

ACADEMY CONNECTION



SEPTEMBER 2024



Greetings Chefs,

As summer draws to a close, I've had the opportunity to reflect on the whirlwind of activities that filled my personal and professional life, including my ongoing commitments to the American Culinary Federation (ACF) and the American Academy of Chefs (AAC).

Fresh off the heels of the ACF convention in Phoenix, I had the pleasure of attending a family event in my hometown of Sicily, Italy. While there, I organized a special recognition ceremony to honor talented chefs and pastry chefs in the province of Palermo for their culinary achievements. I was thrilled to present them with AAC Certificates of Recognition and Honorary Memberships to the ACF Chicago Chefs. The event took place at the historic Palazzo Butera Family in

Bagheria and was widely covered by local and international media. You can find a link to one of the many reports [HERE](#)

In August, I had the privilege of joining ACF President Rene Marquis, CEC, CCE, CCA, AAC, AAC Rajeev Patgaonkar, CEC, AAC, Central Region VP, and our Executive Director Christopher A. Tanner, CEC, CCE, AAC, on a site visit to Grand Rapids, Michigan, to explore the Amway Grand Plaza hotel as a potential venue for the 2026 ACF Convention and AAC Induction Dinner. I'm excited to share that the host property management, chef, and staff are incredibly enthusiastic about hosting us for these events.

During our visit, the Experience Grand Rapids tourism organization provided us with a comprehensive tour of the city, highlighting its many attractions and opportunities for our members. We visited the innovative Square Roots farm at the Gordon Food Service Headquarters, led by Chef Kurt A. Kwiatkowski, CEC, CCA, AAC, where we learned about urban internal container farming. We also explored Pebble Creek Produce, an impressive mushroom farm, and witnessed the fascinating mycology program from spore to lab to growing. Another highlight was [FarmLink](#), a unique market that connects local farms and producers with consumers using an online ordering system.

In addition to these exciting sites, Grand Rapids offers a vibrant downtown market and numerous local restaurants within walking distance of the hotel. Chef Shawn Kohlhaas and the ACF Greater Grand Rapids chapter are committed to showcasing their community to all attendees.

Behind the scenes, the AAC administration team has been diligently working to refine our policies, procedures, and scholarship initiatives. I'm hopeful to share more details about these updates soon. We're also in the final stages of preparing the 2025 budget process. Specific dates for the virtual meetings where our ACF Treasurer will present the proposed budget are listed below. I encourage you to attend, as the AAC budget will be a key component of the presentation.

If your chapter is considering hosting an AAC dinner, please don't hesitate to reach out. I, along with our Vice Chair, Regional Directors, and Karen Stamper, are available to assist you throughout the process.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the AAC.

Respectfully,



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



Sicilian specialties prepared by local chefs and pastry chefs served at the award ceremony reception at the Palazzo Butera in Bagheria, near Palermo, Sicily. Present were local artists and folk poets.



Site visiting team at Square Roots Farm Gordon Foodservice Headquarters





NCR

The September/October National Culinary Review has been published. Look for 2024 AAC Inductees, ACF Award Winners, 2024 Trends and more.

[READ NCR HERE](#)

2025 ACF Budget

Chef Kyle Richardson, CEC, CCE, AAC; ACF National Secretary will be holding 4 sessions to discuss the upcoming ACF Budget prior to the Board of Governors Meeting on November 7, 2024. Included in the discussions will be the AAC Budget.

We encourage all AAC Fellows to dial into one of the sessions.

Tuesday, October 1 @ 3:00pm EDT

Wednesday, October 2 @ 8:00pm EDT

Monday, October 7 @ 3:00pm EDT

Thursday, October 10 @ 8:00pm EDT

Zoom links to be sent in the coming weeks.

AAC Officer Nominations

2025 - 2027 Term

Nominations for AAC Chair and Vice Chair opened at the 2024 AAC Annual Fellows Meeting. Nominations will remain open through December 1, 2024.

Additional information can be found on the [Academy Elections](#) webpage and future editions of the Academy Connection

Questions can be sent to Karen Stamper, Academy Administrator, at kstamper@acfchefs.org or (904) 484-0202

2024 ACF National Convention & AAC Dinner



[VIEW & DOWNLOAD PHOTOS](#)



2025 American Academy of Chefs Applications

Membership - Connection - Involvement

The "Prestigious Honor Society" of the American Culinary Federation offers a unique way to honor those who have worked hard and risen through the ranks of the culinary field. A successful application for acceptance as an AAC Fellow will serve as the culmination of years of involvement in the great culinary profession, and as an ACF member.

An Academy Fellow must request an application for a potential inductee. Candidates will need two sponsor letters of recommendation from voting Academy Fellows. An Academy Fellow is permitted to sponsor one new applicant per year, as is a Regional Director.

Applications must be returned by December 1st, 2024. Induction will be at the 2024 ACF National Convention.

Applications for American Academy of Chefs Induction for 2025 are now available. You can review the current requirements on how to become an American Academy of Chefs Fellow, [HERE](#)



2025 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*

Applications for American Academy of Chefs Induction for 2025 are now available.

To request an application contact Karen Stamper, Academy Administrator, at kstamper@acfchefs.org or (904) 484-0202

Applications must be returned by December 1st, 2024. Induction will be at the 2024 ACF National Convention.

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.



AAC Chefs took part in a recent ACF Certification Test at Southern Maine Community College in South Portland, ME on August 20th.

Pictured are Perrin H. Long, CEC, CCE, AAC; Gary L. Sheldon, CEC, AAC and Wilfred R. Beriau, CEC, CCE, AAC, HOF (Left to Right)

Thank you to Chef Long for the photo.

Tax-Deductible Donations

(August 1, 2024 - August 31, 2024):

ACF Caxambas Chapter of Southwest Florida
ACF Chicago Chefs
ACF Columbus Chapter
ACF Epicurean Club of Boston
ACF Greater Baltimore Chapter
ACF Palm Beach County Chefs Association
Joe G. Aiello, CEC, AAC, HOF
Deborah A. Bando-Duit, CEC, AAC
Leslie L. Bartosh, CEC, AAC
Americo S. DiFronzo, CEC, CCA, AAC, HBOT
Francine Greff, HAAC
Philip H. Jones HAAC, HBOT
John Kukucka, CEC, AAC
Alan L. Romano, CEC, CCE, AAC
Jeff L. Simms, HAAC
Clyde R. Tanner, CEC, CCE, AAC
Ventura Chefs Association

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 2024 Donors!

2024 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.

American Culinary Federation

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