

For Immediate Release:

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James Beard Foundation Hosts First Official Chefs Boot Camp for Policy & Change

Culinary Leaders Gather to Build Community of Advocates for Food-System Change

New York, NY (April 25, 2013) – More than a dozen chefs from around the country will convene for the [James Beard Foundation](#)'s first official **Chefs Boot Camp for Policy & Change** at the 21c Museum Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky from May 12-14. The program, which was piloted last year at the James Beard Award-nominated Blackberry Farm in Walland, Tennessee, is designed to provide chefs with the tools and support they require to lead and advocate for food-system change.

Policy and advocacy skills will be taught at this Chefs Boot Camp through the topic focus of regional food systems. Participating chefs will meet with Mayor Greg Fischer, who has embraced the notion of local food in an urban community as part of his policy agenda, and learn more about the regional Kentucky food scene. Chefs will also spend time at Laura Lee Brown and Steven Wilson's Woodland Farm. There, Farm Manager Kristopher Kelley will expose chef participants to the heritage breeds of bison, pigs and chickens; produce harvesting in the sustainably raised gardens; and be given an introduction to the farm's Kelley Green Biofuel program.

"The James Beard Foundation is continually working to take the conversation about our food-system to the next level," said Susan Ungaro, president of the James Beard Foundation. "Our Chefs Boot Camp fills a critical need for hands-on policy and advocacy skills training that allows participating chefs to bring messages for constructive change out into the culinary world."

The Chefs Boot Camp is conducted under the direction of JBF Award-winning chef and founder of Wholesome Wave, Michel Nischan and Founder of Arabella Advisors, Eric Kessler. At each boot camp, chefs receive policy and advocacy training by industry and political experts through the lens of a specific food system topic. A day of classroom work, mock-interviews, hands-on activities that engage the chefs with local natural resources, and a collaborative dinner cooked by the participants culminates in a morning of strategic brainstorming about effective action points and next steps.

"Laura Lee and I are honored to be hosting this prestigious group of chefs both at our farm and at our restaurant," said Steve Wilson, owner of 21c Museum Hotels and Woodland Farm. "We hope that by providing an opportunity for these chefs to till the soil, plant a seed, and harvest the bounty of Woodland Farm, they leave more inspired than ever before to lead efforts for real food policy reform in their respective communities."

The Chefs Boot Camp for Policy & Change is part of the James Beard Foundation's broader program to encourage dialogue between diverse stakeholders in the food system while providing an opportunity for the values of the country's best chefs to help influence food decisions for the larger American population. Other programs include conducting a national dialogue on food-system issues at regional salons in cities around the country; an annual national food conference held each fall that brings a diverse group of food-system stakeholders together; and an annual Leadership Awards program recognizing visionaries helping create a more healthful, sustainable, and safe food world.

"As the spotlight shines ever brighter on chefs, farmers, artisanal producers, and other food professionals who form the core constituency of JBF, we recognize the powerful potential to turn these dedicated professionals into leaders and advocates for a better, safer, more sustainable food system," said Mitchell Davis, Ph.D., executive vice president of the James Beard Foundation.

Over 280 chefs have applied to the Chefs Boot Camp program to date. Participants were selected to represent regional and topic interest diversity, with consideration given to the voice that each chef has within their local community and nationally. Participating chefs include:

Timon Balloo, SUGARCANE raw bar grill, Miami, Florida
Kathy Cary, Lilly's, Louisville, Kentucky
Dominique Crenn, Atelier Crenn, San Francisco, California
Jose Gutierrez, River Oaks, Memphis, Tennessee
Chris Hastings, Hot and Hot Fish Club, Birmingham, Alabama (JBF Award winner)
Maria Hines, Maria Hines Restaurants, Seattle, Washington (JBF Award winner and participated in pilot Chefs Boot Camp)
Sara Jenkins, Porsena, New York, New York
Phil Jones, Colors Restaurant, Detroit, Michigan
Cormac Mahoney, Madison Park Conservatory, Seattle, Washington
Kyle Mendenhall, The Kitchen Community, Boulder, Colorado
Tory Miller, L'Etoile, Madison, Wisconsin (JBF Award winner)
Naomi Pomeroy, Beast, Portland, Oregon
Hari Pulapaka, Cress Restaurant, DeLand, Florida
Bruce Sherman, North Pond Restaurant, Chicago, Illinois
Levon Wallace, Proof on Main, Louisville, Kentucky

Supporters of this spring's Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change include the 21c Museum Hotel, Proof on Main, Woodland Farm, Kentucky Proud, Kentucky Distillers' Association, Winston Industries, LLC, Louisville Conventions and Visitors Bureau, and Sullivan University's National Center for Hospitality Studies.

To keep abreast of the Foundation's work within the food system and the chefs' progress during the Chefs Boot Camp for Policy & Change, follow hashtag #JBFLeads on Twitter and visit the James Beard Foundation's blog at jamesbeard.org. To apply for future Chefs Bootcamps, please visit jamesbeard.org/bootcamp.

About the James Beard Foundation:

Founded in 1986, the James Beard Foundation is dedicated to celebrating, nurturing, and preserving America's diverse culinary heritage and future. 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, instilling in them the value of wholesome, healthful and delicious food. Today the Beard Foundation 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. In September of 2012, the Foundation launched the Diplomatic Culinary Partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Office of Protocol and helped create the American Chef Corps as a way to champion American chefs abroad, promote American food products and foster an interest in American culinary culture and history through international programs and initiatives. 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 and [Instagram](#).

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