



****MEDIA ALERT****

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**JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION® ANNOUNCES KEY OUTCOMES FROM
FALL 2023 CHEF BOOTCAMP FOR POLICY AND CHANGE**

*The first-of-its-kind program, now training the 25th cohort of culinary leaders,
rolled out policy priorities as the Farm Bill is up for renewal*

NEW YORK (October 12, 2023) – The [James Beard Foundation](#)® (JBF) announced today the outcomes from its Fall 2023 Chef Bootcamp for Policy and Change. The event, held October 1-3 at Carnation Farms in Carnation, WA, brought together 18 chefs from 12 states and the District of Columbia for the 25th edition of the extensive policy and advocacy training workshop.

Over the course of its history, JBF has become a leading and trusted voice in the independent restaurant community and a sought-out expert in advocating for positive change in the food world. Since launching in 2012, the Chef Bootcamp has trained and inspired nearly 400 chefs across 48 states and 4 countries to mobilize in support of policy decisions that impact our food system, with chef participants having successfully influenced policy making to provide nutritious school meals, protect SNAP recipients, support American fisheries, reduce food waste, and fight for safer, more regenerative food production across the United States.

The 25th Chef Bootcamp largely focused on training and discussion around the next Farm Bill, which expired on September 30 and is set for renewal in the coming months. The Farm Bill, passed by Congress about every five years, represents one of the most important pieces of food and agriculture policy and has considerable ramifications for national food security and access, the environment, and support for American farmers and rural communities.

“At the James Beard Foundation, we recognize the immense power and influence that chefs hold, not only in their local communities, but across the country,” said **Anne E. McBride, PhD, Vice President of Programs, James Beard Foundation**. “Programs like the Chef Bootcamp for Policy and Change give us the opportunity to leverage our relationships with, and standing in, the American chef-operator community to train the next generation of industry leaders and build a future where everyone, at all levels of the food supply chain, can thrive. This is what we mean by ‘Good Food for Good.’”

Key outcomes from the 25th Chef Bootcamp include:

- Launching JBF’s imminent [policy priorities](#) that center around climate change mitigation (soil health, composting, and regenerative agriculture), increased opportunities for BIPOC farmers and small producers, and SNAP expansion (including independent restaurants as meal providers for recipients);
- Learning about the Farm Bill and various acts in Congress that affect the food and beverage industry, as well as harnessing the power of chefs as change agents, advocating for policies that affect their communities on a local, state, and federal level;
- Planning support for long-term policy priorities that affect the independent restaurant industry including: funding and market access for BIPOC farmers and small producers; nutrition security and SNAP expansion; living wage and equal pay for those involved in the restaurant supply chain; conservation programs that prioritize soil and water health, food waste and composting; tax credits for independent restaurants that offer specific benefits to their employees; accelerated visas for foreign food service workers; and federal funding for mental health programs.

“As an independent business owner, it is both a privilege and a responsibility to create a better industry than how I started my career,” said **Amanda Saab, Owner of [Amanda’s Plate](#)** and a member of the Fall 2023 Bootcamp cohort. “By participating in Chef Bootcamp, I have both the skills to continue this work in my workplace and community, as well as the support of the Foundation and hundreds of other chefs to better our industry across the country. Creating positive change is something we all must carry the responsibility of.”

In addition to launching JBF’s policy priorities, learning about legislation, and training to become advocates, chef participants:

- Gained an understanding of their role as trusted figures and pillars in their communities, positioning them as perfect agents for industry and food system change;
- Learned the many different ways that policy advocacy can take form, whether it is through the ingredients and farms they choose to support, the compensation model of their restaurant, fighting food insecurity in their local community, or advocating for policy changes at the local, state and national level;
- Were taught to understand their networks of influence, from customers, to employees, friends, family, farmers, distributors and policymakers;
- Discovered their unique voice and developed messaging to advocate for the issues they are passionate about; and
- Learned how to use strong messaging to advocate for policy issues that impact their community.

More information on the Fall 2023 cohort from the 25th Chef Bootcamp can be found [here](#) and below:

- Ashfer Biju (Baccarat Hotel, New York, NY)
- Patrick Combs (Mountain Laurel Catering & Events, Harrisburg, PA)
- Valerie Chang (Itamae, Miami, FL)
- Sonya Coté (Hillside Farmacy, Austin, TX)
- Shanel DeWalt (Make Food Not Waste, Detroit, MI)
- Evelyn Garcia (Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, New York, NY)
- Marissa Tapia Gencarelli (Yoli Tortilleria, Kansas City, MO)
- Lamar Moore (Bronzeville Winery, Chicago, IL)
- Justin Pioche (Pioche Food Group, Upper Fruitland [Doolkai], Navajo Nation, NM)
- Jacqui Pressinger (American Culinary Federation, Jacksonville, FL)
- John Russ (Clementine, San Antonio, TX)
- Amanda Saab (Amanda’s Plate, Dearborn Heights, MI)
- Stephani Sandoval-Kanawi (Compass Group, San Clemente, CA)
- Tonya Thomas^{SEP} (H3irloom Food Group, Baltimore, MD)
- Sophina Uong (Mister Mao, New Orleans, LA)
- K.N. Vinod (Indique, Washington, D.C.)
- Lawrence Weeks (North of Bourbon, Louisville, KY)
- Patricio Wise (Nixtaco Mexican Kitchen & Distillery, Roseville, CA)

The Chef Bootcamp for Policy and Change—part of the James Beard Foundation’s advocacy programs—was initiated with founding support by Osprey Foundation (now Orange Door Fund) on behalf of Chris and Meredith Powell. Program sponsors include Alaska Seafood, Deloitte, Distinguished Vineyards, Lavazza, Niman Ranch, Patrón Tequila, TABASCO® Brand, UnitedHealthcare and YETI. The James Beard Foundation’s programs are also supported by American Airlines, the official airline of the James Beard Foundation; BentoBox, the official restaurant technology partner of the James Beard Foundation; Capital One, the official credit card and banking partner of the James Beard Foundation; and Windstar Cruises, the official cruise line of the James Beard Foundation.

For more information on JBF’s policy priorities visit: jamesbeard.org/policy-agenda, and for more information on JBF’s advocacy efforts visit: jamesbeard.org/advocacy.

Press Assets

- Selects: [available here](#)

About the James Beard Foundation

The James Beard Foundation (JBF) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that 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®. JBF brings its mission to life through the annual Awards, industry and community-focused programs, advocacy, partnerships, and events across the country. For the first time in the Foundation's history, exceptional culinary talent, industry leaders, and visitors from NYC and beyond can experience unforgettable dining and educational programming at [Platform by the James Beard Foundation](#)—and be the first to try new food concepts at the Good To Go by JBF kiosk—inspiring food and beverage devotees for decades to come. Learn more at jamesbeard.org, sign up for our newsletter, and follow @beardfoundation on social media.

About James Beard Foundation Programs

The James Beard Foundation's Programs help the independent restaurant industry reach new standards around equity, sustainability, and workplace practices to ensure that all involved in its supply chain can thrive. We look to turn independent restaurant jobs into long and healthy independent restaurant careers; to expand who has access to leadership, visibility, financial stability, and capital; and to use the power of chefs for climate change mitigation. Our mission comes to life through training programs, policy advocacy, and harnessing the agency of chefs for change.

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