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James Beard Foundation and Vermilion Announce Women in Culinary Leadership Program

*Initiative Launches with Panel Discussion Featuring
Martha Stewart, Lidia Bastianich, and Dorothy Cann Hamilton on September 18th*

New York, NY (September 5, 2012) –In an effort to examine the role of women in leadership positions in the culinary industry, the [James Beard Foundation](#) and [Vermilion](#) are proud to announce the **Women in Culinary Leadership Program**. This new initiative includes a scholarship and “Chefs for Women” program, which will be launched on September 18 at the [Women in Culinary Leadership Evening](#) at Vermilion in New York City. The event will feature a thought-provoking panel discussion and five-course Indian-Latin fusion dinner.

Spearheaded by Rohini Dey, founder of the Indian-Latin restaurants Vermilion in New York City and Chicago, and Susan Ungaro, president of the James Beard Foundation, the Women in Culinary Leadership Program aims to examine the gender imbalance in the food industry, celebrate the accomplishments of women in the field, and support women working to make it in the culinary world as chefs and restaurateurs. An integral part of Ungaro’s work at the James Beard Foundation has been to expand culinary scholarship programs and perpetuate dialogue about food in our society today. This collaborative effort with Dey, who is a passionate supporter and mentor of women through her entrepreneurial involvement and charity work, is a natural next step towards reaching their goals.

“James Beard was always a big supporter of women,” said Ungaro. “Many of those he mentored and championed went on to change the way Americans cook and think about food, including such luminaries as Julia Child, Alice Waters, Barbara Kafka, and Gael Greene.”

The Women in Culinary Leadership Evening features a panel discussion by industry leaders addressing and exploring the gender imbalance in the food industry. Moderated by Emmy and James Beard Award winner Martha Teichner of CBS News, the panel will feature Martha Stewart, founder, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia; Lidia Bastianich, chef, author and restaurateur; Dorothy Cann Hamilton, founder and CEO, the International Culinary Center; Rohini Dey, Ph.D., founder/owner, Vermilion (NYC and Chicago); and Susan Ungaro, president, James Beard Foundation. In addition, Dey will announce the launch of the **James Beard Foundation Vermilion Women in Culinary Leadership Scholarship** and unveil the ongoing “Chefs for Women” program at Vermilion (NYC and Chicago) backed by a roster of talented and highly lauded chefs across the country.

“Women are far from prevalent in the culinary industry, and it’s an issue we plan to address directly,” said Dey. “At the Women in Culinary Leadership Evening, five prominent female leaders will go well beyond platitudes to examine if the glass ceiling in the culinary world is any different from elsewhere. We will also explore ways to create more culinary leadership opportunities for women.”

The Women in Culinary Leadership Evening will take place from 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. at Vermilion in New York City and will raise funds for the James Beard Foundation Vermilion Women in Culinary Leadership Scholarship. The evening is \$100 for a five-course Indian-Latin dinner and panel discussion; \$135 with wine pairing. Prepaid reservations are necessary and can be made by calling Vermilion at 212.871.6600 or emailing eventsny@thevermilionrestaurant.com. More details are available at jamesbeard.org and at thevermilionrestaurant.com.

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, James Beard was a champion of American cuisine who helped educate and mentor generations of professional chefs and food enthusiasts. Today the Beard Foundation continues in the same spirit by offering a variety of events and programs designed to educate, inspire, entertain, and foster a deeper understanding of our culinary culture. These programs include educational initiatives, food industry awards, an annual national food conference, Leadership Awards program, culinary scholarships, and publications. In addition to maintaining the historic James Beard House in New York City’s Greenwich Village as a “performance space” for visiting chefs, the Foundation has created a robust online community, and hosts tastings, lectures, workshops, and food-related art exhibits in New York City and around the country. For more information, please visit jamesbeard.org. You can find insights on food at the James Beard Foundation’s blog *Delights & Prejudices*, become a JBF member at jamesbeard.org/join, like the James Beard Foundation on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/jamesbeardfoundation), and follow the James Beard Foundation on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/jamesbeardfoundation) and [Pinterest](https://www.pinterest.com/jamesbeardfoundation).

About Vermilion

Known for its bold and unique indian-latin cuisine, Vermilion (NYC & Chicago) is founded by former World Banker and McKinsey management consultant Rohini Dey, ph.d. The melding at Vermilion is driven by Rohini’s passion for culinary, her concept and travels. It is based on the deep historical cross-influences and geographical commonalities of the two regions, and an intellectually provocative evolution. Vermilion has been lauded for being both a woman-led entity and for its indian-latin cuisine by FT, Time, Gourmet, WSJ, Chicago Tribune 3 stars, Chicago magazine, Bon Appetit, Esquire, USA Today, Travel & Leisure, Town & Country, Wine Enthusiast among others (thevermilionrestaurant.com). Apart from the platform of both her restaurants, Rohini is active in educating and mentoring women through her non-profit (MSEdG – Educate Girls Globally) to which all her writing proceeds are donated, as a senior donor of the American India Foundation, her active involvement with the International Women’s Forum and The Chicago Network, and by contributing to the entrepreneurial programs of leading business schools (Kellogg, Chicago Booth, Columbia).