

# 2016 LEGACY AWARDS Winners' Reports

BY SHARA BOHACH  
(CLEVELAND), LEGACY  
AWARDS COMMITTEE  
CO-CHAIR

A Canadian and five American women were chosen 2016 Legacy Award Winners by the committee composed of a dozen Dames. Established in 2009, the Legacy Awards provide targeted mentorship opportunities for women who are not members of LDEI. Eligible women must have at least four years of experience working in the food, beverage and hospitality industries. Each Legacy Award winner is sponsored by an accomplished Dame for a one-week workplace experience at her business in the U.S., U.K., Canada, or Mexico.



Shara Bohach and Becky Paris Turner,  
Legacy Awards Committee Co-Chairs

The Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and the Culinary Arts generously supports the Awards. "Year after year, the Foundation finds it very gratifying to see how much all the participants get out of this worthwhile program," said Executive Director, Todd Schulkin. "Being a mentor came naturally to Julia and it's wonderful that through our support of LDEI's Legacy Awards, we can continue to help foster that essential professional value."

Applications are accepted from March through April 28.

## Food and Wine Journalism Category Winner Stephanie Jane Carter

### STEPHANIE JANE CARTER

Publisher  
*Edible New Orleans*

Hosted by: **Regina Ragone** (New York)

In the summer of 2014, I launched *Edible New Orleans* and gave birth to my daughter, Clementine. I was pregnant during the months of planning and preparation and printed the first issue just two months before she was born. I signed off on the second issue from my hospital bed as that tiny person slept near me, just a day later.

My experience with the magazine has mirrored my experience as a first-time mother: late nights, guessing the best move in challenging situations, and lots of hope that I've chosen wisely. I've learned a lot by just doing it. I've also become aware of what I don't know, knowledge that I gained by spending time in New York City at *Family Circle* with Food Editor **Regina Ragone**.

Being at *Family Circle* was like seeing how the big kids do it. Interestingly, I found that big or small, we're all dealing with some similar issues in the world of food media. Troubleshooting with Regina regarding advertorial and editorial, how to support a sales team, being short-staffed, knowing your audience, and how to have an editorial timeline that works was very helpful.

This spirit of talking things through and sharing ideas permeated my experience at *Family Circle*. From fine-tuning my recipe testing to writing short pieces and recipe tips for the magazine to sitting in on planning meetings, there was always a moment and a call for brainstorming. There was the January issue recipe brainstorm that happened in the test kitchen as we hammered out Thanksgiving sides and sheet pie recipe testing. There



Stephanie Jane Carter and Regina Ragone

were formal brainstorming sessions as well in glass covered conference rooms overlooking Midtown Manhattan. Collaboration was key in all aspects of the magazine. And as a leader, Regina cultivated a group that was made stronger from the support and great ideas they shared.

For once, magazines being short-staffed worked in my favor. Regina literally pulled me in, treating me like a real part of the team, to get the issue out. I'm not sure there is a better mentorship experience than actually being part of the team.

The path to being a good writer and editor isn't obvious. This award and mentorship experience helped illuminate a way forward. The LDEI conference in DC showed me that the path forward is filled with friends and mentors and lots of inspiration.

*"Visiting Family Circle and Meredith Corporation for a week was like seeing how the big kids do it. A big takeaway of experience is confidence. We are all dealing with the same issues in publishing, editing and writing, no matter the organization's size. It can all be done and there are solutions."*

—Stephanie Jane Carter



Julie Chernoff, Jane Copeland, Sofia Solomon, Julie Ratowitz, Kathy Ruff. Patty Penzey Erd, Julie Chernoff, Jane Copeland, Toria Emas. Claudia Jendron, Jane Copeland, Julie & Josh Chernoff, Fraser Young.

## Culinary Category Winner Jane Copeland

### JANE COPELAND

Owner and Chef  
Lift Breakfast Bakery, North Vancouver,  
British Columbia, Canada

Hosted by: **Debra Sharpe** (Chicago)

From a very early age, straight through to present day, my parents have always encouraged me to “let them say no.” That is to say, they never expected or accepted complacency from their daughter, rather insisted that I should try, apply for, and dream of doing everything and anything. They made me believe that I should never decide that something is impossible before I ask or try to make it happen.

This empowering gift has opened so many doors in my life. I found the more I asked, the more I got. This worked for sports teams, clubs, scholarships, awards, relationships, and my career. I found that when I ask for something and “let them say no,” more often than not, they said “YES.”

So when a good friend of mine sent me the application link for the LEDI Legacy Award, I applied and figured I would “let them say no.” A few months later, I was booking my flight to Chicago, anticipating my one week “insider’s look” at the grocery, baking and brewery worlds of Chicago.

I stepped off the plane with a head full of questions and a great curiosity about

*The LDEI Legacy Award experience could not have come at a better time for me. As I enter a new “chapter” in my cooking career of business ownership, I can draw on the inspiration from meeting so many incredible women in our beloved industry who have found their own path to success.*

—Jane Copeland

the week ahead. When life hands you such an amazing opportunity, you want to make the most of it. I wanted to be sure that I asked all the right questions, got all the right answers, and extracted the most amount of information I possibly could from a group of women I already knew would have a great deal of experience, skill, and wisdom.

My first three days were spent shadowing **Debbie Sharpe** of Goddess and Grocer and Goddess Rocks, learning how she juggles several busy retail shops as well as a whirlwind schedule of large volume catering events. Then I travelled to Evanston and was graciously hosted by my amazing food and tour guide **Julie Chernoff**, and spent a day falling in love with **Ellen King**’s concept at Hewn Bread and observing how a business very similar to my own, operates.

As with any important “growth” experi-

ence I have ever taken part in, I learned after the first day to completely abandon expectations, relax, and allow for an authentic experience. The truth is, when you least expect or plan for it, most of the questions are answered, new questions form, and lessons are learned. The most lasting impressions are sometimes made when you least expect it. The impact of my experience really came to me when I was writing my speech for the Legacy Awards Luncheon at the conference in Washington. I had learned from three completely distinct women, all extremely successful in the food and hospitality industry, what three different takes on success looks like. This was a great dose of relief for me as I realized that I, too, will be successful because I share the one common thread that links all these women: passion. I look forward to living the legacy this award has bestowed.

# Culinary Category Winner Sunita de Turreil

## SUNITA DE TOURREIL

Founder

The Chocolate Garage,  
Palo Alto, California

Hosted by: **Chantal Coady** (London)

My award experience was a most intimate and wonderful way to meet and learn from a long-time chocolate heroine. **Chantal Coady** (London), owner of Rococo Chocolates. She graciously accepted me into her home, and we packed in real-life daily operations whilst nibbling and tasting lots of chocolate. Being able to learn more about Chantal's path helped me learn more about where I could possibly go. To see the operation of Rococo Chocolates, be it the cafe and retail space, or the factory and production area, or assessing new locations with Chantal and James and their realtor, I had open access to everything, and we shared our experiences in our respective niche areas. I could not have asked for a more real-life experience, and I truly came away understanding Rococo Chocolates, Chantal's role and vision, and the overall micro-industry in



London, in a new way.

I got to further this connection in person at the LDEI conference in D.C. I was amazed at how bright and supportive all the LDEI ladies were. I further connected with Chantal and so many other generous women, who taught me so much about persistence, and our collective privilege. The conference was both inspiring and humbling, and left me wishing I was in a place professionally and financially, to get to take part in the national conference each year, and get more involved locally with the San Francisco Chapter. I certainly now have more goals to aspire to!

I have no doubt that the relationship I built with Chantal and Rococo will inform and guide my path forward, and I suspect we will continue to be collaborators, colleagues, and co-conspirators. I am deeply grateful to LDEI for having bestowed this honor upon me and helped catapult me forward in my career via this meeting and connecting of kindred spirits. Thank you to LDEI and all the members specifically involved with the outstanding Legacy Awards.

Sunita de Turreil and Chantal Coady

# Wine Category Winner Staci Mickelson

## STACI MICKELSON

Wine Sales Representative  
Oeno Distribution,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Hosted by: **Kari Leitch** (Seattle)

It was a privilege to be chosen for the Wine Legacy Award hosted by **Kari Leitch** (Seattle), Vice President of Communications and Corporate Affairs at Chateau Ste. Michelle Winery in Woodinville, Washington. The winery is celebrating 50 years in 2017—an exciting phase for them. My time at Chateau Ste Michelle was incredible! I've taken to heart, and sincerely appreciate, the personal stories and advice shared with me along the way. Watching these ladies at work, especially the sales team, was reaffirming because they have similar challenges that I face, only with

different people.

Going forward I will assert myself, confident in my abilities. The professionalism at Ste. Michelle is outstanding—a key thing I've taken away. In our discussions, the women shared various skills for professionally confronting industry egos and strategies in overcoming challenges unique to women, such as being called pet names or being hit on and be expected to just grin and bear it. I am grateful to Kari Leitch for setting me up at Ste. Michelle.

My day in Seattle was enriching. **Cynthia Nims** planned an incredible route taking me to many Dame-owned and -operated businesses. I was inspired, not only by the abilities and confidence of these women but also by their perseverance, innovative thinking, and motivating attitudes in support of one another. It would be hard to meet these women and not grow as an individual. Since returning home, I've applied what I've learned and begun to

advocate for myself. I developed an action plan to reach the next step in my career.

It was an honor to be in the presence of so many amazing women at the D.C. Conference. LDEI President **Maria Gomez-Laurens'** touching speeches and the generosity of **Marsha Palanci** (New York) were highlights of the event for me. Meeting the other Legacy Winners was so much fun, especially hearing about their careers and Legacy experiences. I witnessed multiple commendable traits from all of the women I met. They can be both serious and caring; they are not afraid to ask for what they want but also not afraid to lend a hand to support other women. I plan to look into Women of the Vine (WOV) and similar locals groups. I strive to bring other women up with me, as we rise best when we work with each other. I hope to encounter other women who pledge to do the same.

*“My recent Legacy trip was so inspiring and reaffirming, I am extremely lucky to have been chosen to get to meet so many amazing women on top of their game. I will continue in my career with confidence, knowledge, and inspiration that I gained in Seattle, and strive to keep growing and be the best I can be to make these women proud.”—Staci Mickelson*



*“My favorite moment: Being coaxed by Chantal to climb up on the kitchen table with a paint brush and work on pollinating a cacao flower from her tree. This was extra funny and special because she and Mott Green planted and grew this tree, and Mott was one of my other biggest inspirations for starting my social mission business.”*

— Sunita de Turreil



Staci Mickelson, Cynthia Nims, and Rose Ann Finkel. Dame Molly Hancock and Chef Wayne Johnson at FareStart.

## Farm-To-Table Category Winner Jovan Sage

### JOVAN SAGE

Owner/Food Alchemist  
The Farmer & The Larder,  
Brunswick, Georgia  
Hosted by: **Lee Murphy**  
(British Columbia)

Being one of six professional women chosen for this year’s Legacy Awards was a breathtaking and timely experience for my life. From Gala to orchard, this was not your average trip.

I traveled to Vancouver to spend a week with **Lee Murphy** of Vista D’oro Farms & Preservatory in Langley, British Columbia—one of Canada’s best-known makers of fine preserves, and the British Columbia Chapter. The first part of my trip centered on the Chapter’s Gala honoring **Lidia Bastianich** (New York). Dame Murphy then welcomed me into her home and ten-acre farm in South Langley, B.C. She shared her story with me around the big farm table, thumbing through the proofs of her upcoming cookbook, *The Preservatory: Seasonally Inspired Recipes for Creating and Cooking with Artisanal Preserves*. I was able to pitch in with harvest, from dodging hornets during the grape harvest to picking and preparing apples for the copper pots. I got the first sips of wine aging in oak barrels and traveled to other wineries to sample the terroir of the Fraser Valley.

My time in British Columbia was spent connecting with and learning from this large community of women—farmers, good food producers, chefs, retailers and restaurateurs. I had the opportunity to meet the Dames behind foodwords&images (**Becky Paris Turner**), The Gourmet Warehouse (**Caren McSherry**), Chicha Restaurant (**Shelome Bouvette**), Silk Road Teas (**Daniela Cubelic**), Pear Tree Restaurant (**Stephanie Jaeger**), and many other women-led food businesses. It’s valuable to hear everyone’s story to learn the good, the bad, and the challenging parts of being a woman food entrepreneur. My Legacy Award trip gave me the insight and perspective for running my



Jovan Sage and Lee Murphy

own restaurant and food business. This experience demonstrated the full power of women in community together.

On the flight home I feverishly rewrote aspects of my restaurant’s business plan and created a product launch plan for my burgeoning Sage’s Larder food and wellness brand. As a new restaurateur, farmer, and food and wellness entrepreneur, business often takes over your life. As a farmer, I want to design a successful growing program that focuses on growing fresh produce to scale. As a small food producer, I want to take the fresh produce and transform it into sauerkraut, pickles, shrubs, and jams. As a woman restaurateur, I want to insure the financial success and commitment to working fresh and local ingredients, small producers, and artisans at The Farmer & The Larder.

I shared my journey with everyone I came into contact with, and when Hurricane Matthew hit, I was able to draw on those stories of resiliency, flexibility, and community in rebuilding. These are the lessons that will stick with me for a lifetime.

*“My favorite takeaway is being able to connect with, and learn from, this large community of women: farmers, good food producers, chefs, retailers and restaurateurs (the entire farm to table chain). It’s valuable to learn the good, the bad, and the challenging parts of being a woman food entrepreneur. This time has given me the insight and perspective for running my own restaurant and food business.”*

— Jovan Sage

# Culinary/Farm-to-Table Category Winner Sue Coraggio Snape

## SUE CORAGGIO SNAPE

Owner/Chef

Leaf and Loaf, Marietta, Georgia

Hosted by: **Nora Pouillon** (Washington, D.C.)

I cannot thank Les Dames enough; first, **Nancy Waldeck** (Atlanta) who told me about LDEI's Legacy Awards. This was a week I would have NEVER had the opportunity to experience without the support of LDEI.

I had the absolute pleasure of living with award-winning Chef **Nora Pouillon** (Washington, D.C.), owner and chef of Restaurant Nora, America's first certified organic restaurant. Nora truly lives an "organic lifestyle," and it was such a gift to spend a week with her just walking, eating, driving, observing, listening, brainstorming, learning, meditating, and drinking.

Her 37-year old Restaurant Nora is still incredibly popular today, and I had a lovely dinner there. She also took me to several other restaurants and on a tour of D.C. "All organic" truly tastes different. Nora sources her products from a variety of organic sources, one of them being The Farm at Sunnyside in Washington, Virginia, where I worked for 2 days. I harvested rainbow bok choy, green onions, beautiful head lettuces, okra, and white and red potatoes.

I handled many crates of harvested produce; weeded very long beds of ginger and turmeric; spent hours getting to know the farmers; cleaned a LOT of garlic and green onions; and grew a deep admiration and appreciation for the people

that make this absolutely gorgeous produce possible. They had large tractors, but while I was there, every individual leaf, tomato, okra, herb, potato and head lettuce—everything—was harvested by hand.

I sat in the warm, gorgeous soil harvesting potatoes under the hot July sun. Some of the others took their shoes off to feel the earth on their skin. I felt grounded, even with hiking boots on, everywhere I walked on that farm. It was really like a small piece of heaven on earth. I say this because everywhere I was greeted by various colors of butterflies and insects (crawling, hopping, and flying), but each seemed a different, beautiful color and size. And then there were the ladybugs. EVERYWHERE.

One of the most memorable tasks was harvesting potatoes. Each potato must be carefully pulled from the rich soil, carefully cleaned of the clumped soil, and gently placed in a small crate. The small crate is then very carefully transferred into a much larger crate for washing. I have never thought of potatoes as gentle little beings, but when harvesting them it was like handling a newborn baby, carefully placing them in a soft bed for travel.

Nora had arranged for me to have an unbelievable birthday dinner at the Inn at Little Washington. Chef Patrick O'Connell thought of everything. The food



Sue Snape and Nora Pouillon. Birthday dinner with Patrick O'Connell at The Inn at Little Washington

was so good and the servers were so fabulous and I'm out of words to describe everything.

Back home, I will become more of a liaison between farmers and restaurants. I will continue to teach elementary school children about food; teach children's classes at the Whole Foods Educational Farm; and educate cancer patients, caregivers, and friends at the Garden of the Cancer Wellness Center. I will have a different approach and appreciation for what this education has taught me, and I will share

as much of it as I can, wherever I go. Since my return I have also met with Wholesome Wave GA to help them with the creation of recipe cards for their farmers markets.

Thank you to Nora for making this experience as rewarding and amazing as it was. You truly blew me away with your hospitality and generosity. Thank you to LDEI for deciding that I was a good candidate for your 2016 Legacy Awards, and for making this trip possible. In much gratitude, I once again say to everyone, THANK YOU.

*"My favorite take-away from my recent Legacy Awards experience is all of the knowledge I have brought back to share with the children and adults in my classes. Being able to say "I've worked on an Organic Farm" and "in a completely Organic Restaurant" really brings my stories and experiences full circle."*

—Sue Coraggio Snape, owner/chef, Leaf and Loaf, Marietta, Georgia