

For Immediate Release

October 2, 2018

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JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES AMENDMENTS TO ITS AWARDS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

New Policies Aim to Increase Access, Representation, and Transparency

NEW YORK, NY (October 2, 2018) – Today the James Beard Foundation announced changes to the policies and procedures that govern its annual Awards—considered the most prestigious culinary honors in the country. These changes will go into effect in advance of the October 15, 2018, call for entry period for the 2019 Awards. They are a first step intended to increase gender, race, and ethnic representation in the governance and outcomes of the Awards, as well as to increase transparency of the judging process, and to make entry to the Awards more accessible than ever before.

The 2018 James Beard Award winners represented one of the most diverse groups of honorees to date, with women and people of color taking home awards in more than half of the Restaurant & Chef categories, a meaningful shift for many in the culinary world. In an effort to continue to strive for inclusion, equity, and equality in the Beard Awards themselves and in the food industry at large, the Foundation conducted research into its general practices and connected with thought leaders who challenged the Foundation to analyze its position on current issues and how they affected the Awards process. A group of chefs, writers, and activists penned a series of op-ed-style pieces that were posted on the Foundation’s website. These thought pieces provided insight about the racial and gender imbalance across Beard Award winners, a general lack of understanding about how the Awards work, and the relative inaccessibility of the Beard Awards for some communities.

The result of these efforts is a series of initial changes that will be enacted by the Foundation and the volunteer committees that oversee the Awards governance process in several key areas.

- **Representation:** The volunteers who oversee the various James Beard Award programs have agreed to increase, monitor, and maintain gender, ethnic, and racial diversity among the committees and judges. Each of the JBF awards committees (i.e., the overall governing Awards Committee and the individual committees overseeing Restaurant & Chefs, Books, Design, Journalism, Broadcast Media, and Leadership Awards) has been given a strong inclusion directive from the Foundation to increase diversity in its ranks at a minimum to represent U.S. census. A similar inclusion directive has been given to the committees to increase the diversity of their judges, which represents a much larger operating body.

Currently the committees are establishing the baseline of where they are on diversity (data which the Foundation has not collected in the past) and they will work either by replacing members whose term limits are up or by increasing their total numbers. Evidence of substantive change to the ranks should be seen in the 2019 judging season.

Additionally, the JBF Who's Who of Food and Beverage in America, a decades old program originally established in 1984 by *Cook's* and *Restaurant Business* magazines, was analyzed for its viability under the new inclusion directives. Due to the nature of the Award, for which only past honorees are able to nominate new members, the Who's Who committee has decided to retire it, memorializing the current Who's Who, but ceasing to induct new members.

Finally, changes were announced to the James Beard Foundation's Leadership Awards, which was folded into the larger James Beard Awards weekend in May in 2018. Beginning with the October 15, 2018, open call for entry, the general public can suggest individuals for consideration for the Leadership Awards, with the goal of broadening the pool of Leadership Award candidates working in sustainability, food justice, and public health.

- **Accessibility:** The James Beard Foundation, together with its supporting sponsor S.Pellegrino® Sparkling Natural Mineral Water, who is committed to shining a spotlight on diverse voices in the industry, will make the first two weeks of entry, October 15, 2018 – October 29, 2018, free for the Book, Broadcast Media, and Design Awards in order to remove any financial barrier to entry. For work to be published or released after the window closes, (i.e. between October 29, 2018 and December 30, 2018), the Foundation will allow individuals to write in for exception, which the committees will review on a case by case basis. To ensure the Journalism awards attract new voices, the entry fee for first-time submissions will be waived for the entire entry period (October 15, 2018, through January 2, 2019). Individual writers who have never submitted a work and who have never had their work submitted on their behalf by a media company to which they contribute are eligible for this free entry.
- **Transparency:** The James Beard Foundation feels strongly that all those entering for their chance to win an Award and those who do win Awards should fully understand the policies and

procedures so that all can walk away knowing the outcome was reached fairly and without bias. All parts of the submission, voting and judging process, including the names of committee members, key dates, and guidelines can be found at www.jamesbeard.org/awards/policies.

Finally, the Foundation will continue to encourage committees and judges to consider restaurant culture and leadership values when making their determinations, a directive first issued by the committee chairs as the judging process was getting underway for the 2018 Awards. Extra time for fact checking has been built into the Foundation's schedule to ensure nominees and winners are vetted to the best of our capabilities.

The 2019 James Beard Awards celebrations begin in New York City on Friday, April 26, 2019, with the James Beard Media Awards, an exclusive event honoring the nation's top cookbook authors, culinary broadcast producers and hosts, and food journalists that will take place at Pier Sixty at Chelsea Piers.

The events then move to Chicago, beginning with the Leadership Awards Dinner on Sunday, May 5, 2019, at which honorees will be recognized for their work in creating a more healthful, sustainable, and just food world. The James Beard Awards Gala will take place on Monday, May 6, 2019, at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. 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 Lifetime Achievement, Design Icon, and America's Classics. A gala reception will immediately follow, featuring top chefs and beverage professionals from across the country.

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. Each of this year's Leadership Award honorees will receive a \$10,000 prize that can be donated to a nonprofit organization of their choice. No other James Beard Awards carry cash prizes.

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](#).

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AWARDS