NEW YORK, NY (June 1, 2022) – The James Beard Foundation® announces that applications are now open for the Women’s Entrepreneurial Leadership Program and Legacy Network, both key entry points for hospitality professionals to engage with the James Beard Foundation and its greater network. The Women’s Entrepreneurial Leadership program trains women restaurant owners looking to scale their businesses. The Legacy Network develops and cultivates BIPOC talent in the culinary industry by pairing advisors with advisees for mentorship and training.

Both programs are part of the James Beard Foundation’s mission to celebrate, support, and elevate the people behind America’s food culture, while pushing for new standards in the restaurant industry where all have the opportunity to thrive. As part of that vision, the Foundation provides necessary support, resources, and training to women and professionals of color, with the goal of fostering a more diverse, equitable, and sustainable industry for all.

About the Women’s Entrepreneurial Leadership Program (WEL)

Now in its sixth year, the James Beard Foundation’s flagship Women’s Entrepreneurial Leadership Program (WEL) is an advanced educational and networking program for women restaurant owners looking to expand and grow. Open to 20 participants, the 10-week program, created in conjunction with Cornell University, includes sessions on leadership, negotiating, business strategy, financial modeling, and more. The curriculum provides gender-specific training and leadership development, while addressing advanced business and finance concepts. Following completion of the program, participants will join a growing community of WEL alumnae, with regular opportunities to connect with each other and the Foundation. Applications for both the Fall 2022 and Winter 2023 sessions open on Wednesday, June 1, 2022 and are due by end of day (11:59 PST) on Thursday, June 23, 2022.
“The WEL Program is a unique opportunity for women leaders of hospitality to level up their personal and business growth. The education, connection, and network provided through the program have demonstrated resounding success in improving confidence and business acumen for women across the board,” said Zoe Adjonyoh, Director of Women’s Leadership Programs. “As such, we’re very excited to be scaling this initiative to two cohorts this year, and providing even more opportunities for women to close the gender ownership gap through the training they receive with WEL.”

The program was initiated with founding support from JBF supporter Jodie W. McLean, CEO of EDENS, one of the nation’s leading private retail real estate companies. The JBF Women’s Leadership Programs are sponsored by Bobbie, Bumble, Distinguished Vineyards & Wine Partners, dough Wines, Enroot, KitchenAid, and San Pellegrino Sparkling Natural Spring Water.

To apply and learn more about the Women’s Entrepreneurial Leadership Program please visit: [www.jamesbeard.org/womens-entrepreneurial-leadership-program](http://www.jamesbeard.org/womens-entrepreneurial-leadership-program)

The James Beard Foundation’s programs are supported by Capital One, the official credit card and banking partner of the James Beard Foundation; American Airlines, the official airline of the James Beard Foundation; and Windstar Cruises, the official cruise line of the James Beard Foundation.

About the Legacy Network

The [James Beard Foundation Legacy Network](http://www.jamesbeard.org/legacy-network), trains emerging leaders across the culinary industry and connects them with future generations of excellence. Designed in partnership with On Purpose Talent, the Legacy Network is a unique and practical leadership development program targeted to BIPOC candidates, with priority given to persons of Black American and Indigenous heritage. Now accepting applications, this year’s cohort will feature 24 participants—12 advisors and 12 advisees—all of whom will be selected to take part in the eight-month program which includes mentorship training, business and operations development, and financial education. Each protégé, under the guidance of Legacy advisors, becomes part of a powerful network that centers the professional growth of talent from historically under-resourced communities. The program will conclude with an experiential trip to Versailles, Kentucky, hosted by Founding Partner Woodford Reserve®.

Applications for both advisors and advisees open on June 1. Advisor applications are due by end of day on Wednesday, June 8, 2022; Advisee applications are due by end of day (11:59 EST) on Wednesday, June 15, 2022.

“Upon completion of the pilot over 60% of advisees felt closer to reaching their professional goals, while advisors’ confidence in their mentorship abilities increased from 20% to 80%,” said Colleen Vincent, Vice President of Community. “When BIPOC professionals are supported and networked in a meaningful and culturally relevant way, the industry becomes equitable and thus sustainable.”
“The Legacy Network Program through the James Beard Foundation has indeed catalyzed my success in this industry. This program has given me the confidence to invest deeply in my own goals and aspirations and change how I lead,” said James Linabary, 2021 Legacy Advisee. “With the wisdom and perspective given by my mentors, I’ve been able to materialize ideas more effectively. Being a part of this network gives me the confidence to know everything I’m working toward will become a reality. I’m honored to be part of such a great crew, and I’m thrilled to see the influence this next cohort will have in the industry and the groups it helps elevate.”

To apply and learn more about the Legacy Network please visit: jamesbeard.org/legacy-network

The Legacy Network Program was launched with founding support from Woodford Reserve.

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About the James Beard Foundation

The James Beard Foundation (JBF) celebrates and supports the people behind America’s food culture, while pushing for new standards in the restaurant industry to create a future where all have the opportunity to thrive. Established over 30 years ago, the Foundation has highlighted the centrality of food culture in our daily lives and is committed to supporting a resilient and flourishing industry that honors its diverse communities. By amplifying new voices, celebrating those leading the way, and supporting those on the path to do so, the Foundation is working to create a more equitable and sustainable future—what we call Good Food for Good™.

As a 501c3 non-profit organization, JBF brings its mission to life through annual Awards, industry and community-focused initiatives and programs, advocacy, and events. Current programs include the Open For Good Campaign, Chef’s Bootcamp for Policy and Change, Beard House Fellows, Legacy Network, Scholarship Programs, Smart Catch, and Women’s Leadership Programs. In addition, JBF celebrates the chefs and local independent restaurants at the heart of our communities with numerous events and partnerships nationwide throughout the year—including the Taste America culinary tour, JBF Greens events for foodies under 40, the soon-to-open Pier 57 Market Hall, food festivals, and more.

For more information, subscribe to the digital newsletter Beard Bites and follow @beardfoundation on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, and Clubhouse. For industry leaders and employees, access JBF Industry Resources by subscribing to our Industry Support Newsletter, or learning more on our Industry Support page, featuring published reports, a Virtual Education Library, and monthly Chef’s Connect events.
About Woodford Reserve
Woodford Reserve, the world’s top-selling super-premium American whiskey, has supported culinary leaders and programs for many years. It was among the first spirits brands to pair food with bourbon tastings, similar to the wine industry. Woodford Reserve, “Presenting Sponsor of the Kentucky Derby,” is crafted at the historic Woodford Reserve Distillery, tucked in the heart of thoroughbred country in Versailles, Kentucky. A National Historic Landmark, the Woodford Reserve Distillery represents craftsmanship with a balance of historic heritage and modern practices. Woodford Reserve is a product of the Brown-Forman Corporation, a premier producer and marketer of fine quality beverage alcohol brands including Jack Daniel’s, Finlandia, Korbel, Tequila Herradura, Old Forester, Sonoma-Cutrer and Chambord. Please enjoy your bourbon responsibly. To learn more about Woodford Reserve, visit us www.woodfordreserve.com or check us out on Facebook at www.facebook.com/woodfordreserve.

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