



New Class of Chefs Joining the James Beard Foundation's Chefs Boot Camp to Fight for a Better Food System

18th Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change will focus on SNAP and food access across the country

New York, NY (June 11, 2019) – Fifteen culinary leaders from across the country will participate in the [James Beard Foundation's 18th Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change](#) from June 16 to 18 at Glynwood Farm in Cold Spring, NY. In completing the program, the chefs will join more than 200 trained advocates in support of a better food system for all.

The June 2019 Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change will be attended by the following chefs:

- Liz Alpern, New York, NY, creator of Queer Soup Night, and co-owner of the Gefilteria
- Nettie Colon, Minneapolis, MN, founder of RedHed Gastro Lab
- Caitlin Corcoran, Kansas City, MO, owner of Ça Va
- Cassidee Dabney, Walland, TN, executive chef at BlackBerry Farm
- William Dissen, Asheville and Charlotte, NC, owner of the Market Place
- Roshni Gurnani, Houston, TX, 2009 *Chopped* champion
- Ann Kim, Minneapolis, MN, owner of Young Joni and 2019 James Beard Award winner for Best Chef: Midwest
- Mike Lata, Charleston, SC, owner of Fig and the Ordinary, and 2009 James Beard Award winner for Best Chef: Southeast
- Joshua Lewin, Somerville, MA, co-owner and chef, Juliet, *Bon Appétit's* Best New Restaurant 2016
- Brother Luck, Colorado Springs, CO, owner of Four and *Top Chef* Season 16
- Sean Mendes, Charleston, SC, owner of Blues Cajun Kitchen, South Carolina Chef Ambassador 2017
- Clayton Rollison, Hilton Head Island, SC, executive chef of Lucky Rooster Kitchen+Bar
- MJ Sanders, New York, NY, Star Chefs' 2019 Rising Star Chef of the Year NYC
- Elle Scott, Boston, MA, founder of SheChef, Inc. on-air talent, America's Test Kitchen
- Saralyn Smith Collingswood, Bellevue, IA, lead chef and educator, Convivium Urban Farmstead

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“This latest group of powerful chefs and owners join a growing coalition within culinary and hospitality who are banding together to advocate for public policies that support people, the planet, and local communities,” said Katherine Miller, vice president of Impact, James Beard Foundation. “At this time we’re focused on harnessing these chefs’ voices, as business owners, employers, and community leaders, to shore up support for the important programs that help feed our most vulnerable populations including farmers, veterans, families, and children in times of great need. Today that means standing firm against any cuts or harmful changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Access Program (SNAP). We’re honored to have this latest group of chefs join us for this training at Glynwood Farm.”

Participating chefs are provided with training from industry experts in how to use their voice most effectively when talking about public policy. They will also explore the connections between local farming communities and food access and affordability. Together, participating chefs will create a collaborative dinner using ingredients from across the Hudson Valley. They will also learn about ways to productively engage in policy discussions after the Boot Camp.

Examples of the sessions at the Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change include:

- **Why Chefs’ Voices Matter:** Participants learn about the food system and why chefs and restaurateurs — as business owners and employers — are a powerful force for change.
- **How Policy Happens:** Overview of policy change at local, state, and federal levels, illustrated using the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as an example of a pressing policy issue.
- **Politics to the Plate:** Chefs learn how to best use their voices in policy discussions including meeting with members of Congress, working with the media and using social media platforms in support of policy change.
- **Farm Activities and Collaborative Dinner:** Chefs tour Glynwood Farm and cook dinner together using ingredients harvested from the farm and sourced from local purveyors, then sit down together and share the meal that they’ve prepared.

The Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change was launched in July 2012 in collaboration with James Beard Award–winning chef and founder of Wholesome Wave, Michel Nischan, and James Beard Foundation trustee and founder of Arabella Advisors, Eric Kessler. The initiative is a part of the Foundation’s broader Impact Programs.

Other [Impact Programs](#) that address the growing challenges facing our food system include Issue Summits; the annual Leadership Awards, which recognize visionaries

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helping to create a more healthful, sustainable, and safe food world; Culinary Labs, which engage chefs in hands-on opportunities around food-systems issues; Smart Catch, a sustainable seafood menu assessment program created for chefs with the purpose of increasing the sustainability of the seafood supply chain; Creating a Full-Use Kitchen, an online food waste curriculum; the Blended Burger Project; Women's Leadership Programs aimed at addressing the gender imbalance in the culinary industry; and the ongoing advocacy and issue support provided by JBF's Chef Action Network.

More than 900 chefs have applied to the Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change program since its inception. Participants are selected to represent regional and topic interest diversity, with consideration given to the voice that each chef has within their local community and on a national level. The program is generously supported by the Carl M. Freeman Foundation in memory of chef Matt Haley; the Distinguished Vineyards portfolio, including Argyle, MacRostie, and Wither Hills wineries; Niman Ranch; the Orange Door Fund; and Windstar Cruises.

A full list of chefs who have attended the previous Boot Camps can be viewed [here](#). Follow hashtag #JBFImpact and #ChefsLead on Twitter and Instagram to track the chefs' progress. For additional information, view the Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change video feature on the Foundation's [YouTube channel](#). To apply to or support future Chefs Boot Camps for Policy and Change, visit jamesbeard.org/education/bootcamp.

About the James Beard Foundation

The James Beard Foundation's mission is to promote good food for good™. For more than 30 years, the James Beard Foundation has highlighted the centrality of food culture in our daily lives. Through the James Beard Awards, unique dining experiences at the James Beard House and around the country, scholarships, hands-on learning, and a variety of industry programs that educate and empower leaders in our community, the Foundation has built a platform for chefs and asserted the power of gastronomy to drive behavior, culture, and policy change around food. To that end, the Foundation has also created signature impact-oriented initiatives that include our Women's Leadership Programs aimed at addressing the gender imbalance in the culinary industry; advocacy training through our Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change; and the James Beard Foundation Leadership Awards that shine a spotlight on successful change makers. The organization is committed to giving chefs and their colleagues a voice and the tools they need to make the world more sustainable, equitable, and delicious for everyone. For more information, visit jamesbeard.org; subscribe to the digital newsletter [Beard Bites](#); and follow @beardfoundation on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).