



**Contact:**

LDNY Scholarship Committee Co-Chairs

Karen Goodlad - [goodvino95@gmail.com](mailto:goodvino95@gmail.com)

May Matta-Aliah - [may@inthegrape.com](mailto:may@inthegrape.com)

*Photos available upon request.*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Les Dames d'Escoffier/New York Scholarship Awards Announced  
For Women Pursuing Careers in Food, Wine and Hospitality**

***Event Honoring 2015 Winners Held July 21<sup>st</sup> at International Culinary Center in New York City***

New York, NY, July 27, 2015 – Les Dames d'Escoffier New York (LDNY), the first and largest chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier International, which supports women leaders in the food, wine and hospitality industries, awarded almost \$75,000 in scholarship funding to 24 women at a gala event this week at the International Culinary Center in New York.

“The annual scholarship awards epitomize the core mission and longstanding values that have defined LDNY since its founding in 1973, providing opportunities for women in the industry early in their careers and giving back to the culinary and wine community through education, mentorship programs and advocacy,” said Linda Lawry, president of LDEI’s New York chapter (LDNY).

The evening began with a special scholarship presentation in memory of LDNY’s late-member Jonell Nash. Jonell, who passed away this year, was the food editor of *Essence Magazine* for 24 years. An LDNY scholarship that she had financed in honor of renowned chef Edna Lewis (who died in 2006) is now renamed, “The Edna Lewis Grande Dame of Southern Cooking Scholarship in Memory of Jonell Nash.” Harriette Cole, Honorary Chair of the event and a former colleague of Jonell Nash, described her longtime friend as a “passionate philanthropist.” This scholarship is awarded to a recipient who preserves and nurtures the Southern culinary tradition and its diverse contributing cultures; the winner is Renae Wilson, a student at the Institute of Culinary Education (ICE).

Additional scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 were awarded to individuals for their achievements, skills and career goals. In addition to the cash awards, each winner was given the opportunity to be mentored by an LDNY member whose experience complements the recipient’s career goals.

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LDNY's 2015 Scholarship recipients are: Talia Ralph, Alexandra Farrington, Maria Baniel, Arni Cabatingan, Sarah Lowman, Clare Hyre, Loren Avellino, Renae Wilson, Victoria Helwig, Hasina A. Grice, Thiana A. Anderson, Jenee' Grannum, Angelica Veza, Catherine Gouraud, Bianca Figueroa, Carolyn Roman, Cheryl Johnson, Kavita Thirupuvanam, Yumilka Ortiz, Theresa Koneski, Liza Marie Medina, Nina A. Vizcarrondo, Alicia Ngai and Mandel Clement.

The LDNY Scholarship Committee event drew more than 100 people, including LDNY members, award winners and benefactors from major corporations, educational institutions, and food, wine and hospitality organizations. Participating companies included The Dunn Robbins Group and the Society of Wine Educators; event sponsors included Palm Bay International, Stoli, Gerolsteiner, and the International Culinary Center.

In partnership with LDNY, culinary and wine scholarships were also given by the Culinary Institute of America (CIA), the International Culinary Center (ICC), the Institute of Culinary Education (ICE), and the International Wine Center (IWC).

A number of scholarships were donated by LDNY members: the Abigail Kirsch Scholarship for the Culinary Institute of America (CIA); Margaret and Darby Perry Scholarship for CIA; the Renee Marton and Nathalie Judith Marton Scholarship for ICE; the Meryl Rosofsky "Sustainable Food, Sustainable Life" Scholarship; and the Florence Griffin Memorial Scholarship for a C-CAP student beginning college in the Fall. Five LDNY Education Scholarships were donated by the LDNY chapter from its own reserve funds.

"The LDNY Scholarship Committee has been awarding scholarships since 1977 and the program continues to grow significantly each year in both donations and individuals who participate in this vital cause," said President Lawry. "We are thrilled to be part of such an important endeavor for young professionals."

### ***About Le Dames d'Escoffier New York (LDNY):***

*Les Dames d'Escoffier New York is the founding and largest chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier International, which began in 1973 as the first organization devoted to professional women in wine, food and hospitality at a time when women were not recognized as leaders in those industries. It is an invitational volunteer organization whose mission is to inspire, empower and mentor women, enabling them to pursue careers in the culinary and hospitality professions through higher education. For more information, visit [www.ldny.org](http://www.ldny.org).*

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