

Academy Connection



May 2024



Greetings Chef,

It has been a busy past couple of months with American Academy of Chefs (AAC) dinners held at two ACF chapters, one in Windsor, Canada, and the other in Baltimore, Maryland. I am honored to have been invited, along with several other ACF board members, to attend these elegant Academy dinners.

On Saturday, April 13, Executive Chef John Kukucka, CEC, AAC of the Essex Golf Club, once again demonstrated a high level of professionalism and hospitality to all guests. His passion for the culinary arts and profession was evident through the performance of his team. As Chair, I was proud to award Chef Kukucka with an AAC Service Pin. Congratulations!

The ACF Greater Baltimore Chapter Academy of Chefs and the Baltimore Chaîne des Rôtisseurs hosted a "Celebration of Master Chefs" dinner on April 18 in honor of Chef Jan Bandula, CMPC, CCE, AAC, and Chef Gerard Kowalski, CMC, AAC.

Chef Lisa Tomecek, CEPC, AAC, event chair and President of the ACF Greater Baltimore Chapter, in partnership with Stuart M. Goldberg, Bailli, Bailliage de Baltimore, presented an evening of culinary elegance at the Baltimore Country Club. I commend Chef Tomecek, CEPC, AAC, Mr. Goldberg, and their entire dinner committee for the

elegant dinner performance. Their attention to detail in the planning and execution of the event was noticed by all in attendance. They exemplified professionalism, culinary skills, and presentation. Each course was perfectly paired with wines, and the dining room setup and decor were elegantly arranged. The service by the waitstaff was flawless, reflecting what an American Academy of Chefs dinner represents.

I am looking forward to our annual AAC dinner in Phoenix, where I will be honored to present the Joseph Amendola Award to Chef Tomecek. Congratulations!

The ACF chapter of Tampa Bay welcomed guests to an American Academy of Chefs dinner at The Fort Harrison in Clearwater, Florida, on April 18. The event celebrated ACF Tampa Bay Chef Barry Reed, CEC, Chef Zoltan Vajna, and Chef Geoffrey Blanchette, CEC, PCEC, Emeritus. Chef Vanessa Marquis, CEC, AAC, event chair and President of the ACF Tampa Bay, along with ACF President Rene Marquis, CEC, CCE, CCA, AAC, coordinated and designed the AAC dinner. The reception featured an impressive wall of ice carvings, displayed caviar, shrimp cocktail, and passed hors d'oeuvres. The seven-course dinner was perfectly executed. In attendance were three past AAC Chairmen—Chef Frederic Sonnenschmidt, CMC, AAC, HOF, Chef Bert Cutino, CEC, AAC, HOF, HBOT, and Chef John Minniti, CEC, AAC, HOF, HBOT—as well as AAC Vice-Chair Chef Reimund Pitz, CEC, CCE, AAC, HOF, and ACF Southeast Vice-President Chef Bryan Frick, CEC, AAC.

To top it all off, at the end of the dinner, Chefs Rene and Vanessa Marquis presented the American Academy of Chefs with a \$10,000 check for the scholarship fund. Thank you for your continuous support of the AAC.

We are currently planning the upcoming summer AAC national dinner in Phoenix. Details for the dinner and the spouse's luncheon are listed below in this newsletter. Please make your reservations as soon as possible for the ACF Convention and the AAC dinner and note that the dinner is open to non-AAC Fellows and guests.

Respectfully,



Joe G. Aiello, CEC, AAC, HOF
Chair, American Academy of Chefs



Join us in **PHOENIX**

 ACF National Convention
Phoenix Convention Center
July 14-17, 2024

Visit acfchefs.org/convention for more information.

2024 AAC Dinner & Reception Dinner

Hilton Phoenix Resort at the Peak
Tuesday, July 16, 2024
6:00pm – 10:00pm

\$195.00 per ticket
Transportation will be provided.
Formal attire is requested.

There will be **NO** onsite ticket sales.

To purchase tickets, [click here](#) or contact Karen Stamper, AAC Administrator at (904) 484-0202

AAC Spouses/Significant Others Lunch

TICKETS ARE NOW ON SALE!!!!

Renaissance Phoenix Downtown Hotel

Wednesday, July 17, 2024

11:30 am.–1:30 p.m.

\$65 per person

Seating is limited

To purchase tickets, [click here](#) or contact Karen Stamper, AAC Administrator at (904) 484-0202

AAC Dinner Journal Ad DEADLINE May 20

Show your support and recognize a deserving Chef with a special message in this year's AAC dinner journal.

Contact Karen Stamper, AAC Administrator at kstamper@acfcchefs.org or (904) 484-0202.

2024 AAC Celebrated Chef

The American Academy of Chefs is proud to announce this years Celebrated Chef



Shirley Shuliang Cheng

AAC Annual Fellow's Meeting

Tuesday, July 16, 2024

7:30 am - 9:00am

Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, Arizona

All are Welcome!!



2024 Hall of Fame

"The Culinary Hall of Fame was unanimously accepted by the Academy members. Its concept is to honor those men and women who, because of their outstanding attributes, have won the respect and love of their professional guild. Therefore, they are so honored by their peers as a positive reflection to all those in this profession who seek achievement!" — *Hermann G. Rusch*

Wilfred R. Beriau, CEC, CCE, AAC

ACF Casco Bay Culinary Association of Portland, Maine

Linda S. Musch, CEC, AAC

ACF Rhode Island Chapter

William J. Tillinghast, CEC, AAC

ACF Philadelphia Delaware Valley Chefs Association

2024 American Academy of Chefs Tentative Inductees

The honor society of ACF, the American Academy of Chefs (AAC) represents the highest standards of professionalism in the organization, society and industry. The

Academy's primary mission is to promote the education of all culinarians by mentoring culinarians, awarding scholarships to students seeking a future in the culinary industry, and by providing grants to professional working chefs looking to further their career.

We are proud to present our 2024 tentative American Academy of Chefs
Candidates for Induction:

Leonard G. Bailey, CEC

ACF Rio Grande Valley Chapter

Sponsored by Keith H. Mandabach, CEC, AAC & Robert A. Milam, CEC, AAC

Danny Bungenstock, CEC, CCA

ACF Greater Cincinnati Chapter

Sponsored by Jeff Bacon, CEC, CCA, AAC & Alan J. Neace, CEC, AAC

Sarah M. Deckert, CEC

ACF Nation's Capital Chefs Association

Sponsored by Rene J. Marquis, CEC, CCE, AAC, AAC & David J. Turcotte, CEC, AAC

David J. Durante, CEC, CCA

ACF Caxambas Chapter of Southwest Florida

Sponsored by Richard Brumm, CEC, CCA, AAC & Frank Setera, CEC, AAC, HHOF

David Kasper CEC, CCA

ACF Professional Chefs / Cooks Association of Rochester

Sponsored by James Taylor, CEC, AAC, HOF & John Venturo, CEC, AAC

Drew Patterson, CEC, CCA

ACF Columbus Chapter

Sponsored by Thomas P. Hunt, CEC, AAC & Douglas R. Maneely, CEC, CCA, AAC

Len Pawelek, CEC

Texas Chefs Association

Sponsored by Kelly V. Cook, CEC, AAC & Patrick Mitchell, CEC, AAC

Scott C. Ross, CEC, CCA

ACF Caxambas Chapter of Southwest Florida

Sponsored by Mark H. Brown, CEC, CCA, AAC & Brian E. Lord, CEC, AAC

Michael J. Stamets, CEC

ACF Capital District - Central NY

Sponsored by Michael Morgan, CEC, AAC & Christopher A. Tanner, CEC, CCE, AAC

Clyde R. Tanner, CEC

ACF Gulf to Lakes Chef & Cooks Association

Sponsored by Michael J. Rigberg, CEC, CCE, CCA, AAC & Jeffrey A. Rotz, CEC, CCE, AAC

Chas Tatigian, CEC, CCA

ACF Caxambas Chapter of Southwest Florida

Sponsored by Richard Crisanti, CEC, CCA, AAC & Ralph Feraco, CEC, AAC

Melissa B. Trimmer, CEPC

ACF Michigan Chefs de Cuisine Association

Sponsored by John Kukucka, CEC, AAC & Thomas Recinella, CEC, AAC

Frank R. Turchan, CEC

ACF Michigan Chefs de Cuisine Association

Sponsored by James Kokenyesdi, CEC, CCA, AAC & John Miller, CEC, CCA, AAC

Jake Williams, CEC

ACF Michigan Chefs de Cuisine Association

Sponsored by Gerneil L. Franklin, CEC, CCA, AAC & Matthew Schellig, CEC, CEPC, CCE, CCA, AAC

R. Troy Wilson, CEC

ACF Beehive Chefs Chapter

Sponsored by Peter Hodgson, CEC, AAC & Peter B. Sproul, CEC, AAC

**2024 Honorary American Academy of Chefs
Tentative Inductees**

Keith A. Boston, CEC

ACF Epicurean Club

John T. Byrne

ACF Minneapolis Chefs Chapter

Mary Chamberlin

Colin Hudson, CEC, CCA

ACF Miami Chapter

Salvatore Saja

ACF Chicago Chefs

Shawn Smith

CEO/Chairman for Hattie Mae & Pals Foundation



**Honor Society of the
American Culinary Federation®**

**2025 American Academy of Chefs
Applications**

Membership - Connection - Involvement

Thank you to all the Academy Fellows who nominated, mentored and supported this year's applicants.

Congratulations to those who completed their Academy applications. The review process will begin shortly. Announcements will be made in Late February.

It is never too early to start working on your AAC Application. The 2025 application process will begin in February 2024 for induction at the 2025 ACF National Convention.

If you have any questions, please contact Karen Stamper, American Academy of Chefs Administrator at kstamper@acfchefs.org

**2024 American Academy of Chefs Award
Recipients**

AAC Chair's Medal

Kyle Richardson, CEC, CCE, AAC
ACF Chicago Chefs

Lawrence A. Conti, CEC, AAC, HOF, Chair's Achievement Award

Bill W. Sy, CEC, AAC, HOF
ACF Chef's Association of Arizona

Joseph Amendola Award

Lisa D. Tomecek, CEPC, AAC
ACF Greater Baltimore Chapter

Lt. General John D. McLaughlin Award

Dr. Ellen S. Pruett

Chef Good Taste Award

Thomas A. Hannum, CEC, AAC
ACF First State Chefs Association

Sharing Culinary Traditions Award

Mark A. Cochran, CEC, CCA, AAC
ACF Culinary Arts Society of Oklahoma

We would love to hear from you!

We would like to hear what great things our Academy Fellows are doing. Email Karen Stamper, Executive Assistant and Special Projects Manager at kstamper@acfchefs.org with events, pictures and acknowledgements about AAC Fellows and we will post in the monthly Academy Connection.

Tax-Deductible Donations

(April 1, 2024 - April 30, 2024):

James M. Binner, HAAC
Alex R. Darvishi, CEC, AAC, HOF
Scott T. Erwin, CEC, AAC
Roderick G. Smith, AAC

[Donate Now](#)

Donations, as many as you choose to make in any given year, are welcome at any time. On behalf of the entire Academy family, we thank you again for your generous support.

Donations may be made by check mailed directly to the Academy Office, online, or via credit card. Please contact the Academy Administrator at academy@acfchefs.org if you have any questions.

THANK YOU to all of our 2023 Donors!

2023 AAC Sponsors

We would like to thank our sponsors for their continued support of the American Academy of Chefs and their mission.

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Through the Academy Connection e-newsletter, the American Academy of Chefs provides members with news and information on products and services offered by the AAC®, its partners and American Culinary Federation.

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American Culinary Federation | 6816 Southpoint Pkwy. Ste. 400 | Jacksonville, FL 32216 US