



November 2024

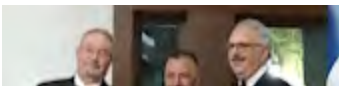
Dear Fellows,

It's been a busy few weeks, and I'm excited to share some highlights from my recent experiences in the culinary community.

Recent Honors and Events



I had the great honor of being recognized at The 54th Anniversary Antonin Carême Induction Dinner hosted by the ACF San Francisco Chapter. It was humbling to receive the 2024 Antonin Carême Medal, as one of the recipients along with Chef Alex R. Darvishi, CEC, AAC, HOF, Chef Colin A. Moody, Mark Eggering, Kurt Grasing and Reynaldo Hernandez with the 2024 Antonin Carême Medal. The Antonin Carême Medal is an award that recognizes individuals who have made significant introductions to culinary arts, culinary education and gastronomy. I would like to extend my deepest thanks to the Board of Trustees, the ACF San Francisco Chapter, and Chef Jay Marshall, CEC, AAC for this incredible recognition. Chef Bert Cutino, CEC, AAC, HOF, HBOT thank you and your wife, Bella, for the world class hospitality you provided during the weekend of festivities.



At the 130th President's Ball of the Epicurean Club of Boston, I had the pleasure of presenting the AAC Service Award Pin to



Chef John R. DiSessa, CEC, AAC, Past President and current Chair of the Club, in recognition of his outstanding service and dedication to the Academy, the ACF, and the culinary profession. Congratulations, Chef John!

Celebrating Culinary Legends



It was truly a privilege to attend the American Master Chefs' Order Dinner, an honorary event celebrating culinary legend Chef Ferdinand E. Metz, CMC, AAC, HOF, HBOT, and AAC Celebrated Chef Thomas Keller, HHOF. The evening was a wonderful gathering of culinary professionals, and the ACF was well represented by Chef Rene J. Marquis, CEC, CCE, CCA, AAC, ACF National President, Chef Fritz Sonnenschmidt, CMC, AAC, HOF, and many others. Chef Marquis presented a Presidential Coin to Chef Brian M. Skelding, CEC and also honored Chef Metz with his Escoffier Award, which had been presented to him at the WorldChefs Congress in Singapore by Thomas A. Gugler, HAAC. Chef Keller was inducted as an Honorary Life Member into AMCO, a well-deserved honor for both of these legendary chefs.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Fellows and all others honored at this year's prestigious WorldChefs Congress. Your achievements and dedication continue to inspire culinary excellence worldwide.

World Chefs, Thomas Gugler's President's Medal:

- Rene J. Marquis, CEC, CCE, CCA, AAC, ACF National President
- Americo "Rico" S. DiFronzo, CEC, CCA, AAC, HBOT; AAC Past Chair
- Bill W. Sy, CEC, AAC, HOF

Lifetime Honorary Member

- Charles M. Carroll, AAC
- Christopher Koetke, CCE, HAAC

Escoffier Award

- Ferdinand E. Metz, CMC, AAC, HOF, HBOT

Lifetime Honorary Judge

- Alex R. Darvishi CEC, AAC, HOF

Certificate of Appreciation for Contributions to Worldchefs

- Vanessa N. Marquis, CEC, AAC



Ladies in Red Christmas Academy Dinner



Chef John Kukucka, CEC, AAC presented his annual AAC Dinner Saturday, November 16th at the Essex Club and Country Club in Ontario, Canada. ACF Vice President Rajeev Patgaonkar, CEC, AAC and other AAC Fellows and their guests were in attendance to enjoy a truly classic AAC Dinner experience. Chef John, thank you for your continuous financial support from funds generated from your dinner and to promote the mission of the Academy.



Inspiring Future Culinarians

In late October, I was invited to speak at the ACF Milwaukee Chefs Association's Annual Chef of the Year event. Thank you to Chef Joseph D. Parajeki, Chapter President and the entire Board of Directors for organizing the Chef of The Year and fund Raiser Dinner. My message to the chefs in attendance emphasized the importance of continuing education in

our profession. I know firsthand how challenging it can be to balance long hours with the demands of family life, and many culinary professionals feel that education takes a back seat. However, I urged the group to consider the question: Would you tell a young family member or a team member that continuing education isn't a priority for their professional future? From my own experience, I can confidently say that continued education is one of the most important factors in career advancement in our field. It's essential for chefs to prioritize their growth through certification and ongoing learning, as these opportunities are key to advancing in our profession.



Becoming a Fellow of the AAC

I've received several inquiries recently about how to become a Fellow of the Academy (AAC) without going through the formal application process. To clarify, the AAC Honorary Fellow status is awarded to individuals who have made significant contributions to the AAC, the ACF, and the culinary industry. This prestigious status is not granted lightly and is only considered by those who have shown a true commitment to our profession. If you are considering submitting a letter of recommendation for someone, please ensure that the individual's professional resume and contributions to the culinary world reflect the high standards of our organization.

Additionally, one of the mandatory requirements to apply for Fellowship is to hold the Certified Executive Chef (CEC) designation. I encourage all chefs aspiring to become a Fellow to prioritize this step in their professional journey.

Happy Thanksgiving

As we approach the holiday season, I would like to take a moment to wish you and your and your family a Happy Thanksgiving on behalf of Chef Raimund Pitz, CEC, CCE, AAC, WCMC, Karen Stamper and the ACF Board and Office Team family. May this time be filled with warmth, gratitude, and joy.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our community.

Respectfully,
Joe Aiello



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



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*

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[CLICK HERE](#) to request an application.

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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.

Tax-Deductible Donations

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

Gary L. Fuller, CEC, CCE, AAC
Keith E. Gardiner, CEC, CCE, CCA, 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 2024 Donors!

We Would Love to Hear from You!

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

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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