

Les Dames d'Escoffier International San Francisco Chapter Inductees

2023-2024

Adahlia Cole

Adahlia Cole Photography

Adahlia is a food and beverage photographer, a freelance food writer, and a marketing consultant to restaurants. Her photography has been featured in the SF Chronicle and Michelin Guide as well as in a number of national/regional outlets. She is a bridge builder and advocate for underrepresented voices in the hospitality community, and has created avenues for mentorship and connection. She has advocated for the acceptance of sex workers within the hospitality community and was involved in community organizing as a Sex Worker's Outreach Project Volunteer. She spoke at an EU summit in 2022 in Slovenia on the topic. During the pandemic she deployed her skills as a marketer and photographer, to support unemployed restaurant workers who created pop-ups, promoting these events through photography and social media, donating her services to those who asked. She has been the director of communications for Nari and Kin Khao since 2021.



Alison Negrin

Chef Consultant

Alison has been a professional chef for over 40 years. She worked with Mesa, Grace Street Catering, and Chez Panisse before becoming the opening chef for Bridges. Her passion for food as medicine, shifted her focus to studying nutrition at Bauman College. She became the executive chef for 12 years at John Muir Health Systems on three campuses, overhauling the menus, transforming the flavor and nutrition of programs for patients, employees and catering. She was an adjunct culinary instructor at Diablo Valley College and currently works with Chefs for Seniors, visiting and cooking healthy delicious food for seniors, allowing them to age in place. She is a professional taster for Chefs Best and is on the board of Culinary Angels which provides organic meals for those undergoing cancer treatments.



Andrea Lawson Gray

Founder, Private Chefs of the SF Bay

Andrea states she feels food is a gateway to understanding culture and a pathway to social justice. She is a culinary historian and content creator. She has been a private chef for 15 years, and a food writer for 10 years. She has used her skills to raise funds and support DACA applicants, and has mentored up-and-coming chefs from underrepresented communities (e.g through La Cocina), and is working with a number of them on cookbook projects. She also created Private Chefs of the SF Bay, a collective of private chefs she co-founded in 2018. As someone who has been self-employed through most of her career, she realizes how important it is for women to have professional connections and support one another.

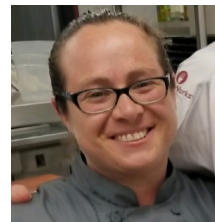


Carissa Crader

Executive Chef/Culinary Operations

Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa

After many years cooking professionally and earning her degree in Hotel & Restaurant Management from Diablo Valley College, Carissa is the Executive Chef of Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa, cooking daily for unhoused people. This includes large scale cooking of nutritious, filling homemade food, much of it from food donations, offering a creative challenge daily. She oversees 4 distribution kitchens and a food truck along with a few church outlets where 2500-3000 meals a day are served to those in need. In addition, she fundraises to support the organization's efforts, and builds public awareness for the organization's work. She also works one day a week at fellow Dame Lesley Stiles restaurant, Roxx on Main as a line cook.



Christine Farren

Executive Director

Foodwise Community

Christine leads Foodwise (previously known as CUESA which operates the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market) with a sense of service and vocation. Her varied work includes working with activists fighting for racial justice, to helping younger farmers implement sustainable and regenerative farming practices, to promoting connection among the chefs who provision their restaurants with the bounty at the farmer's market. She began her 20 years at Foodwise as an office administrator and worked her way through various roles finally becoming the organization's Executive Director. She shepherded the organization through the challenging time of the pandemic and today runs a robust collaborative organization with an energized team who works to serve a broader Bay Area community daily.



Elizabeth Binder

Executive Chef/Owner

Hand-Crafted Catering

Elizabeth is a South African native who has been cooking around the world for more than 30 years. Her impressive resume includes cooking for heads of state in South Africa, working with Sally Clarke in London, and working as head chef at Plisse in Sydney Australia. When she moved to the Bay Area 25 years ago, she worked with and trained under some of the best women chefs in San Francisco including Traci des Jardins, Loretta Keller and Alice Waters. After various roles of increasing responsibility in those restaurants, she became Executive Chef and Partner at Bar Bambino in the Mission District for six years. In 2012 she started her own company, Hand-Crafted Catering, based in Napa Valley which she describes as a rustically elegant sensibility.



Emily Hansen

Chef Emily Hansen

Emily has worked in many high profile restaurants across the country, working her way from Line Cook to Chef de Cuisine. Earning her Grande Diplome at the French Culinary Institute in NYC, she went on to cook in such notable places such as Eleven Madison Park, Del Posto, Gary Danko, Baker and Banker among many other leading restaurants. She realized after several years and many long hours in restaurant kitchens, that there was a lack of female camaraderie and support. In 2012 she decided to venture out on her own, to create a cooking environment that felt right to her. Since then she has been a private chef, focusing on individual client needs, seasonality of ingredients, from clients' home meals to special events. She hopes her participation in Les Dames will help reinforce her sense of teamwork and creative collaboration among her peers.



Iris Rowlee

Beverage Director

Octavia and Frances Restaurants

Iris holds many notable certifications in her young career as a sommelier. She is a Court of Masters certified Sommelier, a Vinalty International Academy Italian Wine Scholar and has received knighthood by the Ordine del Cavalieri del Tartufo e dei Vini di Alba in Italy for having merit in safeguarding local culinary customs. She has studied local cuisine, wine and spirits around the world including the Americas, Europe, Southeast Asia, India and Australia. She has worked in many notable Bay Area restaurants including A16, Perbacco and currently runs the wine programs at both Octavia and Frances. She is the ambassador for the UNESCO heritage region of Conegliano Valdobbiadene and she owns a small importing company focused on Italian wine gems. She has supported many non-profit organizations, including Meals on Wheels, Slow Wine Guide, Glide Memorial Church, Unitarian Universalist Society, and California Prison Focus.



Jodi Liano*SF Cooking School*

Before launching her very successful San Francisco Cooking School in 2012, Jodi Liano was an early to the party tech marketing whiz. Positions in the nascent days at Microsoft as a product marketing manager, and Amazon as the Director of Advertising, honed her creative strategic skills. Leaving that world behind, she became a popular cooking instructor, recipe developer and cookbook author at Tante Marie's from 1998-2012. She then founded the much lauded SF Cooking School in 2012 which Food & Wine Magazine deemed among the "Best Cooking Classes in the World." In 2019, she helmed the Food Media Lab Conference connecting future food media with industry thought leaders. Her school closed post pandemic in 2022. Jodi is now collaborating on a Charleston-based culinary conference called FAB whose mission is to help more women get access to their opportunities in the hospitality industry.

**Juliana Colangelo***Vice President**Colangelo & Partners*

Juliana "Jules" has worked as a communications professional in the wine industry for more than 10 years. Her family's firm now has two offices, New York and San Francisco. She is involved in many wine industry organizations, and is the host of Masterclass US Wine Market, a show on the Italian Wine Podcast. Mentoring, connecting, and guiding are key elements of her industry involvement, with an intrinsic value of social responsibility. She has been offering her expertise pro bono to Be The Change, a virtual job fair committed to bringing more diversity and inclusion to the wine industry. During the pandemic, she started Supper Share to provide job opportunities to unemployed sommeliers through virtual wine tastings. She worked in the non-profit sector before joining the world of wine.

**Karen MacNeil***President**Karen MacNeil & Company*

Karen is a self-taught businesswoman in the world of wine. For 40 years, she has been a leading educator, communicator, author and media personality. She began her career in New York when there were fewer than 15 women in the wine industry. She wrote The Wine Bible, which is now in its third edition and is one of the most successful wine books in the US, having sold one million copies. She is the only American to have won every major wine award given in the English language. She has always hired and promoted young women, giving them their first break in an industry that is notoriously hard to break into. She likes to say, despite this success, that she has only just begun, with many more mountains to climb.

**Kristen Loken***Photographer*

Kristen discovered two loves at an early age, baking and photography. Her father was an avid photographer who inspired her to take up the camera, and the rest is herstory. Inspired by creative collaborations, she specializes in shooting food and the people working within the food world, in her photography business. Her approach to work and life has been inspired by the term freudenfreude, a German reference that describes the bliss one feels when someone else succeeds. This is the ethos she brings to all she does. She wrote an award-winning book, Food People (Are the Best People) during the pandemic, and 15% of the book's profits are donated to No Kid Hungry. She also has done pro bono photography work for Sprouts Chef Training, whose mission is to help youth rise from hardship through culinary training and job placement.



Laurie Mackenzie

Chef Instructor

City College of San Francisco

Laurie has four decades of experience with education, volunteerism and management in the world of food. Her mission has been one of social justice, and she has faithfully served marginalized and overlooked communities, contributing her many talents along the way in both non and for profit organizations. She was the first program and kitchen manager for La Cocina Community Kitchen. She has taught cooking to formerly homeless people in the CHEFS Program. She trained and mentored many youth interns from Mission High School and New Door Ventures as the Savory Chef at Mission Pie. She taught several deaf and hard of hearing high school interns who were getting their first jobs. In 2019 she joined the CCSF Culinary Hospitality program teaching a diverse body of students. Fully bi-lingual, she lives in San Francisco's Mission district where she is deeply involved in her community beyond food.

**Lee Ann Frahm Izzo**

Director of Recruitment and Training

Hi Neighbor Hospitality Group

A self-described Hoosier, New Yorker and Californian, Lee Ann is a businesswoman and restaurateur. After many years in the corporate world, she realized she was unsatisfied and took a job bartending which ignited her passion. From bartending she moved to back of the house management with responsibilities ranging from creating opening systems, training staff, menu development, launching web sites and more. She spent many years working in and managing restaurants in New York and San Francisco. She eventually opened her own restaurant, Dobbs Ferry, with her husband, but it was forced to close during the pandemic. She now heads up Recruitment & Training at the Hi Neighbor Group, providing both front of house and back of house staff recruitment and training for five restaurants under the group's auspices.

**Maria Hunt**

Freelance Journalist, Author, Senior Copywriter

MH Media

As a food journalist and author, Maria has enjoyed telling the stories of people who might otherwise be overlooked. Early to witness emerging trends, she has championed local organic farming, Slow Food, wines from Mexico's Valle de Guadalupe and much more. She likes to champion personalities in food and beverage who are setting standards. Early in her food/wine career, she served as a restaurant critic at the San Diego Union Tribune. She authored the champagne and sparkling wine cocktail book published by Random House called, The Bubbly Bar. She is particularly interested in helping recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of women of color.

**Meghan Zobeck**

Winemaker and Wine Owner

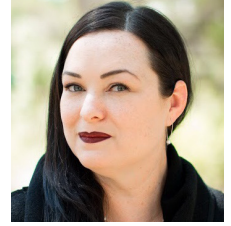
Burgess Cellars and M. Zobeck Wines

Meghan comes to the wine industry through the NFL. Not a typo! She was the first non-admin woman to work for the Denver Broncos. Her role was that of player contract negotiator, one of only three women doing that at the time for the league. She loved her job but it also opened her eyes to gender, inequality and racial discrimination. She shifted her focus to the wine business and approached it with the same drive to succeed. Today she is both the winemaker at Burgess Cellars and owner of her own boutique wine brand, M. Zobeck Wines in Napa. She has been actively involved in social justice issues in the hospitality industry and mentors for Batonnage and the Roots Fund. In 2020, she created a voter registration wine event called Crush the Vote. She is also converting all Burgess vineyards to Regenerative Agriculture, applying for grants to plant landscaping dedicated to supporting pollinators on the properties.



Melissa Smith*Founder**Enotrias*

Melissa knew she wanted to be in the food world from a very young age, working before and after school and on weekends at a local bagel bakery. Instead of her senior class trip to Cancun, she opted to go to the CIA at Greystone. She ended up staying on at Greystone as the pastry chef in the Wine Spectator Restaurant at Greystone. From there she did stints at Terra and The French Laundry. She served as a private chef for the founders and executives of ClifBar. This work spurred her interest in wine and she became a sommelier and retail buyer for K & L Wine Merchants. As the Head Sommelier for K & L, she was interested in helping and promoting beverage businesses led by women. In 2011, she founded Enotrias Elite Sommelier Services which offers in-home and corporate wine tasting seminars, private cellar services, and appraisals for insurance and legal services. She also created the Wine Collecting Master Class.

**Theodora Lee***Owner/Vintner**Theopolis Vineyards*

Theodora is one of the few African American women who owns her own vineyard. She is a senior partner and trial lawyer at Littler, and the founder and owner of Theopolis Vineyards. While working with several clients who had vineyards, she caught the wine bug and studied viticulture at UC Davis which then led her to purchase vineyard land in the Anderson Valley. Initially she was a grape grower, but a twist of fate with Mother Nature, forced her to make her own wine or lose the crop that year. She has made wine ever since, earning high accolades and scores. She has many non profit involvements, including Co-Board Chair of the Dallas Post Tribune, one of the oldest Black newspapers in North Texas; the Board of the SF YMCA; Past President of both the Bay Area Black United Fund and the Alameda County Community Food Bank; Charter Member of the Association of African American Vintners and more. She established The Theopolis Vineyards Diversity Fund for the Department of Viticulture and Enology at UC Davis which provides one scholarship of up to \$10,000 annually to students interested in viticulture and enology with a preference for students who are underrepresented or understand the barriers to entry for the industry.

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San Francisco Bay Area Chapter