

The Communiqué



Les Dames d'Escoffier®

INTERNATIONAL

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

November 17, 2023

Dear Dames,

As we move into the holidays, I wish for all of you abundant time with friends, family and community. For many of us in hospitality it is often our busiest time of year. I hope all of you take some time to do something that sustains you.

This has been an impactful year for our chapter. Don't miss reading about our two business grant recipients. I know the committee had a difficult time choosing them from an accomplished and passionate field of entrepreneurs. Thank you to the committee for making the grant possible and a special thanks to Mary Gassen who dedicated herself wholeheartedly to the committee, applicants and turned what was an idea last year into another valuable way we give back to our community.

For those of you who weren't able to join us on October 25 for Our Roots, Our Focus, Our Future, the recording is available on our [website](#). I encourage all of you to take the time to watch and learn more about LDEI and our chapter. It was such an honor to have some of our chapter's founders, Jerry DiVecchio, Carolyn Wentz, and Linda Anusasananan join us and speak about the beginnings of LDEI-SF and what their goals were when they started the chapter 34 years ago. Thank you to

Dame Kara Nielsen who brought us this terrific program and to Dame Kimberly Noelle Charles for the great idea!

Enjoy catching up with the LDEI-SF chapter in our November Communique, it never disappoints. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me and co-president Frankie Whitman at presldeisf1@gmail.com we want to hear from you.

The communique will be moving to one time a month publishing starting this month. Please follow us on Instagram and Facebook for news and events.

With gratitude and thanks,
Pam Mazzola
Co-Presidents LDEI-SF

Events

Upcoming

Olio Nuovo Tasting at Doctorbird Market Pittsburg, CA November 18, 2023 4-6 PM

It's olio nuovo season! Dames Roberta Klugman and Danielle Fiala will be hosting a tasting of Séka Hills olive oils—featuring their Arbequina olio nuovo—at Doctorbird Market on Saturday, Nov 18, from 4 to 6 pm.

The newly opened Doctorbird Market is Pittsburg's only specialty food and wine market, located in Old Town—just steps from the scenic Pittsburg Marina.

Dame Roberta will be our guide on this informative and delicious exploration. The \$10 cover includes a presentation on Séka Hills olive oils, tips on how to use olio nuovo, and some tasty bites. Space is limited, but if you are interested in attending, please email hello@doctorbirdmarket.com to inquire about availability.

Doctorbird Market is located at 90 E 4th St, Pittsburg CA 94565. Follow them on Facebook and Instagram (@doctorbirdmarket) to keep up to date on happenings in the shop, and drop by for a visit when you're in the area!



Photo Credit - credit: Judy Doherty Photography

Cheese O’Clock online event November 30, 2023 5-6 PM with Dames Janet Fletcher, Remi Cohen along with Laura Werlin

Join these three phenomenal women for an hour of cheese and wine pairings, as part of a series Janet Fletcher produces called Cheese O’Clock. Featured cheeses from Pt. Reyes will be presented by Kuba Hemmerling, and paired with a sparkling wine and a Pinot Noir from Domaine Carneros, where Dame Remi Cohen is CEO. More info [here](#).



Photo Credit - Courtesy of Janet Fletcher

Member Meet Up December 13, 2023 5:30 PM Compline 1300 First Street, Napa, CA

Join fellow Wine Country Dames for a casual no-host holiday meet-up at Compline in downtown Napa. (Dame Jammir Gray is executive chef.) *The New York Times* wine critic Eric Asimov named Compline one of his “six places to drink wine in Napa Valley and Sonoma.”

“What makes Compline wonderful is that it’s so unpretentious and welcoming,” wrote Asimov. Come experience that warm welcome for yourself and enjoy some

conversation and camaraderie—and maybe a glass of bubbles—with local Dames before the holiday madness.

Dame Janet Fletcher is the ambassador; please contact her for questions at janet@janetfletcher.com.

Space is limited to 12 attendees so please [RSVP here](#) early!



Photo Credit Compline Restaurant, Napa, CA

Event Recap - Wednesday, October 25th, 2023 - Getting to Know LDEI-SF: Our Roots, Our Focus, Our Future

Over 40 new and longtime Dames came together for a virtual orientation, Getting to Know LDEI-SF: Our Roots, Our Focus, Our Future, on Wednesday, evening October 25th. This first-ever session covered chapter history, roles and responsibilities of the Board and committees, and details on our philanthropic work. We also gained insights on other chapters' experiences and how the international organization operates from

Dame Robin Plotkin of LDEI-Dallas, who is our Chapter Board Liaison. Co-President Pam Mazzola welcomed attendees and shared the mission and goals of our chapter. Founding Dames Jerry DiVecchio, Linda Anusasananan and Carolyn Wentte told of their experiences in forming a new organization with a star-studded group of women culinary leaders in 1989. Dame Olga Katsnelson was the lucky winner of the door prize, a copy of the Les Dames d'Escoffier New York Cookbook: Stirring the Pot. A recording of the 90-minute meeting, beautifully moderated by Dame Kara Nielsen, VP of Member Engagement, is available [here](#).



Member News

Kudos to founding chapter member, Dame Carolyn Wentte, who received the American Wine Legend designation for the 2023 [Wine Enthusiast Wine Star Award](#) for her contributions to the industry, her region, her family business and beyond. Kudos Carolyn!



Dame Dominica Rice-Cisneros was featured in the [New York Times](#) highlighting her Dia de los Muertos brunch in a moving, colorful feature. If you haven't been to Bombera in Oakland, it's a must visit!

Dames Beth Lee and Jennifer Newens will collaborate on a new cookbook! Dame Lee reports, "I just signed with a literary agent to sell book #2, which I am writing with the first friend I made in California — the incredibly talented Sarene Wallace." Beth's agent is Dame Jennifer Newens with Martin Literary Management. Congratulations Beth and Jennifer!



Newly minted Dame Theodora Lee graced the cover of [VISTAS](#) inaugural holiday issue, a multicultural print magazine creating awareness of black-owned wineries.



Photo Credit - Courtesy of Vistas Magazine

Business Grant

Two Bay Area Women Chosen to Receive \$5000 Business and Mentorship Grants from San Francisco Chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier—International

Led by chair **Dame Mary Gassen**, a diligent awards committee of LDE-SF Dames **Maryam Ahmed**, **Linda Carucci**, **Duskie Estes**, **Mary Gassen**, **Emily Luchetti**, **Sue Conley**, **Janet Griggs**, **Marsha McBride**, and **Dominica Rice-Cisneros** recently selected two deserving winners of our chapter's inaugural **2023 Les Dames d'Escoffier—San Francisco Business Grants**. Each award consists of a \$5000 cash prize plus one year of mentorship with members of our chapter to support the winner in the particular areas of business that she has identified.

The winners are **Stephanie de la Cruz of De La Creamery** in Oakland and **Wendy Lieu of Socola Chocolatier** in San Francisco.

Thanks to the outreach efforts of several of our chapter's well-connected Dames, information about the two grant and mentorship awards reached a wide swath of Bay Area women who own and operate businesses in the fields of food, wine, hospitality, farming, etc.

The application process took place online and the awards committee was overjoyed to have received more than 20 completed applications by the deadline. Applicants had to demonstrate that they've been in business since at least January 1, 2022 and they were required to submit two years of P&Ls demonstrating revenue of no more than \$1M. Five finalists were interviewed on Zoom and each finalist's place of business was visited by **Dame Mary Gassen**.

Awards committee Dames were truly inspired to learn about the business operations—and hopes and dreams—of so many talented, hard-working women who applied for these grants.

This year's awards have been made possible by the generous support of Mijenta Tequila and the fundraising efforts of the San Francisco chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier—International, as well as the commitment of mentoring time and talent of our chapter's Dames. We hope to make these awards annually.

The committee's final task will be to fête the winners and introduce them to our chapter at a gathering in early 2024. Stay tuned for further details. (Summary submitted by Dame Linda Carucci)



Stephanie de la Cruz and Wendy Lieu

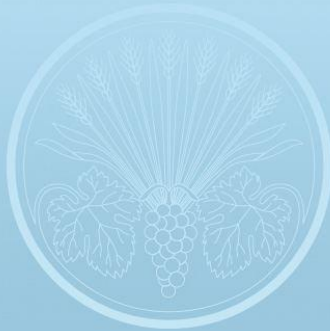
Fellowship

Rachel Levin, a past recipient of the Karola Saekel Craib Fellowship, was the 2nd prize winner for the 2023 M.F.K. Fisher Prize. Established in 2006, it recognizes excellent works by women in all media, that broaden understanding of the diversity and depth of the intersection of food and culture. Named in honor of M.F.K. Fisher whose trailblazing work encouraged deeper thought about the cultural significance of foodways. Congratulations Rachel!



The Fall 2023 issue of the Quarterly is online [here](#). San Francisco had several highlights including our Woman of Purpose profile for Dame Sibella Krause and Fellowship recipient Rachel Levin as noted above, in addition Dame Lori Regis of Boulettes Larder was profiled in Membership Milestones.

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. She will submit it to National.



We welcome you to submit any items for our biweekly communiqué to Communications Committee Chair Kimberly Noelle Charles at kcharles@charlescomm.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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