

## LDEI 2016 Annual Conference

### Conference Planning Meeting for Volunteers

Sunday, December 13, 2015

5-6 p.m.

Bonnie Benwick's Home

#### Participants:

The conference co-chairs, Drew Faulkner and Kari Barrett, led the meeting discussion. The meeting was open to all LDE DC Chapter members interested in volunteering for the 2016 conference. Participation was open and attendance was not taken.

#### Meeting Notes:

- **Conference Vision**

Drew shared the following conference vision to set the stage for the planning discussion.

#### *2016 Conference Vision*

*Our theme, "Global Appetite, Local Impact" reflects our vision for our conference. The world comes to DC, whether in the form of a government embassy, international business, NGO, or an ethnic restaurant. All of these groups influence the flavor of DC, our local flavor. DC is on the cutting edge of the US and Global food scene, movements and issues. This is what we want to display at our 2016 Conference. Let's step it up!*

Drew mentioned that the conference planning committee was planning for ~350 2016 Annual Conference meeting participants. She also referenced that the Smithsonian Institution was holding its 2nd Food History Festival and Gala Event, which includes the presentation of the Julia Child Award, at the same time as the LDEI Annual Conference. Drew noted that efforts were underway to collaborate between our Planning Committee and the Smithsonian Food History meeting planners so that we aren't at cross purposes and may identify opportunities of mutual benefit.

- **Organization**

Kari discussed the overall Conference Planning Committee as the group spearheading the conference planning effort. The Conference Planning Committee is comprised of the two conference co-chairs, the Committee and Subcommittee chairs, and the LDE DC President. Kari then discussed the specific committee roles and responsibilities and designated Committee Chairs. She noted that the document listing all the Committee Chairs and position descriptions is available to members under the “Members Only” tab on the LDE DC website. She also mentioned that the Planning Committee is still seeking a Committee Chair for the Public Relations Committee and welcomed member suggestions in this regard.

Kari and Drew asked that all volunteers interested in helping with any aspect of the conference contact the Committee Chair directly in their area of interest. Kari shared a listing of all Committee Chairs and their contact information at the meeting.

During the discussion on the committees, Susan Callahan suggested that the Conference Planning Committee form a separate or subcommittee to create a local artisan market expo at the conference similar to the one held at the LDEI Annual Conference in Charleston. It was also suggested that Edible DC and Fresh Farm markets would be good local organizations to contact for the expo. The conference co-chairs agreed to follow-up on the suggestion to have an expo.

- **Planning to Date and Near-term Priorities**

Drew covered planning activities to date including: confirmation of the Fairmont Hotel, Georgetown for the conference; confirmation of keynote speaker Susan Ungaro, President, James Beard House; invitation out to Mrs. Obama as a possible additional keynote; organization of planning committee and conference committees along with confirmed Committee Chairs; a monthly schedule for routine planning committee calls; Charleston feedback shared with Committee chairs; Joan Nathan’s house confirmed for a Wednesday night welcoming reception; Thursday night Dine Around; hold for a Friday night dinner event space at Union Station; plans for Sunday fundraiser brunch to celebrate Escoffier’s birthday at La Maison Francaise (the French Embassy); initial educational programs outline (handout shared at meeting); 2-3 interns to assist in planning efforts; and routine communications in place to keep the LDE DC membership apprised of conference planning efforts.

Near-term priorities of the Planning Committee that were mentioned by Drew included: confirmation of the Friday night event venue; further development of the educational

programs outline to incorporate the overall conference theme; presentation of the educational programs framework to the LDEI BOD at their January meeting; fill the remaining PR Committee chair slot; further solicitation of member engagement on optional tours development; and creating promotional pieces for the conference. A list of conference planning deadlines has not yet been received but will be provided to the Planning Committee by LDEI staff.

Additional planning suggestions offered by meeting attendees were to provide all conference attendees logistics information for optional off-site events such as the Wednesday evening welcoming reception and Thursday night Dine Around e.g., specific event directions and maps, metro and Uber information, etc. Meeting participants also discussed taking into account that the conference will occur over Halloween weekend in Georgetown. Linda Forristal also offered to help with shipping packages in the Hospitality Suite.

- **Planning Committee Communications**

Kari reviewed the current efforts underway to keep the membership informed on Planning Committee actions and status. Currently, the Planning Committee will provide routine updates in a “Conference Corner” section of Entre News; post planning documents on the LDE DC website under the “Members Only” tab; and post conference related information on a newly created conference Facebook page (open to all in LDEI). Kari welcomed other thoughts on communications from meeting attendees and the general membership.

## **Adjourn**