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## THE CHARLIE AWARDS

*A Celebration of the Twin Cities Food and Restaurant Industry*  
November 11 at the Pantages Theatre

Minneapolis (August 28, 2012) --- The second annual CHARLIE AWARDS, a celebration that recognizes the exceptional contributions of the Twin Cities metro area food and restaurant industry, will be held on Sunday, November 11, 2012 at the Pantages Theatre in downtown Minneapolis (710 Hennepin Ave.) beginning at 2 p.m. A VIP brunch sponsored by *Mpls.St. Paul Magazine* will precede the show at 11:30 a.m. at The Brave New Workshop (2605 Hennepin Ave. So.). There will also be an after-party sponsored by *Minnesota Monthly* from 3:30 – 5 p.m. at the IDS Center Crystal Court (80 S. 8<sup>th</sup> St.).

The Charlie Awards recognizes all of the organizations, businesses and individuals that comprise our local and regional food industry, including: restaurants, corporations and businesses (e.g. coffee shops, food suppliers, vendors, retailers, wholesalers), institutions (e.g. hospitals and schools), beverage manufacturers and suppliers (e.g. breweries, wineries, distillers, beer and wine crafters), culinary schools, chefs, and restaurant staff (e.g. wait staff, bartenders, maître de, pastry chef).

The award show will be 90 minutes of live entertainment and highlight some of the best and brightest in the business. The awards will consist of two components – individuals and businesses honored by their peers and outstanding food recognized by the public and industry leaders.

Awards for individuals and businesses will be determined by a vote of all restaurants participating in the Charlie Awards. Each restaurant participating will have one vote in the various categories, with the individual/business having the most votes in each category receiving recognition. Food receiving recognition will be determined by both the public and a panel of experts.

Awards will include: Lifetime Achievement; Community Hero; Chef; Emerging Chef; Pastry Chef; Service; Bartender; Restaurateur; Restaurant; Restaurant Design; Food Truck; Craft Brewer; and Cup of Coffee.

Any non-franchised restaurant or food truck may enter one food item they believe is representative of their establishment. The items will be grouped in the following neighborhoods (subject to change based on number of entries): Minneapolis, St. Paul, North Metro, East Metro, South Metro and West Metro. For information on how to enter your business, visit [www.charliesexceptionale.com](http://www.charliesexceptionale.com).

The awards are named after the legendary restaurant, Charlie's Café Exceptionale, which was a mainstay in downtown Minneapolis until the 1980s. The Charlie Awards were created to recognize the outstanding contributions that our metro area food and restaurant industry to ensure a diverse, vibrant and creative lifestyle and economy. The Charlies were the brain child of Minnesota's own culinary expert and James Beard award-winning food journalist, Sue Zelickson.

Tickets for the CHARLIE AWARDS will go on sale beginning September 14, and will be available online at [www.charliesexceptionale.com](http://www.charliesexceptionale.com); at the box offices of the State, Orpheum and Pantages theatres; or at any Ticketmaster outlet. Tickets for the main show and after-party are \$35 (\$25 for members of the food community). Tickets for all three events, including the VIP brunch, are \$100, with a portion of the proceeds benefitting Open Arms of Minnesota, the only nonprofit organization in Minnesota that cooks and delivers free meals specifically tailored to meet the nutrition needs of individuals living with life-threatening illnesses.

**Current sponsors include: General Mills, Walser Automotive, Open Table, Ispiri Design-Build, U.S. Foods, Joia, Minnesota Monthly, Mpls.St. Paul Magazine, Open Arms, G&K Services, Kohler, Horizon Equipment, and the Minnesota Restaurant Association.**

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