

JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION

The James Beard Foundation Gala: Rise Celebrates the Chef Community Creating a Better Food World

~ Food Policy Advocacy Champions Eric Kessler and Michel Nischan to be Honored at Annual JBF Fundraiser ~

New York, NY (September 6, 2018) –The [James Beard Foundation](#) (JBF) is pleased to announce this year’s annual [JBF Gala: Rise](#), which will celebrate the countless ways our food community rises to meet global challenges and make a better, more delicious and sustainable food world. The black-tie fundraiser will take place on Friday, November 9 at The Pierre, a Taj Hotel, in New York City, and feature a once-in-a-lifetime collaborative dinner by chefs who embody the leadership, diversity, and tenacity that the Foundation supports everyday through its programs and initiatives.

Media Contact :
Raquel Hochroth/
Diane Stefani
212.255.8455
raquel@rosengrouppr.com
diane@rosengrouppr.com

The 2018 JBF Gala will honor James Beard Award–winning chef and founder and chief executive officer of Wholesome Wave, **Michel Nischan**, and JBF trustee and founder of Arabella Advisors, **Eric Kessler**, for their role in launching and guiding the signature JBF Impact Program: [Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change](#) in 2012.

“Our Boot Camp program came to life thanks to the leadership of Eric Kessler and Michel Nischan in helping us harness the power of chefs’ voices, in line with our shared vision of empowering this community of change agents to create a better food world,” said Clare Reichenbach, the James Beard Foundation’s chief executive officer. “We are extremely proud that all of the chefs at this year’s fundraising gala have either participated in our Boot Camp or Women’s Leadership programs. This magical evening will shine a spotlight on their hard work championing critical issues and their dedication to working with the Foundation to move the industry forward.”

For the first time, each course will be co-created by two chefs working together and will highlight a mission-driven initiative of the Foundation. The lineup will include:

- **First Course: Focus on Reducing Food Waste through Whole Product Utilization**
 - **Mourad Lahlou**^{***BC}, Mourad, San Francisco
 - **Kwame Onwuachi**^{BC}, Kith and Kin, Washington, D.C.

- **Second Course: Highlight Sustainable Seafood**
 - **Michael Cimarusti**^{**BC}, Providence^{**}, Los Angeles

- **Jen Jasinski**^{*BC}, Rioja, Denver
- **Third Course: Pasta Course by Women’s Leadership Program Alumni**
 - **Kathleen Blake**^{***BC}, The Rusty Spoon, Orlando, FL
 - **Amy Brandwein**^{**BC}, Centrolina, Washington, D.C.
- **Fourth (main) Course: Focus on Sustainable Meat**
 - **Duskie Estes**^{BC}, ZaZu Kitchen and Farm, Sebastopol, CA
 - **Ouita Michel**^{***BC}, Holly Hill Inn, Midway, KY
- **Dessert Reception: Featuring Women’s Leadership Program Alumni**
 - **Alicia Hinze**, The Buttered Tin, Saint Paul, MN
 - **Jan Wichayanuparp**, Sweet Republic, Phoenix

*Notes James Beard Award winner

**Notes James Beard Award nominee

***Notes James Beard Award semifinalist

^{BC}Notes JBF Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change alumni

The multi-course dinner will include participation from host chef **Ashfer Biju** and host pastry chef **Michael Mignano** from The Pierre, A Taj Hotel. There will be fine wine pairings and live music throughout the evening. Silent and live auction packages will support the James Beard Foundation’s mission and programs.

The 2018 JBF Gala event chairs Henni and John Kessler; and Robin and Frederic Seegal, and vice chair Nancy Lukitsh will be heading up a special VIP experience that includes an exclusive kitchen tour, tasting, and photo opportunity with the evening’s chefs.

The 2018 JBF Gala premier sponsors include Swiss International Airlines and Monaco Government Tourist Office. Additional sponsors include Crimson Wine Group, Gourmet Settings, Heineken®, La Panaderia®, La Quercia, Saratoga Spring Water, Seedlip Drinks, and Woodford Reserve Bourbon (current list as of press time).

For more information about the JBF Gala: Rise, visit jbf gala.org. Supporter tickets for the event begin at \$500 and can be purchased [here](#) or by calling 212-627-2308. For table purchases, please contact Julie Marshall at jmarshall@jamesbeard.org.

About the James Beard Foundation

The James Beard Foundation’s mission is to celebrate, nurture, and honor chefs and other leaders making America’s food culture more delicious, diverse, and sustainable for everyone. For more than 30 years the Foundation has accomplished this mission through programs that highlight food’s central role in our lives. In addition to hosting guest-chef dinners throughout the year at the historic James Beard House in New York City, the Foundation administers the James Beard Awards; grants scholarships for culinary students; produces national events that include Taste America; and creates educational programs for the culinary community and food lovers. The Foundation addresses the growing challenges facing our food system through its Impact Programs, which include the Leadership Awards; Chefs Boot Camp for Policy and Change; Issue Summits; and Culinary Labs. Industry issues, such as gender imbalance and diversity in culinary leadership, are

addressed through our Industry Programs. For more information, please visit jamesbeard.org and follow @beardfoundation on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [Facebook](#).