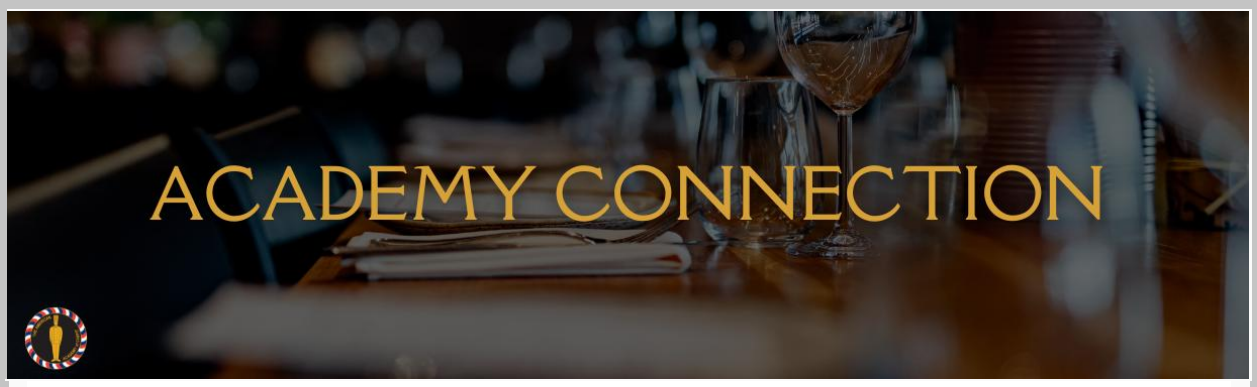


September 2026



Dear Fellows of the Academy,

This month has been filled with Zoom planning meetings focused on fine-tuning the ACF/AAC scholarship policies and procedures, as well as developing a comprehensive marketing strategy to promote these opportunities to our members and culinary industry partners.

I would like to sincerely acknowledge and thank the ACF staff and members of the Scholarship Committee for their dedication, hard work, and valuable contributions throughout this process. Our goal is to complete the policies and procedures, and marketing strategy and submit them to the ACF/ACFEF Boards for their review and approval. Following approval, we plan to officially present and launch the enhanced scholarship program at the beginning of 2027.

Congratulations to Chef Michael Deihl, CEC, AAC, on accepting the important responsibility of serving as Chair of our Nominations and Elections Committee. I am confident that his leadership, experience, and commitment to the American Academy of Chefs will be invaluable as we move forward with this important process. Chef Michael has already been brought up to speed, and I look forward to working closely with him and to achieving a successful outcome for the Academy.

On Friday, August 21st I had the honor of attending “The Global Culinary Adventures of Philip Jones,” a special retirement celebration honoring Philip H. Jones, HAAC, HBOT and his remarkable career and lasting legacy at Jones Dairy Farm in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin.

I was privileged to present Philip with an American Academy of Chefs (AAC) Award of Recognition in appreciation of his dedicated service as a member of the AAC Board of Trustees. It was a meaningful opportunity to recognize not only his service to the Academy but also his many contributions to our profession and the relationships he has built throughout his distinguished career.

The evening brought together culinary leaders, friends, colleagues, and distinguished chefs from across the country to celebrate Philip's passion for food, his contributions to the culinary profession, and the many friendships and professional relationships he has developed throughout his career. The program featured an outstanding group of guest chefs and a global tasting experience inspired by Philip's culinary journey, followed by live music, a special toast, and entertainment.

I was especially honored to attend alongside several past Chairmen of the American Academy of Chefs, past National Presidents of the American Culinary Federation, and many other AAC Fellows and members. They generously volunteered their time and talents to prepare and serve culinary stations representing the many states and countries where Philip has worked and traveled throughout his remarkable career.

Their participation and culinary expertise helped make the evening truly special and served as a testament to the tremendous respect Philip has earned throughout the culinary profession. It also reflected the lasting friendships and professional relationships he has cultivated throughout his career.

I congratulated Philip on his retirement and wished him every success and happiness as he begins this next chapter of his life. It was truly a memorable evening celebrating an exceptional individual, an outstanding career, and the enduring legacy of Philip Jones and Jones Dairy Farm within the culinary community.







I would ask that if you are planning to host a local AAC dinner in the upcoming year, please let us know the date as soon as possible. This will help ensure that the date does not conflict with other chapters that may also wish to sponsor an AAC dinner and will allow us to make arrangements for either myself or the Vice Chair to attend.

If you are planning to honor a Fellow with a Lifetime Achievement Award, please contact us in advance to review the AAC policies and procedures for the award process.

I hope you enjoy the last days of summer with your family and friends. Thank you for your continued support of the Academy.

With sincere appreciation,

Joe Aiello

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





2026 ACF National Convention Academy Photos

Download and Share Your Photos from This Year's Event

Whether you were inducted into the AAC, won an award this year or just came to celebrate with us, you can find pictures capturing this year's AAC events and achievements on the ACF Flickr account. Please visit and enjoy the memories from our 2026 Annual AAC Meeting, Dinner, and Spouse's Luncheon.

Feel free to download your photos and share them on social media. If you do share your photos, please tag the American Culinary Federation or use the hashtag #ACFChefs so we can see your post.

View Photos





2027–2029 AAC Officer Elections

Nominations for the 2027–2029 AAC Officer Elections are now open. The deadline to submit all required paperwork to be considered as a candidate is **December 1, 2026**. Go to Elections for all the information and required forms.

The term of office is a two (2) year term commencing on the Monday following the 2027 ACF National Convention through the close of the 2029 ACF National Convention.

AAC Elections

2027 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, 2026. Induction will be at the 2027 ACF National Convention.

Applications for American Academy of Chefs Induction for 2027 are now available. You can review the current requirements on how to become an American Academy of Chefs Fellow on the ACF Website.

VIEW REQUIREMENTS



2027 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 2027 are now available.

Applications must be returned by December 1st, 2026. Induction will be at the 2027 ACF National Convention.

REQUEST APPLICATION

Tax-Deductible Donations

July 19 - August 31, 2026

Michael D. Tadlock
ACF Michigan Chefs de Cuisine Association

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 2026 Donors!

DONATE NOW

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.

2026 AAC Sponsors

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















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
6816 Southpoint Pkwy Ste 400
Jacksonville, FL 32216
(904) 824-4468



higher logic