, featuring top chefs and beverage professionals from across the country.

The 2016 James Beard Foundation Awards are presented in association with HMSHost, Lexus, and Mariano's; and the following partners: Premier Sponsors: All-Clad Metalcrafters, American Airlines, Lenox Tableware and Gifts, True Refrigeration®; Supporting Sponsors: Acqua Panna® Natural Spring Water, Breville, Goose Island Beer Company, Lavazza, S.Pellegrino® Sparkling Natural Mineral Water, Skuna Bay Salmon, Valrhona; Gala Reception Sponsors: Ecolab, Royal Caribbean International, Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts; with additional support from: Chefwear, VerTerra Dinnerware, and Wisconsin Cheese. The James Beard Foundation also gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Chicago Department of Aviation, Choose Chicago, and the Illinois Restaurant Association.

About The James Beard Foundation

Founded in 1986, the James Beard Foundation celebrates, nurtures, and honors America's diverse culinary heritage through programs that educate and inspire. A cookbook author and teacher with an encyclopedic knowledge about food, the late James Beard was a champion of American cuisine. He helped educate and mentor generations of professional chefs and food enthusiasts, instilling in them the value of wholesome, healthful, and delicious food. Today JBF continues in the same spirit by administering a number of diverse programs that include educational initiatives, food industry awards, scholarships for culinary students, publications, chef advocacy training, and thought-leader convening. The Foundation also maintains the historic James Beard House in New York City's Greenwich Village as a "performance space" for visiting chefs. For more information, please visit jamesbeard.org. Get food news, recipes, and more at the James Beard Foundation's [blog](#). Follow the James Beard Foundation on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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