

The Communiqué



Les Dames d'Escoffier®

INTERNATIONAL

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

March 17, 2023

Dear Bay Area Dames,

Wednesday's sunshine reminded me that spring is just around the corner. If you are like me the weather and recent financial turmoil has left me feeling unsettled and a bit on edge. So I am happy to share this very good news regarding our chapter. A very generous anonymous donor has granted our chapter \$10,000 to initiate a business grant and an additional \$5,000 to add to our scholarship fund. We are tremendously grateful to our donor and their commitment to women in the hospitality industry.

The board of LDEI-SF has worked over the last several years to add a business grant to our philanthropic work. Now it's not only possible, but *it's happening!* Mary Gassen and Emily Luchetti will be co-chairs on the committee, and Sue Conley has signed on as a committee member. This is already a dynamic group, but we are looking for several more dames to serve. Share your passion to promote women-owned businesses and be part of the process.

The Scholarship and Membership Committees have been working to revise their applications. They will be on our website soon. Please encourage qualified women you know in the industry to apply for membership (starting April 1-May 31). We continue to pursue diversity, equity, and inclusion in our membership. The

scholarship has been revamped to include women and nonbinary individuals. Please spread the word about the two available scholarship awards of \$2,500 each. As always, all this information is on our updated website.

For those of you who were able to join our presentation of Table Talks, *New Frontiers in Meat & Dairy: Improving our Food System with Innovative Biotech*, I know we can all agree it was fabulous! Board member and Events Committee co-chair, Kara Nielsen, did a beautiful job moderating and assembling the panel of the women entrepreneurs and CEOs. We hope to make the recording available sometime in the future. Thank you Kara for making us all a little hopeful about the future of food and sustainability.

Thank you to all the board members, committee chairs and committee members for your service to the chapter; we are doing good work! And thank you to our membership for keeping our chapter active and vibrant. I hope to see some of you at our next member meet-up.

Warmly,

Pam Mazzola
Chapter President LDEI-SF

Events

Member Meetups

We encourage you to take advantage of these fun opportunities to informally interact with fellow Dames in a casual setting, and perhaps even to court prospective members.

DECANTsf Friday April 14, 5:30-7:30 pm.

The second event in our Member Meetups series—casual, no-host events for chapter members around the Bay Area—will be at Dame Cara Patricia's SoMa wine bar, bottle shop, and education venue, [DECANTsf](#) on Friday evening, April 14 at 5:30 pm.

Dame Patricia, Advanced Sommelier, opened the doors to DECANTsf in 2019 with co-founder Simi Grewal, as a sustainable wine and craft beer bottle shop and bar combining hospitality, education, and curated selections for everyone. A graduate of DePaul University and The Culinary Institute of America, she is known for her relaxed style of wine education. Her motto is "Drink for Yourself," a reminder that regardless of trends and fads in the beverage world, what is most important is what makes YOU happy.

Dames will gather to enjoy drinks and light bites which can be pre-ordered. Invitation to follow. Please register on our [website](#).

DECANTsf is located at 1168 Folsom St., SF, CA. Please contact Dame Nancy Light at nancyalight@gmail.com with questions.



Photo courtesy DECANTsf

Table Talks

Our chapter's Table Talk, *New Frontiers in Meat & Dairy: Improving our Food System with Innovative Biotech*, held on Friday, March 10 via Zoom, was very well received. The three speakers—Nicki Briggs of Perfect Day, Joanna Bromley from The Better Meat Co., and Amy Chen of UPSIDE Foods—introduced their companies and explained the innovative technologies each employs to produce nutritious protein-based foods without using animals. San Francisco Dame Kara Nielsen set the stage by articulating how these companies are part of rapidly expanding trends around sustainability.

Perfect Day is already scaling its dairy protein, which is generated from yeast using precision fermentation. Look for Brave Robot ice cream and Modern Farmer cream cheese to sample how close to actual dairy they taste. The cultivated meat from UPSIDE Foods starts with cells from chicken eggs fed a nutrient-rich diet that allows them to grow into meat inside stainless steel tanks. With America's first FDA green light for cultivated meat earned last November, UPSIDE will be able to sell its chicken later this year, pending USDA approval. At The Better Meat Co., fast-growing mycelium (root structure of mushrooms) is transformed into a high-protein ingredient called 'rhiza' that is sold to food companies to be made into a host of meat alternatives such as cold cuts or burger patties.

All three companies share an urgent mission to cut greenhouse gases, reduce pollution, and be kinder to animals. These products may seem far out, but some are already in supermarkets, making this a topic culinary professionals should know about.



Photo courtesy The Better Meat Co.

Networking

On Monday, March 6, our chapter partnered with the Hi Neighbor Hospitality Group, Dress for Success, and the James Beard Foundation for a mixer with women leaders in the hospitality industry, held at The Madrigal in San Francisco. Les Dames d'Escoffier was well represented, with many members of the SF and Sonoma chapters in attendance.

The Madrigal provided delicious bites, and beverages were sponsored by [21 Seeds Tequila](#), [SIA Scotch Whisky](#), [Tessier Winery](#), and [Dashe Cellars](#)—all women-owned brands making their mark in a traditionally male-dominated industry. And in true hospitality fashion, attendees went above and beyond in donating generously to the Dress for Success accessory drive. It was a lively evening of connection and camaraderie with friends old and new. Even if you were unable to make it, you are invited to reach out to The Madrigal to plan a visit: <https://www.themadrigalsf.com>.





(l-r) Dame Tonya Pitts, Dame Danielle Fiala, Dame Sandra O'Day, Nina Horn of Horn BBQ, Anais Smith of AF&Co

Fundraising

The Raffle is On! This is your chance to support our chapter and get the word out about your business, product, service, or latest undertaking. We are actively seeking donations for raffles at our upcoming in-person events. Books, gift cards for meals, wine, experiences and more make great raffle prizes! And of course, they'll be greatly appreciated by winning Dames. Please email Nancy Light, Events Committee Co-Chair, at nancyalight@gmail.com with details about the item you'd like to donate, and to receive instructions for shipping. We're collecting items now for our Spring in-person events.

Membership

Save the Dates! Our New Member Application period opens on **April 1** and ends on **May 31**. The updated application form will soon be available on our website.

From our National organization: the **M.F.K. Fisher Prize** is now accepting entries through **March 31, 2023**. Open to both Dames and non-members, the M.F.K. Fisher Prize recognizes excellent works in any media format, including print and electronic (audio, broadcast, television, podcast, and video) that broaden the understanding of the intersection of food, beverage, and culture. The three top winners will receive cash prizes, and five additional works of distinction will be awarded.

For more information, visit the [LDEI website](#).

Member News

Dame **Toni Allegra** was back onstage on February 16, in UpStage Napa Valley's production of "The Last Romance," a tender Italian comedy by Joe DiPietro. The play features Toni as Rosa, an Italian-accented sister of Ralph who, at 80, starts a

romance with a woman at the dog park. Rosa is an avid cook. An opera singer accompanies the action with various arias.



Toni Allegra photo, courtesy www.antoniallegra.com

Dame Toni is also the founding director of the Wine Writers' Symposium, which held its 19th conference at Meadowood Napa Valley on March 5-8.

Dames **Maryam Ahmed** and **Sarah Bray** served on the production team.

Dames in the news...congratulations to our membership on some recent kudos!

Tablehopper relaunch

After 17 years of assiduously and enthusiastically covering the San Francisco Bay Area dining and drinking scene through the best and worst of times, [tablehopper](#) founder and publisher Marcia Gagliardi has relaunched her groundbreaking insider newsletter and column with a new subscription model, now offering various tiers and insider benefits. Known for being an inexhaustible source of the latest restaurant news, this new era will provide tablehopper readers with expanded content and even more access to Marcia's deeply supportive, on-the-ground reporting, and keen curation of SF's best amenities. [Subscribe](#) to see

the major upgrade and discover why it's a must-read newsletter for anyone who lives to eat in SF.



Photo credit: Mariah Tiffany

LDEI Quarterly

If you're not familiar with how to access our National Quarterly, it is on the ldei.org website and available archivally in addition to print. The current issue is [here](#). Upcoming due dates for 2023 are below. We have several entries already for the May 1st edition:

Summer 2023: May 01, 2023

Fall 2023: August 01, 2023

For any updates on Membership Milestones and Chapter Programs for the LDEI Quarterly, so please contact Dame Jodie Chase at jodie@chase-ink.com. She will submit it to National if you make the deadline!



We welcome you to submit any items for our biweekly communiqué to Communications Committee Chair Kimberly Noelle Charles at kcharles@charlescomm.com or committee member Danielle Fiala at daniellesfiala@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!



Email: lesdamessf@gmail.com

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