



# JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES HUMANITARIAN HONOREE AND 2018 AWARDS THEME

James Beard Award–winning chef José Andrés named  
Humanitarian of the Year

2018 Awards theme is “RISE”

NEW YORK, NY (February 21, 2018) – The James Beard Foundation announced today that José Andrés, multiple James Beard Award–winning chef, owner of ThinkFoodGroup, humanitarian and founder of World Central Kitchen, has been named the recipient of the 2018 James Beard Humanitarian Award.

Andrés is a committed advocate of food and hunger issues and is known for championing the role of chefs in the national debate on food policy. In 2012, Andrés formed World Central Kitchen, a non-profit that provides smart solutions to hunger and poverty by using the power of food to empower communities and strengthen economies. Together with World Central Kitchen and #ChefsforPuertoRico, Andrés served over 3.3 million meals in Puerto Rico following the devastation of Hurricane Maria in 2017.

Andrés is named the Humanitarian honoree as the Foundation announces this year’s theme, “RISE,” which celebrates the community of chefs and industry leaders who rise to the occasion—whether to feed those in need, to stand up for what they believe in, to support their local communities, or to express their personal stories through their cooking.

“The Foundation is thrilled to name José Andrés as the 2018 Humanitarian of the Year,” said Mitchell Davis, executive vice president of the James Beard Foundation. “José’s work in Puerto Rico and Haiti shows how chefs can use their expertise and unique skills to enact profound change on a global scale. He has demonstrated how, at the most difficult times, hot-cooked

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meals provide more than nutrition, they provide dignity. And we couldn't imagine a more fitting honoree this year as we celebrate how chefs and our industry Rise.”

Most recently, following the devastation of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico in 2017, chef Andrés, World Central Kitchen, and the #ChefsForPuertoRico network of chefs and volunteers serviced communities in need across all 78 municipalities through 23 kitchens. With the support of the people of Puerto Rico, the organization has activated a local, committed network of chefs, volunteers and partner organizations with a proven model to provide effective and efficient food relief in times of emergency. World Central Kitchen continues to demonstrate its in-depth commitment to Puerto Rico, its people, economy, health and future. Ongoing programs and long-term projects related to chef-driven disaster preparedness and feeding operations, sustainable and local agriculture, and resurgence of the island's food economy are under development.

“I am honored to be receiving and sharing this award with my team at World Central Kitchen, #ChefsforPuertoRico, #ChefsforCalifornia, good friends like Robert Egger and LA Kitchen, DC Central Kitchen and all of the incredible people I have been fortunate to meet over the years through the simple act of cooking a hot meal. Whether it's teaching and preparing a meal alongside people who have just started a new chapter, empowering communities through clean cookstoves, or cooking meals for people who have experienced unimaginable devastation, I've learned that food is powerful. It nourishes, but it also has the power to be an agent of hope and change,” commented Andrés.

The James Beard Foundation Awards Gala will be held at the Lyric Opera of Chicago on Monday, May 7, 2018. During the event, which is open to the public, awards for the Restaurant and Chef and Restaurant Design categories will be handed out, along with special achievement awards Humanitarian of the Year, Lifetime Achievement, Design Icon, Who's Who of Food and Beverage in America, and America's Classics. A gala reception will immediately follow, featuring top chefs and beverage professionals from across the country.

On Friday, April 27, 2018, the James Beard Media Awards, an exclusive event honoring the nation's top cookbook authors, culinary broadcast producers and hosts, and food journalists, will take place at Pier Sixty at Chelsea Piers in New York City.

Established in 1990, the James Beard Awards recognize culinary professionals for excellence and achievement in their fields and furthers the Foundation's mission to celebrate, nurture, and honor chefs and other leaders making America's food culture more delicious, diverse, and sustainable for everyone. Each award category has an individual committee made up of industry professionals who volunteer their time to oversee the policies, procedures, and selection of judges for their respective Awards program. All JBF Award winners receive a certificate and a medallion engraved with the James Beard Foundation Awards insignia. There are no cash prizes.

The 2018 James Beard Foundation Awards are proudly hosted by Choose Chicago and the Illinois Restaurant Association and presented in association with Chicago O'Hare and Midway International Airports as well as the following partners: Premier Sponsors: All-Clad Metalcrafters, American Airlines, HMSHost, Illinois Office of Tourism, Lavazza, S.Pellegrino® Sparkling Natural Mineral Water, TABASCO® Sauce, Woodford Reserve Bourbon; Supporting Sponsors: Breville®, Corporate Essentials, Hyatt, Robert Mondavi Winery, Skuna Bay Salmon, Taylor Precision Products, Valrhona, Windstar Cruises; Gala Reception Sponsors: Dogfish Head Craft Brewery, Ecolab, Front of the House®, Kendall College; with additional support from: Chefwear, Emmi Roth, Loacker, and VerTerra Dinnerware.

## About the James Beard Foundation (JBF)

Founded in 1986, the James Beard Foundation celebrates, nurtures, and honors chefs and other leaders making America's food culture more delicious, diverse, and sustainable for everyone. A cookbook author and teacher with an encyclopedic knowledge about food, the late James Beard was a champion of American cuisine. He helped educate and mentor generations of professional chefs and food enthusiasts, instilling in them the value of wholesome, healthful, and delicious food. Today JBF continues in the same spirit by administering a number of diverse programs that include educational initiatives, food industry awards, scholarships for culinary students, publications, chef advocacy training, and thought-leader convening. The Foundation also maintains the historic James Beard House in New York City's Greenwich Village as a "performance space" for visiting chefs.

For more information, please visit [jamesbeard.org](http://jamesbeard.org). Get food news, recipes, and more at the James Beard Foundation's [blog](#), or subscribe to the free digital newsletter [Beard Bites](#). Follow [@beardfoundation](#) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#), and Snapchat. Watch the James Beard House Kitchen Cam, James Beard Awards, and more on the Foundation's [Livestream](#) channel. Find more JBF-related video on the Foundation's [YouTube](#) channels.