



NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT RACHAEL LEVINE

Dames of Sacramento – summer greetings and look ahead

LDEI Sacramento chapter said farewell to spring by enjoying a lovely Dames Night Out hosted by Dame Randii MacNear and the Davis Farmers Market on May 24 followed by an exciting new membership drive that officially closed on May 31. The Membership committee is eagerly reviewing applications and will present a slate of potential new members to your board of directors in early July. The new member induction and annual meeting has been scheduled for Sunday, Aug. 20. This year's induction (and general meeting) will be a luncheon hosted by Dame Christy Hayes at Kitchen 428 in Woodland. If you haven't previously enjoyed Christy's hospitality or the historic property located at 1st and Bush streets, you are in for a treat. I cannot wait for you to enjoy the second-floor veranda where we will start the day with bellinis and hors d'oeuvres.

Summer kick-starts with our annual membership renewal drive beginning June 1. Be on the lookout for email notifications and a mailed post card in early June. As usual, we highly encourage everyone to renew through the website. If you need your password reset, please write me directly at rachaellevine@hotmail.com. There have been a few changes to our previously normal schedule, including fees – National has moved up their deadline for chapter payments and membership slate submissions up by one month, from Oct. 1 to Sept. 1, and increased their dues



Dame Randii MacNear greets Dame Elaine Corn to the Davis Farmers Market's Picnic in the Park, a recent Dames Night Out.

from \$85 to \$100. For us to stay in compliance, our renewal drive closes on Aug. 15. If you need an extension, for any reason, please reach out to Treasurer Amy Myrdal Miller or me.

Volunteer organizations live only because of the service of their members. Everything mentioned above is touched in one way or another by volunteer hands. Whether the work is done by one person, by a committee or a collaboration between committees, it's you – our members – that make all this work. It is fitting then that we celebrate those of you who serve our chapter. Without you and the gift of your time and thoughtfulness, we would not have grown into the dynamic, impactful community group we are today. To those of you

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Several members came out for this al fresco Dames Night Out. Dames fill a table at the May 24 "Picnic in the Park" event at Davis Central Park, which will also be the site of the 2023 Village Feast.

Photos by Jennifer Kaye

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who served in the past – you are thanked and celebrated. In this summer newsletter, you will find a list of all who serve your chapter. I hope you find inspiration among the names and choose to help us grow as well.

Opportunities to volunteer are ever present. Village Feast planning and work has officially launched. We are delighted to share that this is the 20th year of the founding of the event. To properly celebrate, we decided to bring the event back to its origin story – Davis Central Park. Mark your calendars for Sunday, Oct. 22. We do need your help and expertise in several areas – curating the local wine list, reaching out to potential sponsors, organizing silent auction items, and finding in-kind donors to help underwrite rentals, print marketing, and design. Please consider helping – a few hours-of-service from each of you will make a huge impact.

I raise a glass to all of you! Have a safe and fruitful summer.

With gratitude,

Rachael

President, LDEI Sacramento



That's a well-packed picnic basket! This assortment was part of Dames Night Out at Davis Central Park.



Volunteers needed: Get involved

Our LDEI chapter includes several committees focused on specific chapter functions such as membership recruitment and retention, program planning, fund raising and how we spend those funds – scholarships and philanthropy.

Find the committee that's right for you. Discover what you like to do and where you can help our chapter make an impact.

Interested in joining a committee? Reach out to our committee chairwomen.

There are other ways to get involved, too. We're always looking for hosts and participants for

interesting programs and workshops as well as our Dames Night Out mixers. Past programs have included heart- and brain-healthy nutrition, how to make French pastries and local farm tours. Reach out to our Programs committee with your ideas. Got news or photos to share? Send them to our Communications chair Elizabeth Smith.

Besides taking part in our year-round committees, every member is encouraged (make that expected!) to contribute to the 2023 Village Feast in some way. Start thinking about those one-of-a-kind and experiential auction items! (Yes, there will be gift baskets of homemade goodies, too.) More on those opportunities coming soon.

Membership Committee

- Co-chair: Donnell Brown
- Co-chair: Jennifer Kaye
- Elise Bauer
- Christy Hayes
- Kathi Riley Smith
- Sue Robison

Liaison Chairs: Carrie Boyle, Rachael Levine

Scholarship & Philanthropy Committee

- Co-chair: Marybeth Bizjak
- Co-chair: Andrea Hagan Thompson
- Carol Barsotti
- Lane Giguere
- Mary Kimball
- Gayla Mace

Program Committee

- Kathy Griley
 - Liz Mishler
 - Sue Robison
 - Kate Washington
 - Kate Stille
 - Karen Stone
 - Nicole Salengo
 - Jennifer Kaye
- Liaison Chairs: Carrie Boyle, Rachael Levine
- Co-Chair: Amanda Frew
 - Co-Chair: Liz Mishler
 - Sue Robison
 - Gayla Mace
 - Edie Baker
 - Marcella White
 - Amina Harris
 - Board members who sit on committee meetings: Rachael Levine, Carrie Boyle, Amy Myrdal Miller

Fundraising Committee

Chair open

- Acting co-chair: Rachael Levine
- Acting co-chair: Joni Stuart
- Amina Harris
- Amy Myrdal Miller
- Marybeth Bizjak
- Mary Kimball
- Randii MacNear
- Sue Robison
- Debbie Arrington

Communications Committee

- Chair: Elizabeth Smith
- Debbie Arrington



Dame profile: Mary Kimball of Center for Land-Based Learning

By Elizabeth Smith

Dame Mary Kimball was raised on a small farm in Yolo County and has been involved in food and agricultural education at the local, regional, state, and national levels for over 25 years.

Mary earned her master's degree in human and Community Development from the Ohio State University and a B.S. Degree from the University of California at Davis in Agriculture Science and Management, Plant Science Option. She is also an alumnus of the California Agricultural Leadership Program (Class XXXII) and the American Leadership Forum, Mountain Valley Chapter (Class XV). In 1998, the Yolo County Resource Conservation District hired Mary to oversee a small, agricultural education program called FARMS (Farming, Agriculture, and Resource Management for Sustainability) Leadership, founded by local farmers and scientists. Its focus was to bring predominantly urban, disconnected young people to farms, ranches, research facilities, agricultural businesses, and wildlife areas to introduce them to diverse opportunities in farming and natural resources. Mary's role



was to expand this local program to other regions.

It was during this tenure that Mary founded the nonprofit Center for Land-Based Learning, whose mission is to cultivate the next generation of farmers, agricultural leaders, and natural resource stewards. Today, Mary serves as Chief Executive Officer. In that role, she has led the growth and development of the organization from one program in the Sacramento region with 30 high school students to six different model education programs serving thousands of high school students and adults. CLBC now spans almost 60% of California's counties, primarily in the Central Valley from Butte to Kern. The

education program portfolio includes the California Farm Academy – the state's only beginning farmer training, business incubator – and two-year Registered Apprenticeship Program for beginning farm and ranch management in California.

Under Mary's leadership, the Center's programs have reached more than 40,000 high school students with in-depth, life-changing experiences – and 1,000-plus beginning farmers in Northern California – with over 250 alumni of the training program, business incubator, and apprenticeship. All these people are changing the face of – and the accessibility to – agriculture, food and farming. Mary is also very active in local, regional, and statewide groups. In addition to serving as a board member for our chapter, she is a board member of the Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District since 2016, as well as a member of the Sacramento Metro Chamber's Food and Agriculture Committee, and the Sacramento Chapter of the Land and Economics Society. She also served on The City of Woodland's Redistricting Commission in 2021-2022, the Yolo County Planning

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Meet Mary Kimball

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Commission in 2006-2014 (including two terms as chair), a member of the Board of the Yolo Land Trust in 2004-2014 (including three years as President) and was a founding member of the Yolo Food and Ag Alliance.

Throughout her work and volunteerism, Mary has made it her mission to change the face and future of farming to a more diverse, inclusive one, providing access to a broad group of young people who have been shut out or have extensive barriers to entry. Recognition for Mary's work includes the Award of Distinction from UC Davis College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences in 2003, the Profiles in Leadership Award from the California Agricultural Leadership Foundation in 2014, the Wells Fargo CARES Award in 2015 for her work promoting agriculture and youth education in the Sacramento Region, and the Common Threads North Community Service Award for Women in Agriculture in 2016. In 2023, Congressman Mike Thompson selected Mary as Yolo County's Woman of the Year for her work. Mary was also our chapter's nominee for the 2023 Les Dames d'Escoffier International Woman of Purpose.

Board members and committee chairwomen

President

Rachael Levine rachaellevine@hotmail.com

First Vice President

Carrie Boyle carrie.boyle@gmail.com

Treasurer

Amy Myrdal Miller
amy@farmersdaughterconsulting.com

Secretary

Debbie Arrington debarrington17@gmail.com

Past President

Joni Stuart joni.c@comcast.net

At-large:

Marcella White marcella11@me.com

Randii MacNear rmacnear@dcn.org

Mary Kimball Mary@landbasedlearning.org

Gayla Mace gmace@golygon.com

Shelly Kessen shelly.kessen@fleishman.com

Committee chairwomen:

Scholarship & Philanthropy

Marybeth Bizjak mbbizjak@aol.com

Andrea Hagan Thompson* andeahagan@gmail.com

Programs

Amanda Frew Aefrew@gmail.com

Membership

Donnell Brown donnellbee@yahoo.com

Jennifer Kaye* Jennifer_kaye@sbcglobal.net

Communications

Elizabeth Smith dame.elizabeth.smith@gmail.com

*Not on board



Sacramento Dames Help Bring Back Oak Park Farmers Market

Our chapter recently gave \$3,000 from our Scholarship and Philanthropy fund to help the Oak Park Farmers Market reopen this summer.

Under the helm of Dame Joany Titherington, this fabulous community market has provided healthy produce to the underserved Oak Park neighborhood, which has long been a food desert. The market was disbanded a while ago, and its future looked grim.

But Titherington managed to raise the funds to bring it back, better than ever, in mid-June. Come out to McClatchy Park on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and support this community treasure!



Upcoming events:

Induction Lunch and Annual Meeting

Sunday Aug. 20
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Kitchen428 and
Mojos Lounge
428 1st St.
Woodland, CA 95695

Tickets including
lunch: \$65

*Watch your e-mail box
for invitation*

2023 Village Feast

Returning to its roots for its 20th anniversary

We need you! Save the date:

Sunday, Oct. 22
1-4 p.m.
Davis Central Park
C & 4th streets, Davis

*Ticket information to come
Co-hosted with Davis Farm to School*

Start planning now to make this our best Feast in two decades!

We need donations for our silent auction including one-of-a-kind items and culinary-related experiences.

Possible travel or vacation donations welcome.

Contact Rachael Levine rachaellevine@hotmail.com
or Debbie Arrington debarrington17@gmail.com.

Help our committee – volunteer now!



Dames go to Alchemist



Five Dames gather in the Alchemist incubator kitchen along with our recent grant recipients.

Sacramento Dames Sue Robison, Liz Mishler, Elaine Corn, Andrea Hagan Thompson and Marybeth Bizjak met with our philanthropy partners at Alchemist Community Development Corp. in late March.

We toured the incubator kitchen and met with the first three recipients of our \$1,000 matching grants: Dee Siazon (Real Mojo Foods), who used the money to purchase a hot dog cart; Jeneen Rainey-Tatum (Southern Hospitality Eats), who needed a replacement oven for her cottage bakery business; and Kasandra Kachakji (Meza California), who bought two Arab concave griddles, known as saj, for making pita bread. We also sampled their food: great pickles from Dee, a sampler box of baked goods from Jeneen and freshly baked pita bread with Mediterranean dips from Kasandra. They were an inspirational bunch and made us proud to be affiliated with Alchemist.

Alchemist CDC had its own big news to share. The nonprofit recently received a \$7.9 million award from the state of California's CERF Economic Development Pilot Program. This money will enable Alchemist to build its Public Market project in Sacramento's River District.

The Public Market will be an all-electric campus including an incubator kitchen, a social enterprise café, a retail store with grocery products from small Sacramento makers, and a co-working office space. It will also be home to eight small incubator restaurants with a shared outdoor food court.

Congratulations, Alchemist CDC! The Sacramento chapter of the Dames is very happy to partner with this innovative social-justice nonprofit organization.



LDEI scholarship winner: Jeneen Rainey-Tatum of S.H.E. (Southern Hospitality Eats)

This year, at the suggestion of Dame Mary Kimball, we began giving scholarships to women involved with the Alchemist CDC, a nonprofit that connects Sacramento-area communities to land, food, and opportunity toward a vision in which all neighborhoods are vibrant, equitable, healthy, and diverse. Three women each received \$1,000 awards.

Jeneen Rainey-Tatum is one of those recipients. She runs S.H.E. (Southern Hospitality Eats) Foods, and, along with the other awardees, is part of the Alchemist Kitchen Incubator Program which helps people navigate the beginnings of their food businesses. S.H.E. Foods makes delicious treats, cakes, pies, cookies, and veggie breads.

Rainey-Tatum grew up in Mobile, Alabama, and enjoyed experimenting in the kitchen and baking cakes as she watched her siblings. Her family moved across the country when her grandfather, a serviceman, was assigned to a Stockton base. She attended high school in Stockton and graduated from UC Davis with a major in managerial economics. She worked in computer engineering as a Product Line Manager at Hewlett-Packard for 15 years and baked for fun. She attended church at the Center of Praise Ministries, and it was there that she met her husband, Willie Tatum Jr.

Her family grew quickly. As she raised six children, she brought her baked items to share at work, church, and at her children's extracurricular activities. Everywhere she brought the treats, people encouraged her to make it a business. Her three youngest children enjoyed being in the kitchen, finding it as a way to quell insecurities, and help them learn to better communicate and gain confidence, which has helped them greatly during troubling times.



Jeneen Rainey-Tatum of S.H.E. (Southern Hospitality Eats) has seen her business grow with the help of Alchemist Kitchen.



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Cancer ravaged Jeneen's family, and there were many losses. Jeneen's father and her husband's parents succumbed to the disease. In addition, her husband and daughter were each diagnosed with rare cancers or diseases. Sadly, Jeneen's husband passed away in 2018. Her daughter has been managing well, but her illness is so unique that she is regularly studied by researchers at UCSF. While challenging, the pandemic allowed the family to slow down and face the trauma they were going through. Jeneen managed to stay positive and keep her family's spirits up by challenging her kids to be creative in the kitchen and to help others whenever possible. They kept baking and found ways to continue selling their baked goods. She never quit, and launched S.H.E. Foods in 2021. Since enrolling in the Alchemist's program, her business has grown. With the award from LDEI, Rainey-Tatum was able to purchase a new range which was desperately needed when her old stovetop and oven failed on Thanksgiving last year just after she placed the



turkey in the oven. She laughs as she explains that it was just another challenge to solve. Her dream is to open a commercial kitchen for S.H.E. Foods and other businesses in Natomas, where customers can purchase the many items made there. For now, you can find her on 23rd and Capitol every Sunday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., as well as at local festivals. Follow her on Instagram @she_foods_com.

Jeneen Rainey-Tatum and her family sell her S.H.E. products at a Sacramento farmers market.

**Sharing is caring;
follow us online**

Instagram: @lesdamessac

Public Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/LDEISacramento>
(or @LDEISacramento)

Private Facebook Group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SacLesDamesCommunity>