

The Communiqué



Les Dames d'Escoffier®

INTERNATIONAL

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

December 19, 2023

Dear Dames,

We are in the middle of the holiday season trying to complete our to-do lists and set our goals for 2024. Year end is always a good time to pause and reflect on what we have accomplished. 2023 has been an amazing year for LDEI-SF. We have kicked off our new Business Grant program, awarding needed funds to two women-owned businesses; we have modified our Fellowship grant program to award the annual recipient with a larger grant; we have awarded two scholarship recipients; and we have organized regular educational and convivial events for our chapter so members can meet, learn and connect. Thank you to all our board, chairs, committees, and you, our members and those outside our organization who participated in events and fundraisers. We were all happy to share the experience with you and are grateful for your time, energy, and expertise.

In January our board will be meeting for a strategic planning session. Foremost on our agenda is assuring the strength of our chapter, its future and leadership. Many of our current board members have served us faithfully beyond their term limits. It is crucial that we initiate best practices, which means putting a strong succession plan in place. Our current board serves through the next induction which is in September. You are the future of the organization. Please seriously consider serving on the board. It is a great opportunity to meet and work

with other strong women in our industry and to help further develop the organization for all our members. Pam and I are happy to answer any questions about the investment of time and energy required, which is quite manageable. Reach either co-president at the shared email, presldeisf1@gmail.com

The end of the year is the time to make philanthropic donations. Please consider making a tax-deductible gift to our chapter before December 31st. You can choose to donate to any of our chapter's specific philanthropic endeavors, or the funds can go to the chapter in general which helps sustain our programs and administrative costs. Our chapter has the commitment and purpose to continue impacting women in the hospitality industry, as we all work together as a chapter to increase our impact. Click on this [link](#) to make your year end donation. We'd be grateful.

As you buy your last-minute holiday gifts, please take the opportunity to support a Dame-owned business, or one of our business grant recipient's businesses, some of which we highlighted on our [instagram feed](#) recently. Thank you to Kristen Loken, a new member on our communications committee, for her initiative with this great idea and seeing it through in a very short window. Thanks to all who participated. We know we'll have the opportunity to include many more of you in 2024.

Wishing you a healthy and happy new year.

Your Co-presidents,

Frankie Whitman
Pam Mazzola
Co-Presidents LDEI-SF

Events

Recap of recent events

Olio Nuovo Tasting at Doctorbird Market Pittsburg, CA

On November 18, Dames Roberta Klugman and Danielle Fiala hosted an olive oil tasting to celebrate the release of Séka Hills' Olio Nuovo. The tasting was held at

Doctorbird Market —Pittsburg’s only specialty food and wine market—owned by Dame Danielle and her husband, Zane. Despite the rain, the turnout was great, and the enthusiastic guests were grateful for the wealth of knowledge Dame Roberta shared.

Doctorbird Market is located at 90 E 4th St., Pittsburg CA 94565. To keep up to date on happenings at the shop, check out their website: <https://doctorbirdmarket.com/>, or follow them on Facebook and Instagram: @doctorbirdmarket.



Photo Credit - credit: Doctorbird

Holiday Meet Up Compline, Napa, CA

Despite year-end holiday craziness, about 15 Dames from the San Francisco and Sonoma chapters made time to gather at Compline, an acclaimed Napa restaurant and wine bar, on Wednesday, December 13, for an informal no-host meetup. Dame Jammir Gray, Compline's executive chef, secured the restaurant's cozy lounge for our group and provided a lovely cheese and charcuterie buffet. Guests mingled over wine and nibbles, catching up with friends and meeting new Dames, and seemed to enjoy the relaxed no-agenda format.

"I thought this evening really demonstrated the appeal of small-group Meetups," said event ambassador Dame Janet Fletcher. "People were able to come together at day's end without a long drive, just for conversation and camaraderie. I hope we can continue to arrange these opportunities, which are easy to organize and easy to attend."



Photo Credit - Kristen Loken

Member News

Dame Joanne Weir announces additional location of her beloved restaurant, Copita.

After two years of a completely new build-out, Copita #2 opened November 1 in Willow Glen, a charming neighborhood in San Jose. Complete with 247-seats on two floors with a rooftop bar on a prime corner in Willow Glen, Copita serves their award-winning margarita, a large selection of tequilas and mezcals, and modern Mexican food that is 100% gluten free and focuses on seasonal and organic produce. Designed by Arcanum Architects in San Francisco, the restaurant boasts extensive tile work, 2 bars, 2 large paintings by Oaxacan painter, Cheri Velazco, rooftop fire tables and soft seating.

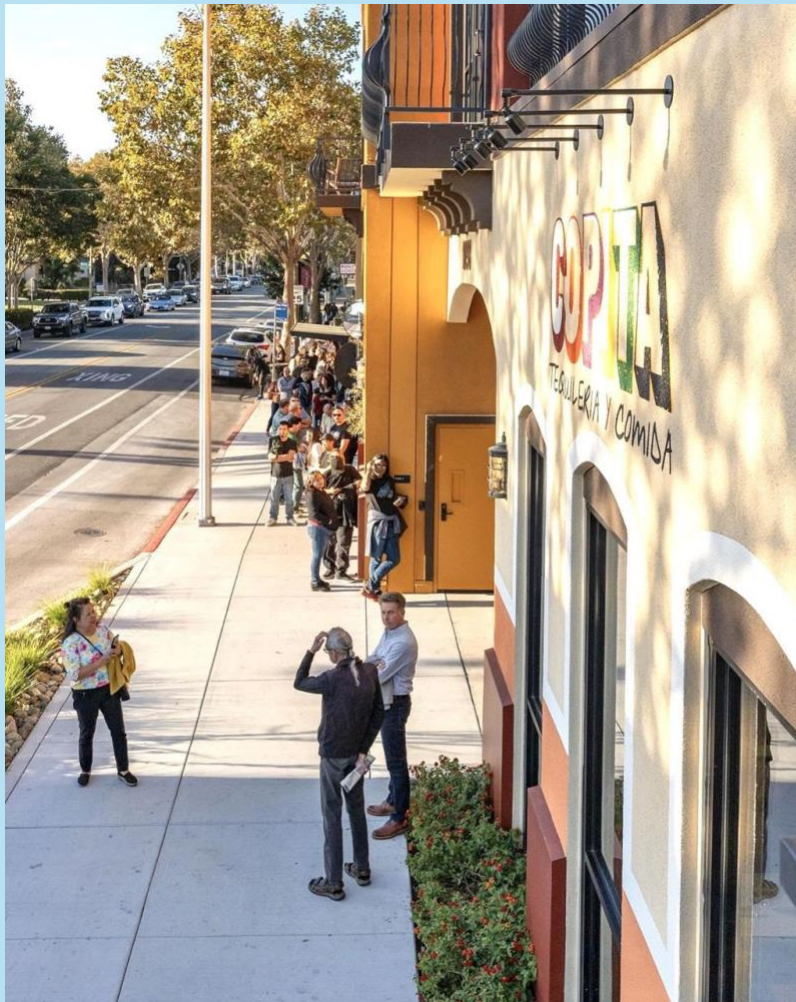


Photo Credit - Copita

Dame Tonya Pitts - recently took on a new role at Wine Enthusiast as a wine critic, in addition to her new role on the SF chapter board and her wine director position at One Market. A natural gift for storytelling and describing wines will benefit the top magazine/online outlet's readers tremendously. Kudos Tonya!

New Dame Kristen Loken reports on her experience recently in Lithuania with the Tech2Empower for Ukraine.

"I spent a week in Vilnius, Lithuania as a volunteer advisor with Tech2Empower supporting Ukrainian refugees. I was one of 19 women selected to join [WAKE's program](#) to support refugees resettling in Vilnius. I'm so grateful to the WAKE team. It was an impeccably planned program, from the NGO partners to cultural visits in Vilnius, everything was thoughtful, engaging and inspiring. The highlight: supporting resilient Ukrainian women entrepreneurs. I'd worried I would have nothing to offer these women, but it was an incredibly inspiring day of sharing our collective experiences and knowledge. Their resilience, creativity, and engagement left an indelible mark, teaching us lessons far beyond what we imparted. In addition to making portraits of each of the participants I led a visual storytelling workshop with dear friend Josephine Courant. These women are powerfully invested in building their new lives through their businesses and creative collaborations light me up inside, I can't quite describe how inspired I felt seeing their aha moments as we shared our insights as fellow entrepreneurs. It was a beautiful reminder that no matter how small we may feel, making an impact even for one person has a ripple effect, and just feels good.

You can read the [Impact Report](#) of our work together, and if you feel so moved, support WAKE's work here. Their next program is in Trinidad and Tobago fighting climate change."



Photo Credit - Kristen Loken

Business Grant

Two Bay Area Women were chosen to receive \$5000 Business and Mentorship Grants from the San Francisco Chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier International. Read more about their achievements and path forward [here](#) highlighting this important program kickstarted by super Dame, Mary Gassen and her committee.



Stephanie de la Cruz and Wendy Lieu

Fellowship

Fellowship recipient Lisa Morehouse's story "Farming with Ghosts: David Mas Masumoto Shares How he learned a Family Secret" was rebroadcast recently on KQED. Produced and collaborated upon with the Food and Environment Reporting Network, it is a story of resiliency and unearthing difficult truths from a multi-generational farming family in California. Full 20 minute recording is [here](#).

The final issue 2023 of the LDEI Quarterly is online [here](#).

We await 2024 deadlines, however if you have any updates on Membership Milestones or 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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