

For Immediate Release



**JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION® CELEBRATES 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF
CHEF BOOTCAMP FOR POLICY AND CHANGE**

NEW YORK, NY (November 9, 2022)—The **James Beard Foundation®** celebrates the **10th anniversary of the Chef Bootcamp for Policy and Change**, a groundbreaking program that trains chefs around the country to advocate for policies and practices that impact the hospitality industry and food system. For over a decade, hundreds of chef-advocates have successfully championed at the local, state, and federal level to provide nutritious school meals, protect SNAP recipients, support American fisheries, reduce food waste, and fight for safer, more regenerative food production across the United States.

The Chef Bootcamp for Policy and Change was founded in 2012—conceptualized by James Beard Award-winning chef Michel Nischan of Wholesome Wave, James Beard Foundation board member Eric Kessler, and Foundation leadership—who recognized the growing potential for chefs, with their cultural influence, to leverage their platforms for food system change. **More than 163 million people dine out at least once a week** (National Restaurant Association); **the food and beverage industry is one of the most trusted industry sectors** (Edelman Trust Barometer 2022); and **the restaurant industry is projected to become a \$900 billion industry by the end of 2022**, as well as **expected to provide 16.9 million jobs by 2030** (National Restaurant Association). This enormous platform uniquely positions chefs—sitting at the intersection between customers, the workforce, local community, retailers, packagers, farmers, and more—to be powerful accelerators of change.

Bootcamp prepares chefs with the skills and knowhow to be comfortable as leaders advocating for issues—while bringing participants together in community for education and discussion on important food system issues across the environment, agriculture, nutrition, and hunger. Since launching, **nearly 350 participants—representing 47 states and 3 countries—have used their experience to mobilize in support of a healthier, more sustainable, and more equitable food system**. Notable alumni have included **Hugh Acheson, Nyesha Arrington, Rick Bayless, Maneet Chauhan, Esther Choi, Dominique Crenn, Ashley Christensen, Elizabeth Falkner, Cheetie Kumar, Edward Lee, Anthony Myint, Kwame Onwuachi, Bill Telepan**, and many more.

Whether in their restaurants, communities, or beyond, Bootcamp has given chefs the courage and conviction to act. The pilot, held in partnership with PEW Charitable Trusts in 2012 at

Blackberry Farms in Tennessee, was a catalyst for the “Super Chefs Against Super Bugs” movement, with over 1,000 chefs advocating to stop the overuse of antibiotics in industrial farms. Since then, alumni have gone on to support causes at all levels, including:

- **Andrea Reusing** championing Fair Labor practices;
- **Tiffany Derry** advocating for Food Waste Labeling in Congress;
- **Renee Erickson** becoming a vocal supporter for fishery conservation;
- **Ben Hall** advocating for the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act in DC;
- **Sara Bradley** raising awareness for working mothers;
- **Patrick Mulvaney** advocating for local hunger and food insecurity issues—serving over 2 million community meals in Sacramento and 37 million California-wide during the pandemic;
- **Mourad Lahlou** lobbying 22 congressional members with bootcamp alumni, the Stanford based ReFED organization, and JBF to reduce food waste—including meeting with Chellie Pingree, author of HR 4184 (The Food Recovery Act)

*“For 10 years the James Beard Foundation has provided chefs with essential advocacy training to be critical changemakers in their communities and the broader food system,” said **Kris Moon, President and COO of The James Beard Foundation**. “Throughout, we’ve seen chefs putting these skills into practice to create a better world for all, perhaps most noticeably when the pandemic hit in 2020 and many Chef Boot Camp alumni were the first to spring into action, leveraging the training they received to advocate for their communities, their restaurants, and the entirety of the independent restaurant industry. We couldn’t be more proud of the work that has been done, and more committed to supporting these advocates in the work that is ahead.”*

BOOTCAMP HISTORY AND HIGHLIGHTS:

- **2012:** The Chef Bootcamp for Policy and Change is conceptualized by JBF Board Trustee Eric Kessler, Michel Nischan of Wholesome Wave, and JBF leadership.
- **2012:** The first-ever Bootcamp pilot launches at Blackberry Farm in Walland, TN in partnership with PEW Charitable Trusts.
- **2013:** On behalf of the Osprey Foundation (now Orange Door Fund), Chris and Meredith Powell provide critical founding support for Bootcamp to become an official JBF program.
- **2014:** JBF partners with the NRDC to support the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery and Conservation Management Act. This was an early joint initiative, of many, that would pair chefs, fisherman, and other important food system stakeholders to advocate on behalf of policy change for marine fisheries.
- **2018:** JBF publishes *Waste Not*, a comprehensive book on food waste reduction and full-use cooking, featuring Bootcamp alumni recipes.

- **2019:** Bootcamp chefs actively participate in policy advocacy efforts to protect SNAP meeting with members of Congress in D.C., and engaging in social media advocacy campaigns.
- **2019:** The first Chef Action Summit launches in Princeton, NJ, bringing together over 100 Bootcamp alumni.
- **2020:** JBF provides seed funding for the formation of the Independent Restaurant Coalition (IRC)—of which many founding members are bootcamp alumni—helping to amplify efforts and securing \$26.2 billion in relief for independent restaurants in the wake of COVID-19.
- **2022:** 10-year anniversary of Bootcamp, celebrating nearly 350 alumni to date.
- **2022:** The 23rd Chef Bootcamp for Policy and Change kicks off in Avery Island, Louisiana from November 6-8
- **2023:** The second annual Chef Action Summit will take place from January 29-31 in Houston, TX

The 10th anniversary of the Chef Bootcamp for Policy and Change coincides with the Foundation’s recent participation in the Biden-Harris Administration’s White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health—where over 500 people gathered to discuss achievable strategies to end hunger and reduce diet-related diseases by 2030. The James Beard Foundation highlighted the culinary work of chef-advocates who embody the Foundation’s mission of Good Food for Good. In addition—as part of the \$8 billion in commitments made—the Foundation has pledged to work with the Environmental Working Group (EWG), Plant Based Foods Association, Independent Restaurant Coalition, and James Beard Award winner Andrew Zimmern to encourage chefs, restaurant owners, and operators to offer at least one plant-based or vegetarian option on their dinner menus.

*“The James Beard Foundation was honored to be a part of this year’s White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health. As policymakers and community activists alike recognize, chefs play a crucial role as advocates and frontline workers in the fight to create a more equitable, sustainable, and healthful food culture for all,” said **Clare Reichenbach, CEO of the James Beard Foundation.** “We are honored—through programs like Bootcamp, as well as the chefs highlighted and the commitment made at this year’s conference—to support the transformative work of chefs leading their communities around food.”*

ABOUT THE 2022 FALL COHORT

The 23rd session of the program just wrapped with participants—15 chefs from 13 states—gathering at the TABASCO® Brand headquarters on Avery Island, Louisiana on November 6-

8. Participants received intensive policy and advocacy training, including an introduction to the Farm Bill that is due for renewal in 2023. Conservation and sustainability challenges served as thematic focus points.

*“During our time in Louisiana, Bootcamp participants received policy advocacy training that allowed them to develop goals and messaging around the issues they care about—to make change in and for their communities,” said **Dr. Anne E. McBride, Vice President of Programs, James Beard Foundation.** “Given the environmental challenges faced in many parts of the country, we also focused on conservation as a thematic issue—with specific focus on Louisiana, notably around coastal erosion, including guest speakers from Rainey Conservation Alliance, SPROUT, and Taproot Earth.”*

The 2022 Fall Bootcamp Participants Are:

- **Mandy Dixon** (Within the Wild Adventure Company - Homer, AK)
- **Shenarri Freeman** (Cadence - NY, NY)
- **Nelson German** (alaMar, Sobre Mesa - Oakland, CA)
- **Ederique Goudia** (In the Business of Food - Detroit, MI)
- **Cleophus “Chef Ophus” Hethington** (Ebi Chop Bar, Triangular Traded Spices - Atlanta, GA)
- **Lauren Ivey** (Death & Taxes - Raleigh, NC)
- **Dan Jacobs** (DanDan, EsterEv, JVR Hospitality Group - Milwaukee, WI)
- **Carlo Lamagna** (Magna Kusina - Portland, OR)
- **Ryan Manning** (The Manning Group - Orlando, FL)
- **Joseph Romero** (Three Sisters Kitchen, Zazen - Albuquerque, NM)
- **Le’Genevieve “Vie” Squires** (Detroit Food Academy – Detroit, MI)
- **Chutatip “Nok” Suntaranon** (Kalaya, Philadelphia)
- **Elena Terry** (Wild Bearies - Madison, WI)
- **David Thomas** (H3irloom Food Group - Baltimore, MD)
- **Cesar Zapata** (Phuc Yea - Miami, FL)

To read more about our 2022 cohort of Bootcamp participants, [please visit here](#).

As a result of the fall Chef Bootcamp for Policy and Change, participants:

- Gained an understanding of their role as trusted figures and pillars in their communities, positioning them as perfect agents for industry and food system change;
- Learned the many different ways that policy advocacy can take form—whether it is through the ingredients and farms they choose to support, the compensation model of their restaurant, fighting food insecurity in their local community, or advocating for policy changes at the local, state, and national level;
- Allowed participants to understand their networks of influence—from customers, to employees, friends, family, farmers, distributors, and policy makers;
- Discovered their unique voice and developed messaging to advocate for the issues they are passionate about;

- Learned how to use strong messaging to advocate for policy issues that impact their community.

Concluding this 23rd session, the Foundation is honored to mark this 10-year achievement and add 15 more chef-advocates to the hundreds of alumni around the country who have used their voice for good. Today, with more chefs energized and empowered than ever before, we look forward to building on the momentum of this anniversary in support of a more sustainable, equitable, and delicious food future for all.

The James Beard Foundation is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to celebrate, support, and elevate the people behind America's food culture and champion a standard of good food anchored in talent, equity, and sustainability.

Chef Bootcamp for Policy & Change was initiated with founding support by Osprey Foundation (now Orange Door Fund) on behalf of Chris and Meredith Powell and is sponsored by Best Made, Deloitte, Distinguished Vineyards, Tequila Patrón, TABASCO® Brand, and YETI.

The James Beard Foundation's programs are also supported by American Airlines, the official airline of the James Beard Foundation; Capital One, the official credit card and banking partner of the James Beard Foundation; and Windstar Cruises, the official cruise line of the James Beard Foundation.

PRESS ASSETS

- **Selects:** <https://app.air.inc/a/bdTZMBvnZ>
- **Video:** [10 Years of Bootcamp Roundtable](#) Discussion
- **2022 Bootcamp Sizzle:** <https://app.air.inc/a/ccmegUMDw>

**Additional stills and videos are available upon request*

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About the James Beard Foundation

The James Beard Foundation (JBF) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that celebrates and supports the people behind America's food culture, while pushing for new standards in the restaurant industry to create a future where all have the opportunity to thrive. Established over 30 years ago, the Foundation has highlighted the centrality of food culture in our daily lives and is committed to supporting a resilient and flourishing industry that honors its diverse communities. By amplifying new voices, celebrating those leading the way, and supporting those on the path to do so, the Foundation is working to create a more equitable and sustainable future—what we call Good Food for Good®. JBF brings its mission to life through the annual Awards, industry and community-focused programs, advocacy, partnerships, and events across the country. For the first time in the Foundation's history, exceptional culinary talent, industry leaders, and visitors from NYC and beyond can experience unforgettable dining and educational programming at Pier 57—inspiring food and beverage devotees for decades to come. Learn more at jamesbeard.org, sign up for our newsletter, and follow @beardfoundation on social media.

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