

# *The Communiqué*



**Les Dames d'Escoffier®**

INTERNATIONAL

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

February 12, 2024

Dear Dames,

We were excited to kick off 2024 with an event honoring our Scholarship and our very first Business Grant recipients. The awards have been made possible by donations from our members, and from several large donors and from [Mijenta Tequila](#), who has graciously become our first corporate sponsor and supporter of our Business Grant, and [Tahitian Gold Company](#) who was a sponsor of the event on February 9th. Of course these awards could not have been made and this celebration could not have been organized without the hard work of our events, grants, and communications committee members. Thank you to all!

Every few years it is good practice to review our organization's structure including our by-laws. We recently appointed a Board committee to review and update our by-laws and Board structure. We have just begun this work. In the process, the committee has reviewed the National by-laws, the by-laws of other chapters, and the sample by-laws suggested by our National organization. When we have a revised set of by-laws and operating rules, we will share these with all our members and look forward to your input and vote of approval to officially adopt them. Even in these initial stages of this work, we think this effort will help give focus and guidance to our chapter. It will also clearly delineate roles and

responsibilities of board members and of our committees, and provide a clear succession plan for both board and committees.

Having the opportunity to see how other chapters work has given us insight into how to improve the functioning of our chapter. We have said it before but will continue to say that what you get out of an organization is directly related to what you put in. To be a vibrant and inspiring chapter will require each and every member to get involved, whether it is serving on a committee, serving on the Board, and attending events. Ask yourself why you joined and renewed your membership, how you have benefited in the past, and how you hope to benefit in the future. We are an impressive group of women who have a tremendous amount of combined experience and wisdom to impart. If things move forward as planned, we will be reaching out to each and every member to invest in our chapter by becoming a more active member. We are speaking from our own experience when we say our involvement in the chapter has been a joy. We truly enjoy working with each other to help make us better. Come join us!

Also, this will be the last communique put together by outgoing communications chair Kimberly Charles, who started it two years ago for our chapter. She has faithfully served the board both as a member and committee chair for six years and will be taking on a different role. We'd like to thank her for creating this helpful missive and we will continue publishing it monthly. For the time being, please submit your news for consideration to AnneMarie Austin at [lesdamessf@gmail.com](mailto:lesdamessf@gmail.com). Please reach out to either of us if you have an interest in being a part of the communications committee. We'd love your insight and expertise.

With Gratitude,  
Pam Mazzola, Frankie Whitman  
Co-Presidents LDEI-SF



Photo credit: Kristen Loken

## *Events*

**LDEI-SF 2023 Award Recipient Reception**

9 February, 2024 at Prospect Restaurant, San Francisco

Over 35 Dames gathered at Prospect Restaurant on Friday, to celebrate the chapters, 2023 Female Entrepreneurship Grants and L'Etoile d'Escoffier Culinary Scholarships Recipients. A special thanks to our reception hosts, Dames Pam Mazzola and Kathy King, for such a convivial, engaging and delicious evening.

Mary Gassen, Committee Co-Chair, introduced the Female Entrepreneurship Grant winners: Stephanie De La Cruz of De La Creamery ([www.delacreamery.com](http://www.delacreamery.com)) and Wendy Lieu, Socola Chocolatier ([www.socolachocolates.com](http://www.socolachocolates.com)). Committee Chair Chantal Martin, introduced L'Etoile d'Escoffier Culinary Scholarship winners: Alma Moon who attends Laney College; in Oakland and Ashton Rodenburg, who attends the CIA at Greystone. Mary and Chantal; both spoke of the importance of the mentorship element of these awards, noting that access to the chapter's collective wealth of knowledge is the most valuable gift.

The evening was punctuated by a taste of our Reception Sponsor, Tahitian Gold Co. Vanilla (attended by father son duo Manuata and Noa Martin) and Food & Beverage Sponsors and Donors; Mijenta Tequila, Tsar Nicoulai Caviar, Demaine Estates, Villa Marcello Prosecco, Comstock Wines Sauvignon Blanc and Skylark Wine Red Belly Blend.

The menu included -

*La Dama Cocktail ~ Prospect*

*Mijenta Blanco Tequila, St Germain, Hibiscus Syrup, Blood Orange, Fresh Lime, Tahitian Gold Co. Vanilla Sugar & Salt Rim*

*Tsar Nicoulai Caviar ~ Prospect*

*Crispy Tater Tot with Smoked Crème Fraîche & Caviar*

*Lobster Pain Perdu ~ Prospect*

*Tahitian Gold Co. Vanilla-scented Sauce*

*Tequila with Cherry & Vanilla Bonbon ~ Socola Chocolatier*

*Mijenta Añejo Tequila Dark Chocolate Ganache, Tahitian Gold Co. Vanilla Ganache, Morello Cherry Pâte de Fruit with Añejo Tequila*



*Double New Guinea Vanilla*  
*Frozen Custard ~ De La Creamery*  
*Blood Orange Fruit Caviar & Tahitian Gold Co. Vanilla Fleur de Sel*

and an endless array of beautifully presented, mouthwatering bites and small plates graciously provided by Prospect Restaurant.

The room was peppered with ever changing vignettes of intimate groups and conversations. The evening was a huge success, inspirational and great fun!



Photo credit: Kristen Loken

### **LDEI-SF Reception Raffle**

A huge big thank you to the chapter dames who generously donated our 2023 Award Recipient Reception raffle, and to all those who purchased tickets. We raised \$335 to benefit the LDEI-SF General Fund.

The lucky winners, raffle items, their donors were:

*Frankie Whitman - Fairytale Brownies, donated by Eileen Spitalny*

*Barbara Haimes - 30-Minute Astrology Reading, donated by Kimberly Noelle Charles*

*Marsha McBride - One-hour consult on Culinary Star LinkedIn Profile, donated by Nancy Light and generously passed along to grant recipient Wendy Lieu*

*Nancy Light - Two-hour travel planning consult donated by Karen Rowley, Many More Travels*

### **Event Preview for 2024**

Last year saw a dynamic increase in events, a pace our Events Committee plans to continue in 2024. From our virtual Table Talk panel to a Sonoma Chapter mixer to delicious fundraising and educational events, our Dames mixed, mingled, expanded our minds and palates. We launched our regional Member Meetups as well, with afternoon and evening gatherings at Dame-owned businesses around our vast Bay Area, offering both community and support.

We are kicking off the year with the February 9th award reception at Prospect in San Francisco and will be hosting a virtual Table Talk event in March along with LDEI chapters across the country. Our Table Talk this year, organized by Dame Roberta Klugman, will address the impact of GLP-1 agonists, such as Ozempic, on food as one of life's great pleasures. Don't miss this great panel featuring molecular biologist, nutritionist and public health advocate, Marion Nestle and former *Washington Post* business of food reporter Laura Reiley. Dame Kara Nielsen will moderate this timely discussion.

There will again be a series of Member Meetups popping up across our expansive region. The committee is also crafting several educational programs and panels this year and will host our third annual DEI panel on Indigenous People Day, October 14th. Of course, look for our annual autumn Induction and annual Business Meeting plus educational events featuring our esteemed Fellows, culinary superstars and more California chapter mixers. Keep some room in your calendar for these many ways to be engaged, educated and committed to our LDEI chapter!

## **Sweet Home Chicago Dames 5 day/4 night trip June 12-16**

The Chicago chapter of Les Dames is organizing a getaway to Chicago for a gastronomic and culinary immersion in this vibrant city. Organized for a group of 20-24, you will stay at the Chicago Athletic Association Hotel by Hyatt on Michigan Avenue with a view of the Navy Pier. A sample itinerary includes:

- Private lunch at Virtue, Chef Erick Williams' James Beard award-winning restaurant serving elevated soul and Southern food
- Choose either a pizza tour with America's foremost pizza expert, Steve Dolinsky or a food tour of Chicago's most colorful Mexican neighborhood, Pilsen
- Awe-inspiring architecture cruise along the Chicago River
- Private guided tour of the Art Institute of Chicago, highlighting the portrayal of food in art
- A hands-on craft cocktail class at The Violet Hour, named one of America's best bars by Food & Wine magazine
- And so much more!

Pricing and further details are [here](#). Cost includes hotel, eight meals and the tour. For more details contact Claudia Rayston at [crayston@globalgourmands.com](mailto:crayston@globalgourmands.com).



Photo courtesy of the Chicago chapter of Les Dames

## *Fellowship*

Dame Robert Klugman reports: This winter, the Karola Saekel Craib Excellence in Food Journalism Fellowship received another generous donation from Karola's daughter, Anne Craib, which was matched by her employer, Visa. We'd like to extend our sincere gratitude to Anne for her continued support of the program. Because of her efforts, as well as the generosity of our membership, and others, the Fellowship has a balance of over \$20,000. We will once again award \$5,000 to this year's recipient.

The Karola Saekel Craib Excellence in Food Journalism Fellowship is awarded to a promising Bay Area woman food journalist (not a Les Dames member) each year. We are actively seeking confidential nominations.

Please visit <https://lesdamessf.org/Fellowship> for the criteria, bios of our past recipients, and background information.



Send any nominations to Fellowship Co-chairs Roberta Klugman [rklugman@robertaklugman.com](mailto:rklugman@robertaklugman.com) and Jennifer Newens [jennifernewens@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jennifernewens@sbcglobal.net).

Also, ICYMI you can enjoy listening to fellowship recipient Lisa Morehouse's produced segments for California Foodways on KQED, all listed [here](#) for your reference.

## *Member News*

### **M.F. K. Fisher Last House Needs Books**

We heard recently from our friends at the Bouverie Preserve in Sonoma, home to M.F.K. Fisher's Last House. Program Coordinator and Events Manager Susie Allen shares, "Attention cookbook, wine and gardening authors, please send us a signed copy of your book, any M.F.K. Fisher books you've been holding onto, any other culinary books, organic gardening books, anything else you can think of that seems a fit. I think we should include somewhere in the book who is donating each specific book, whether it's a personal bookplate or just a note that I can secure in the book."

These can be mailed to Susie's home address at:

84 Woodworth Lane, Sonoma, CA 95476

Also, she is happy to see any of our members in Sonoma if you wanted to bring a few boxes in person. Please note that donated books become property of Audubon Canyon Ranch.



Shelves at Last House awaiting LDE-SF authored books

### **LDEI Quarterly**

The most recent issue of the Quarterly is online [here](#). We still await 2024 deadlines for the LDEI Quarterly. For any updates on Membership Milestones and Chapter Programs, please contact Dame Jodie Chase at [jodie@chase-ink.com](mailto:jodie@chase-ink.com). She will submit it to National.



We welcome you to submit any items for our biweekly communiqué to Anne Marie Austin at [lesdamessf@gmail.com](mailto:lesdamessf@gmail.com) by 12 pm on Wednesdays for biweekly publication on Fridays. Please consider the categories of Events, Announcements, or Opportunities for Networking and Volunteering. Also, note that it is rare we would publicize fundraising events outside our own needs, but if a major, national, or significant event is happening with several Bay Area Dames, we want to know about it!



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