

JBF WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

James Beard Foundation Names 20 Fellows for 2018 Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership Program

*~ The future of food is female at annual five-day program
empowering women in the culinary world ~*

NEW YORK, NY (June 13, 2018) – The **James Beard Foundation (JBF)** has announced the 20 fellows participating in its 2018 **Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership (WEL)** program, taking place September 23 to 28 at Babson College in Wellesley, Massachusetts. Now in its second year, the WEL program is part of the Foundation's broader Women's Leadership Programs and aims to support female food industry entrepreneurs and restaurant owners in order to grow their careers and scale their businesses.

"The Foundation is deeply committed to supporting parity for women in the culinary industry," said Clare Reichenbach, chief executive officer of the James Beard Foundation. "What's unique about the Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership program is its focus on mentoring established female chefs and restaurateurs seeking to scale and advance their business. We believe that having more women at the helm is key to shifting the restaurant culture to a place where all can thrive. We look forward to working with our newest class of WEL fellows to realize their visions – and ours – for a stronger industry and community."

The 2018 class of 20 Women's Entrepreneurial Leadership fellows are:

- **Nikki Berglund** (Luna Fargo, Fargo, ND)
- **Beth Black** (FOODE, Fredericksburg, VA)
- **Emily Blount** (Saint Leo Restaurant, Oxford, MS)
- **Claire Calvin** (Dinners on the Porch, LLC, Winston-Salem, NC)
- **Joanne Canady-Brown** (The Gingered Peach, Lawrenceville, NJ)
- **Jennifer Caswell** (Bryan Caswell Concepts, Houston)
- **Esther Choi** (mokbar and ms. yoo, Brooklyn, NY); 2018 Audi WEL Fellow
- **Caitlin Corcoran** (Ça Va, Kansas City, MO)
- **Sandra Cordero** (GASOLINA, GASOLINA Cafe, and Pancake, Los Angeles and Oxnard, CA); 2018 Audi WEL Fellow
- **Violeta Edelman** (Dolcezza, Washington, D.C.)
- **Kelly Fields** (Willa Jean, New Orleans)

**For Immediate
Release**

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- **Katy Gerdes** (Angel Food Bakery & Donut Bar, Minneapolis)
- **Ping Ho** (Marrow and The Royce, Detroit)
- **Sandra Holl** (Floriola, Chicago)
- **Joanna Kirkendall** (Pleasantry and 1215 Wine Bar & Coffee Lab, Cincinnati)
- **Danielle Leoni** (The Breadfruit & Rum Bar, Phoenix)
- **Fiona Lewis** (The District Fishwife, Washington, D.C.)
- **Ann Marshall** (High Wire Distilling Co., Charleston, SC)
- **Kari Seher** (MELT Ice Creams, Fort Worth, TX)
- **Daniella Senior** (Colada Shop and Bresca, Washington, D.C.)

WEL complements the Foundation's [Women in Culinary Leadership \(WCL\)](#) program, launched in 2012, which champions women at the start of their careers. Both WCL and WEL comprise JBF's Women's Leadership Programs, made possible with the founding support of Audi, as well as Rohini Dey, EDENS, and WCR (Women Chefs and Restaurateurs).

“As part of Audi’s commitment to advancing women in the workplace, we are thrilled to be a founding sponsor of the JBF Women’s Entrepreneurial Leadership program supporting women who are driving progress in the culinary arena,” said Loren Angelo, VP of Marketing, Audi of America. “The WEL fellows are an inspiration. We look forward to supporting their education and goals within the industry.”

Developed with and hosted at Babson College, the Women’s Entrepreneurial Leadership program is targeted to women chefs/owners of at least one restaurant or food business. The WEL curriculum addresses advanced business and finance concerns related to entrepreneurship and expansion, while also providing gender-specific training and leadership development. In addition to the Babson College curriculum, JBF’s Women’s Entrepreneurial Leadership program administers a group of mentors who agree to provide expertise and career development support to the participants on an ongoing basis once they leave the program. Events, meetings, and webinars are held throughout the year in order to grow the network of women leaders across the country.

“We are thrilled to welcome the new class of WEL fellows, an amazing and diverse cohort of women from across the country, each committed to reach for greater success,” said Jodie W. McLean, chief executive officer of EDENS. “By providing these owners with access to the tools and financial training needed to operate thriving, scalable businesses, they will be empowered to advance as leaders in their industry and their community. The benefits to an entire organization and industry are significant when women are in executive leadership roles and can impact policy, guide growth, and set industry practices and norms.”

The JBF Women’s Leadership Program Advisory Board is comprised of chefs, restaurateurs, business leaders, academics, and other experts, both men and women, who volunteer their time to serve as a source of expertise for both WEL and WCL programs. They include:

- Elizabeth Blau, founder and CEO, Blau and Associates
- James Beard Award–winning chef Traci Des Jardins, Rubicon and Jardinière, San Francisco
- Rohini Dey, JBF trustee and founder/owner of Vermilion Restaurant
- Ahmass Fakahany, CEO/owner, Altamarea Group
- Ruth Gresser, chef/owner, Pizzeria Paradiso; Women Chefs and Restaurateurs, Past President
- Carla Hall, chef, television personality, and philanthropist
- Dr. Deborah Harris, associate professor of Sociology, Texas State University
- Pamela Hinckley, CEO, Tom Douglas Restaurants
- Josh Kulp, co-owner, Honey Butter Fried Chicken
- James Beard Award–winning chef Tony Mantuano, Spiaggia, Chicago
- Jodie W. McLean, CEO, EDENS
- Cindy McLoughlin, JBF trustee and partner with CohnReznick
- Melissa Musiker, director, APCO Worldwide
- Richard Perlman, chairman, Compass Partners LLC
- James Beard Award–winning chef and JBF trustee Anne Quatrano, Bacchanalia, Atlanta
- Jessamyn Rodriguez, founder and CEO, Hot Bread Kitchen
- Juliana Stone, vice president at The Elliot Group
- Susan Ungaro, past president, James Beard Foundation

For more information on both the WEL and WCL programs, please visit: jamesbeard.org/women-leadership-programs.

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 our Taste America tour; 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](https://www.instagram.com/beardfoundation), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/beardfoundation), and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/beardfoundation).