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## 2018 CHARLIE AWARDS NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCED

Minneapolis (Jan. 2, 2018) --- For the first time in its history, finalists are being announced for The Charlie Awards, an event that celebrates the exceptional contributions of the Twin Cities food and beverage community. The organizers of the Charlie Awards wanted to acknowledge and salute all the finalists for their achievements and allow them to savor the spotlight.

The seventh annual Charlie Awards will be held on Sunday, Feb. 25 beginning at 3:30 p.m. at the Pantages Theatre (710 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis). At the awards show, winners in each of nine categories will be revealed. The Charlies celebration will culminate with a special presentation of the Lifetime Achievement Award, before finalists and guest adjourn for the Afterparty next door at Seven Steakhouse (700 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis).

### The 2018 Charlie Awards Finalists in alphabetical order

#### **Outstanding Service**

*A restaurant or foodservice business that excels at hospitality by being consistently outstanding and welcoming, and having an inviting and fun personality that makes people feel more at home than when they are at home*

Good Day Café; Manny's; Mucci's

#### **Outstanding Restaurateur**

*Not all the magic happens in the kitchen. This category is for the owner of the restaurant with at least five years in the industry, who excels at running a restaurant, keeping it profitable as well as relevant, and who is an influencer in the community*

Ann Kim and Conrad Leifur: Young Joni, Pizzeria Lola, Hello Pizza; Brent Frederick/Jacob Toledo: Jester Concepts (Borough, Parlour, Monello); Alex Roberts – Alma/Café Alma & Brasa

#### **Outstanding Restaurant**

*A restaurant that continually hits on all cylinders with creative and exceptional food, atmosphere and service*

Bellecour; Café Alma/Alma; Heyday

#### **Outstanding Baker/Pastry Chef**

*A working baker or pastry chef with at least five years of experience who is an artist when creating the staff of life or the masterpieces of desserts and morning pastries*

Katy Gerdes – Angel Food Bakery; Emily Marks – Bachelor Farmer; Solveig Tofte – Sunstreet Breads

#### **Outstanding Chef**

*A working chef with at least five years in the industry, who shows consistency, relevancy, creativity and isn't resting on his or her laurels.*

Lisa Carlson – Chef Shack; Jamie Malone – Grand Café; Hide Tozawa - Kyatchi

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**Rising Star**

*An under 30, up-and-coming foodservice professional whose talent and hard work guarantees he or she will make their mark on the Twin Cities community and go on to even greater contributions.*

Adam Eaton – Saint Dinette; Yia Vang – Union Kitchen; Josh Walbolt

**Beverage Innovator**

*A professional who is doing innovative work with wine/beer/spirits, either as a brewer, mixologist, sommelier, craft soda producer or bartender*

Bang Brewing; Brie Roland – St. Genevieve; Nick Kosevich – Can Can Wonderland/Bittercube

**Hidden Gem**

*An out-of-the-box restaurant, food truck or catering service that often flies under the radar of the mainstream media, but is a favorite with the neighborhood or foodie fans*

Marla's Caribbean Cuisine; Moroccan Flavors; Quang Restaurant

**Community Hero**

*He or she uses their skills and platform to better the community, either through charitable acts or mentorship*

Lachelle Cunningham & Michelle Horovitz - Breaking Bread Café (Appetite for Change); Pat Weber, owner of Mise en Place consulting (volunteer extraordinaire for Charlies, Cookie Cart, etc); Rose McGee (sweet potato comfort pie)

After the awards ceremony has concluded at The Pantages, the party will move next door to Seven Steakhouse (700 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis). The festivities will include food prepared by culinary students from ProStart, St. Paul College and chefs from the American Culinary Federation (ACF), led by Pat Weber from Mise en Place consulting and Seven's chef, past Charlies Outstanding Chef Honoree Sameh Wadi.

Tickets for the Charlie Awards Show and Afterparty at Seven Steakhouse are just \$25 per person. To purchase tickets, call 612-767-3229 or go online at [charliesexceptionale.com](http://charliesexceptionale.com). The VIP dinner—which this year doesn't follow the Afterparty, another change—will be held on March 12 at Open Arms, the Charlies' nonprofit partner. Tickets are \$125. Proceeds from all three Charlies events go to Open Arms.

The Charlie Awards are produced and administered by Foodservice News, along with the founders of the Charlies, Sue Zelickson and Scott Mayer. Franchise Times Corp bought Foodservice News in 2001. In addition to its 10-times a year magazine, it also produces a website/blog site, an award-winning Chef Book and a Buyers Guide. Offices are located at 2808 Anthony Lane S in Minneapolis. Contact information can be found at [foodserviceneeds.net](http://foodserviceneeds.net) or by calling 612-767-3200.

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