

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The James Beard Foundation Announces Fifth Year of its Women in Culinary Leadership Program

*~ Top industry leaders across the country paired with
15 recipients for paid mentorship initiative ~*

Media Contact

Gwen Steuart

Diane Stefani

The Rosen Group

212.255.8455

gwen@rosengrouppr.com

diane@rosengrouppr.com

New York, NY (August 16, 2017) – The [James Beard Foundation](#) (JBF) is pleased to announce the 15 recipients of its 2017 [Women in Culinary Leadership \(WCL\) Program](#), an accelerated, learning-by-doing mentorship initiative. Since launching in 2012, WCL has provided mentorship opportunities for over 42 women in the culinary industry.

More than 65 applicants with a background of two years or more in hospitality and the culinary arts, entered to participate in the eight-month mentor/grantee program with top industry leaders. The program, spearheaded by Rohini Dey, JBF trustee, and Susan Ungaro, president of the James Beard Foundation, aims to build in-depth skills in the kitchen, restaurant management, and hospitality fields.

“By creating this program five years ago to break through the barriers of the ‘gastro ceiling,’ the goal has been to build women’s operational skills, financial literacy, confidence, and networks in the field,” said Dey. “In using a hands-on approach both in front and back of the house, the WCL provides recipients with the experience to excel in their chosen occupation alongside culinary leaders. Empowering women on a grassroots level to create tangible progress is more vital now than ever before; especially given the glacial change in women’s leadership across all arenas, whether political or the boardroom or culinary.”

The **2017 Women in Culinary Leadership Program** pairs the following grantees with these restaurant industry leaders:

1. **Sierra Carver, Shelby, OH** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by David Kinch*, Manresa, Los Gatos: <https://www.manresarestaurant.com/>

**JAMES
BEARD
FOUNDATION**

2. **Lauren Elmer, Chicago** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Stephen Starr*, Starr Restaurants, Le Coucou*, New York: <http://www.lecoucou.com/>
3. **Tanya Jimenez-Le, Newman, GA** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Anne Quatrano*, Bacchanalia, Atlanta: <http://www.starprovisions.com/bacchanalia/>
4. **Miranda Langlet, Austin, TX** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Shelley Lindgren, A 16, San Francisco: <https://www.a16pizza.com/>
5. **Marketa Lucas, Charlotte, NC** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Paul Fehribach, Big Jones, Chicago: <http://bigjoneschicago.com/>
6. **Nalini Mehta, Atlanta, GA** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Kim Bartmann, Bartmann Restaurant Group, Minneapolis: <http://www.bartmanngroup.rocks/>
7. **Lorraine Moss, Las Vegas, NV** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Susan Feniger* and Mary Sue Milliken*, Border Grill, Los Angeles: <http://www.bordergrill.com/>
8. **Erika Murphy, Spokane, WA** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Tom Douglas*, Tom Douglas Restaurants, Seattle: <https://www.tomdouglas.com/>
9. **Cattibrie Plank, Seattle** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Tom Douglas*, Tom Douglas Restaurants, Seattle: <https://www.tomdouglas.com/>
10. **Reina Shanks, Greensboro, NC** – Will complete a Hospitality program overseen by Kevin Boehm, BOKA Restaurant Group*, Chicago: <http://bokagr.com/>
11. **Jasmine Smith, Austin, TX** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Rohini Dey, Vermilion, Chicago: <http://thevermillionrestaurant.com/index.cfm>
12. **Paige Smith, Stillwater, OK** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Elizabeth Blau, Elizabeth Blau & Associates, Las Vegas: <https://elizabethblau.com/>
13. **Courtney Uecker, New Orleans** – Will complete a Hospitality program overseen by Ti Adelaide Martin, Commander's Palace*, New Orleans: <http://www.commanderspalace.com/>
14. **Hailey Vinter, Omaha, NE** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Sarah Robbins, 21C Museum Hotels, Louisville: <https://www.21cmuseumhotels.com/>
15. **Brittany Walker, Accokeek, MD** – Will complete a Chef program overseen by Jose Andres*, Think Food Group, Washington D.C.: <http://www.thinkfoodgroup.com/>

"It has been very rewarding to watch the growth of our Women in Culinary Leadership Program, but our industry still has a long way to go to help women thrive in leadership roles," said Susan Ungaro, president of the James Beard Foundation. "It is more important than ever to bring

attention to the need for even more opportunities, which is why we recently launched the Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership Program."

The [Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership \(WEL\)](#) program, taking place September 10 to 15, is a new initiative to help female chefs and owners grow their businesses by cultivating women's leadership in the culinary industry. For more information about the WCL and WEL programs, please visit: <https://www.jamesbeard.org/women-leadership-programs>.

***James Beard Award Winner**

About the James Beard Foundation

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. 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.