



Detroit

THE CITY OF

CHEFS

A FILM BY KEITH FAMIE





July 7, 2023

Keith Famie
Visionalist Entertainment
28345 Beck Road
Wixom, MI 48393

Dear Keith,

Thanks for the conversation today regarding the production of a documentary special exploring the historical and economic significance of Detroit's legendary Chefs.

As we discussed, we are excited by the prospect of creating and engaging content that reveals new perspectives on how our diverse populations have been impacted socially and culturally by the art of cooking and entrepreneurship.

Detroit PBS is committed to covering issues in the public interest, including the ways in which our diverse backgrounds can catalyze commerce, equity and entertainment – in the past, present and future.

And finally, for fans of history, this program is a unique way of telling the Detroit story from the kitchens where international and family recipes combined to inspire a city through gastronomy!

We are so pleased to include it in our broadcast plans and look forward to a holiday premiere in 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fred".

Fred Nahhat
Senior VP, Production
Detroit Public TV



Consolato d'Italia
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Dear Keith,

The Consulate of Italy is very excited to hear about your new and upcoming documentary "Detroit - City of Chefs", and I am sure you will be able to give some incredible insights into the significant Italian contribution to the vibrant food scene in Detroit.

The Italian presence can be traced back to the founding of Detroit - as the second in command to Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac was the Italian Alfonso Tonti - and since then there was a slow trickle of Italians populating the region. Prior even to the boom of the auto industry in Detroit, Italians were heading this way, largely involved in the produce industry. Thus the influence of Italian cuisine in Detroit can be traced back to the early 20th century when Italian immigrants began settling more steadily in the area. They brought with them a rich culinary tradition that has since become an integral part of the city's gastronomic landscape.

One of the most notable contributions of the Italian community to Detroit's food scene is the introduction of iconic dishes such as pizza, pasta, and cannoli. These dishes have not only become staples in Detroit but have also helped shape the city's culinary identity. So much so that Detroit is now the "Capital of Pizza in the US", and the Detroit style pizza - according to local legend - was borne out of the use of a drip pan from the auto world to recreate Sicilian Sfincione.

Moreover, Italian immigrants have played a crucial role in establishing many of Detroit's beloved eateries. These restaurants, often family-owned and operated, have become cherished community institutions, serving up authentic Italian fare and warm hospitality.

Additionally, Italian-American chefs and restaurateurs have been instrumental in innovating and adapting traditional Italian recipes to suit the local palate. Their creativity and passion for food have led to the creation of unique dishes that reflect the fusion of Italian and American culinary traditions, leading to a whole new cuisine onto itself.

The Italian contribution to the Detroit food scene is undeniable. It has not only enriched the city's culinary offerings but has also contributed to its cultural tapestry. As we continue to celebrate Detroit's diverse food culture, let us remember and honor the enduring legacy of the Italian community.

Looking forward to seeing what will surely be an incredible food journey!

Sincerely yours,

Paola Allegra Baistrocchi
Consul of Italy



Detroit's culinary heritage is as important to our city's story as the automobile. Even during economic downturns, legendary dining spots like the Detroit Athletic Club, the Pontchartrain Hotel, Joe Muer's, the Roostertail, Mario's and the London Chophouse were setting standards of excellence for cuisine and service across the world's stage.

It began in the 1960s, with Detroit on overdrive — General Motors, Ford and Chrysler were expanding globally and executives from these industry giants, thanks to extensive work-related travel, became savvy, adventurous diners with a love of fine wine and professional service. This paved the way for Detroit to introduce a diverse range of dining destinations rivaled only by New York and Paris. Trailblazers like Milos Cihelka (from Czechoslovakia), Heinz Menguser (from Austria), Yvonne Gill (from New Zealand), Rene Mouttet (from France), Leopold Schaeli (from Switzerland), Aldo Ottaviani (from Rome) plus our native Detroiters Douglas Grech and Carolyn Haskins...some of which brought culinary traditions from their homelands...but all worked wizardry in their kitchens. Meanwhile, the lord of the dining room was the maître d', who often patterned characteristic savoir faire from the classic restaurants of Europe.

Young chefs who wanted to join back-house teams had to have a skill set that kept up with the demands of impeccable kitchens. Each raised the bar for food interpretation with a unique style, invaluable advice, brand recognition and the sheer power of personality to enhance a guest's restaurant experience. Yearly charity events at Cranbrook and the St. Vincent & Sara Fisher Center brought these young masters together while international organizations like the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs (founded in 1610) found their way to Detroit, a new dining mecca. If a chef was tapped on the shoulder to prepare a complex, seven to twelve-course meal for this group, they had to be prepared for careful scrutiny by top critics in gastronomic excellence. Remarkably, many of these young chefs were the product of a single culinary education — Livonia's incomparable Schoolcraft College.

Today, Detroit's growing ethnic population have added their own spice to this fascinating, wide-reaching story, from food trucks to white tablecloth dining rooms, making our city one of the world's most culturally diverse and unique places to dine out. Meanwhile, our innovative kitchen masters continue to influence chefs around the globe.

The 2023/2024 Detroit Public TV documentary by Producer/Director Keith Famie and the team at Visionalist Entertainment Productions will tell the unfiltered story Detroit's culinary heritage. Expect to laugh, be inspired, reminisce, and possibly tear up as you join us as we celebrate Detroit's expansive reputation as an international dining destination.



2023/2024 Scope of Production:

- History of our rich ethnic community, restaurants & food purveyors
- The early professional chefs, country clubs & hotels
- History of Jewish delis
- The early food critics
- History of chefs as charitable ambassadors to our community
- History of the Michigan Chefs De Cuisine
- Michigan's culinary colleges / our future chefs
- US Culinary Olympics
- Ice Carving competitions / Plymouth
- Michigan's Master Chefs
- James Beard Awards
- Food & Wine Awards
- Michelin Guide
- Kitchen designs & how they evolved
- Front of the house directorship, Maître d's & the wine industry
- Feature on today's leading Metro Detroit restaurants & the next generation of chefs

■ September 22, 2023

Keith Famie
Visionalist Entertainment
Wixom, MI 48393

Dear Keith,

College for Creative Studies (CCS), is thrilled about the opportunity to collaborate with Visionalist Entertainment on the production, "Detroit: The City of Chefs." As an institution of Detroit, we take pride in showcasing our city's culture, including its culinary heritage. CCS has a unique opportunity to contribute to the film through claymation, and we anticipate this contribution will be mutually beneficial for your project and our students' development.

A critical aspect of student success at CCS is their engagement with the partners through experiential learning. We aim to provide students with hands-on experiences that closely align with their future careers. While we can impart fundamentals in the classroom, the real-world experiences they gain are instrumental in fostering their artistic development. Working on films like "Detroit: The City of Chefs" enables students to bridge their academic journey with their professional aspirations. CCS remains dedicated to expanding experiential learning opportunities for all students and extends our sincere gratitude to supporters like you who can assist in furthering these endeavors.

Best Regards,



Matt Chung
Associate Director, Strategic Partnerships and Programs
Office of Partnerships



***The featured Chefs, Restaurateurs & Food Writers
in the stop motion animation collaboration with the
College for Creative Studies.***





Clay Animation Collaboration Opening & Closing Scenes

Film Opening:

The film opens with three or four pastry chefs working on an elaborate display in a kitchen. The display encompasses artistic designs of pulled sugar, chocolate sculptures and an iconic centerpiece with gum paste chef characters. Gum paste is a sugar dough that has a special ingredient added - Gum Tragacanth. This essential ingredient makes the paste stretchable, elastic, and pliable.

We see the pastry chefs working on these figures and the display. The figures will actually be made out of animation clay by the students at the College for Creative Studies...but the audience thinks its gum paste.

As we see the chefs turn off the lights and go home, like Geppetto and Pinocchio, we watch the gum paste (clay figures) come to life. Over a minute or so of playful actions, we watch them bring create a fun logo of ***Detroit: The City of Chefs*** on some sort of created display or paint with powdered cocoa. This will set up the film in a fun, artistic, and whimsical manner!

Closing Scene:

We will find a way to close the film with the same characters in a fun, heartfelt way... possibly each of them holding an "in memory of" image of one our beloved restaurant icons who have passed on.



· DETROIT · ATHLETIC · CLUB ·

**THE LEGENDS
OF THE
STOVE DINNER**

JANUARY 15, 2024



The Legends Of The Stove

PRESENTED BY THE

· DETROIT · ATHLETIC · CLUB ·

A historical gathering of iconic
Metro Detroit chefs, restauranteurs,
& front of the house legends.

Hosted by
Executive Chef Shawn Loving, CMC

Opening Comments by
JoAnne Purtan

January 15th, 2024

A Visionalist Entertainment Production

Tonight's Featured Culinary History Makers

Chef Shawn Loving
Loving Spoonful,
Schoolcraft College,
Detroit Athletic Club

Chef Brian Polcyn
Pike Street, Five Lakes Grill,
Forest Grill

Chef Ed Janos
Money Tree, Too Chez

Chef Jeff Baldwin
Van Dyke Place, The Whitney,
J. Baldwin's

Chef Paul Grosz
Raphael's, Cuisine,
Schoolcraft College

Chef Jimmy Schmidt
London Chop House,
Rattlesnake Club

Chef Rick Halberg
Tweeny's, R.I.K.'s, Emily's

Chef Luciano DelSignore
Bacco Ristorante, Bigalora,
Casa Pernoi

Chef Greg Upshur
Cousins Heritage Inn,
Too Chez, Ford's Estate

Chef Jeff Gabriel
Grosse Pointe Yacht Club,
Les Auteurs, Schoolcraft College

Chef Steve Allen
The Golden Mushroom, Steve & Rocky's

Chef Nick Apone
Intermezzo, Nino Salvaggio
International Marketplace

Chef Joseph Decker
Golden Mushroom, Awrey's Bakery,
Schoolcraft College

Chef Kevin Gawronski
Schoolcraft College

Chef Dan Hugelier
London Chop House,
Detroit Athletic Club,
Schoolcraft College

Chef Marcus Haight
The Lark, Schoolcraft College

Chef Milos Cihelka
London Chophouse,
Detroit Athletic Club,
The Golden Mushroom

Chef Anthony Lombardo
SheWolf Pastificio & Bar

Chef Kevin Brennan
Club Recess, Orchard Lake
Country Club, Detroit Athletic Club

Chef Keith Famie
Chez Raphael, Les Auteurs, Forte

Chef Douglas "Duglass" Grech
Pontchartrain Hotel, The Great Dane,
Restaurant Duglass

Chef Mike Ransom
Ima

Chef Terence Tarver
Saint John's Resort

Chef Jeff Hammer
Detroit Athletic Club

Chef Jim Oppat
Andiamo Ristorante, Joe Muer Seafood,
Statler French American Bistro

Chef John Vermiglio
Grey Ghost

Chef Kelli Lewton
Two Unique Caterers &
Event Planners

Chef Chris Misiak
Schoolcraft College

Chef Mary Brady
Diamond Jim Brady's Bistro,
Schoolcraft College

Chef Heather Moore
Schoolcraft College

Chef Brian Beland
Country Club of Detroit,
Schoolcraft College

Chef Scott O'Farrell
Macomb Community College

Chef Doug Ganhs
Oakland Community College

Joe Muer Jr.
Joe Muer Restaurants

Mickey Bakst
Tapawingo, Tribute

Joe Vicari
Joe Vicari Restaurant Group

Adrian Lark
The Lark

Madeline Triffon
London Chop House,
Rattlesnake Club, Plum Market

Ted Gillary
Detroit Athletic Club



These clay puppet creations are part of a collaboration with Detroit's College for Creative Studies Entertainment Arts department. They will come to life in a stop motion sequence for **Detroit: The City of Chefs**.

TONIGHT'S CELEBRATION SUPPORTS THESE AMAZING METRO DETROIT ORGANIZATIONS:



· DETROIT · ATHLETIC · CLUB ·

— PRESENTS —

The Legends Of The Stove

JANUARY 15th, 2024

Lobster Bisque with Chive Crème Fraiche
Deviled Egg Variation with Beluga, Pickled Radish, Smoked Duck
Sautéed Lake Perch Goujons
DAC Salt-Caraway Sticks

Chef Shawn Loving with Chef Jeff Gabriel & Chef Dan Hugelier

Shaved Fennel, Calamari & Octopus Salad with a Parmesan Crostini, Dressed with
Tangerine & Calabrian Pepper Green Olive Vinaigrette

Chef Nick Apone

Baccalà Mantecato (Whipped Salt Cod) with Olive Oil, Lemon, Fennel Pollen & Focaccia

Chef Anthony Lombardo

Duck Pie with Cherrywood Smoked Salmon & Assorted Charcuterie

Chef Brian Polcyn & Chef Ed Janos

Calamari with Diced Tomatoes, Scallions & Capers in a Beurre Blanc

Chef Jeff Baldwin

South African Durban Spiced Shrimp & Kachumbari slaw

Chef Keith Famie

Japanese Potato Salad, Torched Salmon Belly & BLIS Smoked Wild Char Roe

Chef Mike Ransom

Longganisa Skewer, Sweet Chili Mustard, Pickled Jalapeño & Hush Puppy Crisp

Chef John Vermiglio

Pan Seared Potato Gnocchi, Ragout of Boar, Seasonal Mushrooms, Chestnut Muddica

Chef Jim Oppat

Venison Epigrams with Sauce Grand Veneur

Chef Paul Grosz

Dearborn Brands' Red Spiced Wagyu Short Rib with Celeriac Ravioli, Essence of Pinot

Chef Jimmy Schmidt

Melanzane alla Parmigiana, Tepid Oven Roasted Eggplant, Whipped Buffalo Mozzarella & Basil

Chef Luciano DelSignore

Beef Wellington with Foie Torchon, White Bean Truffle Purée, Crispy Prosciutto,
Blackberry Reduction & Sea Salt Puff Pastry

Chef Terence Tarver

Fairway Packing Co.'s Rack of Lamb Genghis Khan

Chef Marcus Haight

Salon-Style Competition Tastings:

Schoolcraft College's Culinary Salon Team ~ directed by Chef Brian Beland
Macomb Community College's Culinary Salon Team ~ directed by Chef Scott O'Farrell
Oakland Community College's Culinary Salon Team ~ directed by Chef Doug Ganhs

Pastries & Desserts:

Micro Plate Winter Dessert Collection:

Sweet Greek Honeycomb Cake: Local Wild Honey-Soaked Spice Cake, Pistachio Brittle
Strawberry Bavarian Bomb: Vanilla Bean Ricotta Crème, Strawberry Balsamic Reduction, Oat Shortbread
Lemon Crème: Lemon Mousse, Blueberry Compote, Graham Crumble

Chef Kelli Lewton

Assorted Table Presented Pastries

Chef Jeff Hammer, Chef Joseph Decker & Chef Heather Moore

Tonight's Distinguished Hospitality Team

Mickey Bakst, Adrian Lark & Madeline Triffon

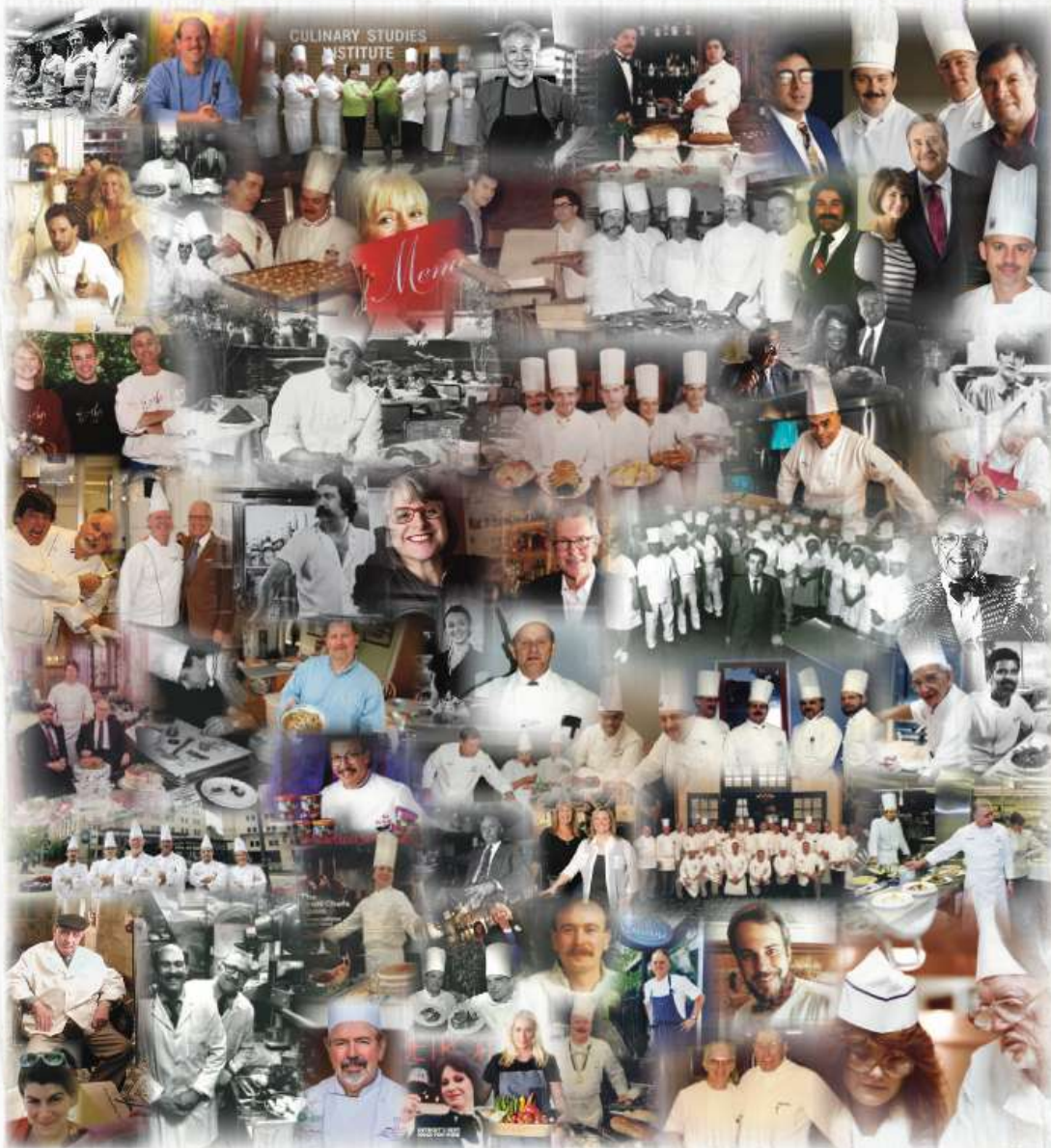
Wines Graciously Selected by Great Lakes Wine & Spirits

J Vineyards California Cuvee, J Vineyards Pinot Gris & Rombauer Merlot





DETROIT'S CULINARY HISTORY MAKERS



By R.J. King - January 17, 2024
Photographs by Patrick Gloria

Legends of the Stove

As part of a documentary film to be called “Detroit: The City of Chefs” — to be released later this year on Detroit Public Television by Keith Famie, executive producer and director, and his team at Visionalist Entertainment Productions in Wixom — The Legends of the Stove took place at the Detroit Athletic Club on Jan. 15. The historic gathering of iconic chefs, restauranteurs, and front-of-the-house legends from metro Detroit featured some 40 culinary masters, including Chef Milos Cihelka, Chef Douglas “Duglass” Grech, Chef Shawn Loving, Chef Ed Janos, Chef Jimmy Schmidt, Chef Anthony Lombardo, Chef Luciano Del Signore, Master Sommelier Madeline Triffon, Adrian Lark, Joe Vicari, and more. The evening, which included gourmet cuisine and wine, benefitted Gilda’s Club Metro Detroit, Rising Stars Academy, and the Rainbow Collection.



Chef Austin Hannah,
Chef Mia Johnson



Chef Jim Oppat,
Chef Mike Osinski



Chef Keith Famie, Chef Ed
Janos, Chef Brian Polcyn



Chef Luciano DelSignore



Chef Milos Cihelka, Madeline
Triffon, Steve Allen



Chef Paul Grosz,
Margret Fleming



Chef Shawn Loving,
Chef Milos Cihelka



Chef Tricia Holt,
Chef Terence Tarver



Dylan Walker, Chef Jeff
Gabriel, Austin Hanih



Gino Baratta, Emmet Baratta,
Chef Paul Grosz, Beauregard Nash



Joe Muer, Carl Schiller



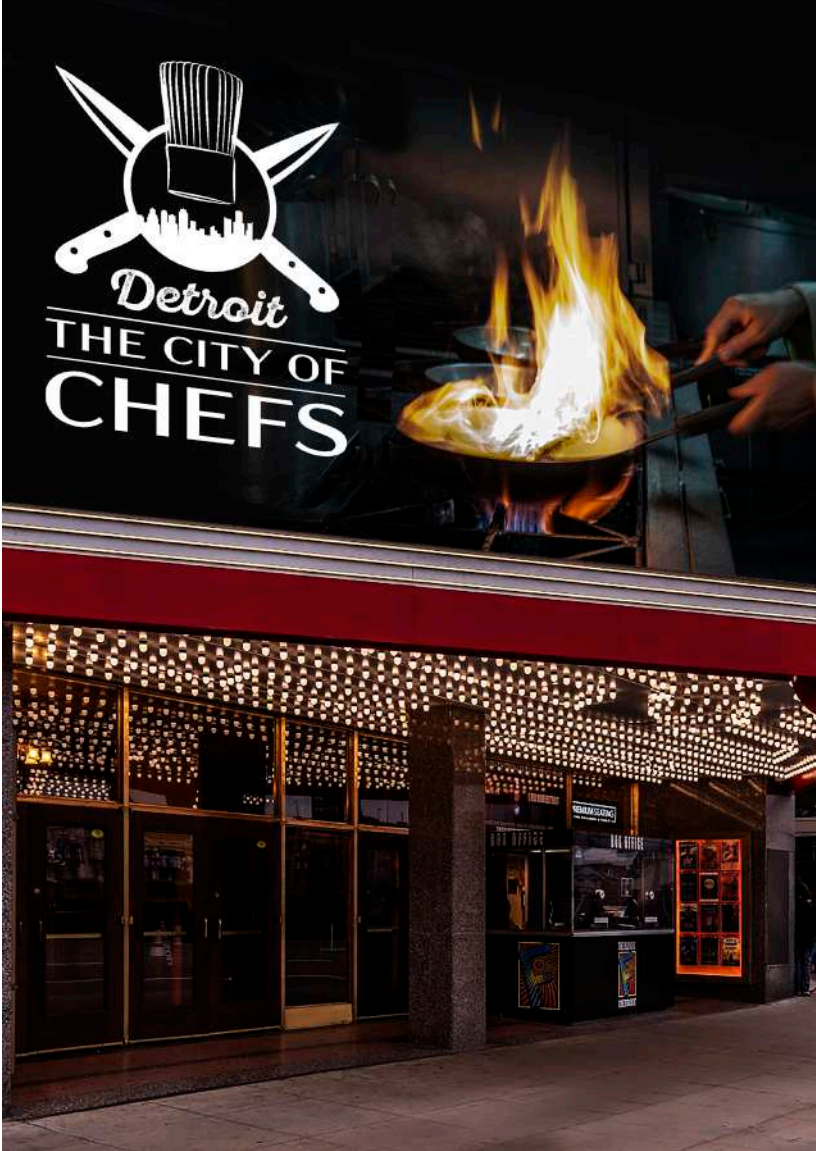
Joe Schimizzi, Tony
Schimizzi, Peter Bondi



Paul Johnson, Chef Kelli Lewton



Detroit: The City of Chefs



Charity Premiere Gala • Fall 2024 / Location TBD

At one of Detroit's iconic historical venues in celebration of **Detroit: The City of Chefs**, we will host a food and wine tasting gala that will bring together our current leading Michigan chefs along with many of the now retired chefs who were recognized as trailblazers for Detroit's cooking scene.

The evening will be hosted by one of Metro Detroit's leading media personalities and will pay tribute to several of Michigan's leading charities.

Part of the evening will pay tribute on the big screen to those who we have lost as part of our culinary heritage.

The event will be a thank you to all those who so graciously supported Detroit's culinary journey & **Detroit: The City of Chefs!**





MEDIA SUPPORT



Generations of leading Detroit chefs and restaurant professionals pose at the Legends of the Stove event in the Detroit Athletic Club.

DINING NEWS

Shining a Light on Chefs

Keith Famie talks about his upcoming documentary celebrating Detroit's cuisine and its makers

BY JACK THOMAS

You may have dined at one of Farmington Hills-born Keith Famie's renowned metro Detroit restaurants in the '80s or '90s (Chez Raphael, Les Auteurs, Forte). And you may have seen him as a *Survivor* finalist. What you may not know is that he is a Michigan Emmy-winning director-producer who is currently working on an upcoming Detroit Public TV documentary, *Detroit: The City of Chefs*, set to premiere later this year. We caught up with him in January, after his Legends of the Stove event at the Detroit Athletic Club, a charity dinner prepared by an all-star, multigenerational lineup of metro Detroit chefs. The event will appear in the documentary, along with stop-motion animation sequences produced by students at the College for Creative Studies.

Hour Detroit: What can viewers expect when watching *Detroit: The City of Chefs*?

Keith Famie: The film is not just about the historical relevance of the culinary industry, but it's also about the current relevance of our culinary industry in Detroit and the individuals carrying it forward. It's going to be a fairly rich story, kind of like an onion with a lot of layers to it.... The Italians, the Poles, the Irish, the Germans, the Lebanese — this vast, rich culture of ethnic groups that came here, they brought their cooking styles and ingredients, and that built who we are today, which is pretty significant.

How did the Legends of the Stove dinner come about?

In [*Detroit: The City of Chefs*], there's a story unfolding about how in the '70s, chefs started coming out of the kitchen...

to start cooking at socially charitable events. And I think charities figured out, "Wait a minute — if we want to have a really successful event, what if we just invite chefs to cook?" And so that became just a mainstay. So, my thought was, "Let's do a chef's charity dinner. What if we bring together as many of the old guards and current new ones as possible?" Then it was like, "Well, there's only really one place we should be doing this that is the most historical culinary landmark in our state — the Detroit Athletic Club."

How does the automotive industry play a part in the film?

The automotive executives in the '50s and '60s started doing a lot of traveling. And as they traveled around the world, they were able to refine their palate; they were able to see a whole range of new cooking styles. Well, they brought

those interests and those passions back here and almost kind of challenged chefs, if you will. Back then, the only places you could really go to get a meal of that nature, that creativity, and that quality of ingredients were clubs and hotels. And eventually restaurants flourished from that.

What will the animated sequences look like?

People think of chefs as staunch and serious. But by nature, we're whimsical. So I felt that a fun way to open the film was to create a whimsical moment, almost [like] Pinocchio and Geppetto. So [for the animated sequences] we've got [figurines of] a master chef, pastry chef, and a master baker working on this elaborate cake. The whole opening of the film is the chefs using utensils and bowls to make one cohesive piece of music that comes to life. And then we're going to use the

same chef lookalikes to close the film with a special endearing message in memory of those who've passed on.

What do you think sets Detroit apart from other cities in the culinary field?

Detroit has always been considered this kind of "flyover community" to New York or L.A. So, I think our chefs here kind of... they know there's more at stake. I think they really want to make it known that we're as good and as hardworking, as creative, as professional as anybody in the country. Detroit, and Michigan, have a lot to be proud of when it comes to our culinary heritage.

DBUSINESS

DETROIT'S PREMIER BUSINESS JOURNAL

A La Carte

Celebrity chefs, culinary students, and charities inspire a one-of-a-kind gourmet dinner at the Detroit Athletic Club.

BY R.J. KING |  PATRICK GLORIA

Major corporate and charitable events can take a year or more to organize, manage, and execute, and as soon as one anniversary or celebration is done, the planning begins for the next one.

But what if there isn't sufficient time to organize a major milestone, especially a one-of-a-kind culinary extravaganza and fundraiser that requires coordinating with 40 of metro Detroit's top chefs, sommeliers, restaurant owners, general managers, and maître d's?

For anyone planning a major event in a compressed time frame, consider the execution of *Legends of the Stove*, a tribute to metro Detroit's culinary heritage that was held on Jan. 15 at the Detroit Athletic Club. The only hitch was pulling together the entire production in 10 weeks during the holiday season.

Apart from reaching out, confirming, and coordinating with the culinary masters on the dinner and dessert selections, and how and where offerings such as beef Wellington would be prepared on-site, the reception was being filmed as part of "Detroit: The City of Chefs." The documentary will debut this fall on Detroit Public Television, and coincide with a red carpet premiere.

To get started, on Oct. 30, Chef Keith Famie, a longtime filmmaker and executive producer and director of Visionalist Entertainment Productions in Wixom, sent an email to Master Chef Shawn Loving and General Manager Charles J. Chambers of the Detroit Athletic Club.

"I would like to create a dinner event/invite only, which would include outside guests as well as DAC members," Famie wrote. "These guests would all be seen on camera as we would film the service. We would invite several historical chefs to be part of the menu preparation, and we would film this as part of the story of current iconic chefs and those from the past."

"I wanted to give the DAC the first opportunity to be the location featured. I see the event being of benefit to a few local charities highlighting how the



hospitality industry and chef community come together to help support social issues, and I see this taking place in February sometime. Clearly this would be a historical evening in so many ways."

While Loving and Chambers, along with the DAC board of directors, were open to hosting the event in the club's main dining room and the neighboring Pontchartrain and Georgian rooms, one problem immediately emerged. The second-floor kitchen that services the hospitality rooms was being shut down in mid-February for a complete rebuild that wouldn't be completed until September.

Another potential challenge was the success of the Detroit Lions. After the team won its first playoff game at Ford Field — the DAC offers a pre-game buffet to several hundred members and their guests before each home game — the next contest could have been held on the same Monday night as *Legends of the Stove*.

"When I received the email to move forward, I said, 'Wow, I'm staring at Thanksgiving with hundreds of turkeys and dinners to prepare for our members, their families, and their guests, plus carry-out dinners,'" says Loving, who served as the event's culinary host. "And there was a different volume of food service for Christmas."

"I was concerned if we could prepare for *Legends of the Stove* with the same intensity and focus we're known for, and deliver it all professionally. So, with my team, (I) put a plan together and I reached out (in early November) and let all the individual contacts know I was 150 percent in, but let me get through Thanksgiving first. And as far as the Lions, we were fortunate the second playoff game was held that Sunday. I mean, really fortunate."

To mark Detroit's historical role in the culinary world, Famie, a former chef at Chez Raphael, Les Auteurs, and Forte, wanted to celebrate the present, but also the past — not 20 years or 30 years, but three centuries of comestible history.

From medieval times, chefs and their kitchen brigades played a vital role in the success of the nobility. Following the French Revolution in 1799, the culinary teams of royalty and monarchs cast off what was a rigid system of trade guilds to bring forward fine-dining restaurants.

Still, the hierarchical structure of tightly operated kitchens remained in place. In fact, the double-breasted chef's jacket is a lasting vestige of culinary leaders, evoking the venerable roots of military ranks.

Long shut off from dining rooms, the emblematic curtain to the back of the house finally opened locally a half century ago, led by Master Chef Milos Cihelka of the Detroit Athletic Club, who got his start at the London Chop House and, following his stint at the DAC, helmed the former Golden Mushroom in Southfield.

In 1972, Cihelka founded the Michigan Chefs de Cuisine Association, an organization that serves to lift the public profile of culinary teams while raising money for charities.

"When you look at iconic culinary figures in our region like Chef Milos, Chef Douglas Grech (Pontchartrain Hotel, The Great Dane, Restaurant Duglass), and Joe Muer Jr. (Joe Muer Restaurants), they set the plateau for all the chefs and culinary teams that followed," says Chef Marcus Haight, the longtime executive chef at The Lark and today a professor in culinary arts at Schoolcraft College in Livonia.

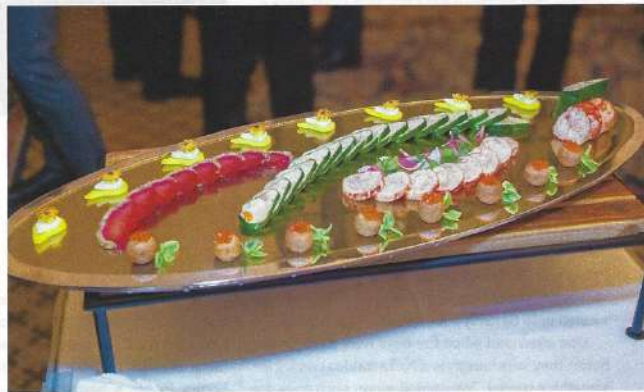
To ensure that knowledge was passed on to the next generation, Haight and his fellow faculty members made it a point to include students in the preparation of the cuisine for *Legends of the Stove*.

Limited to 150 guests, the selections included Lobster Bisque with Chive Crème Fraîche, Duck Pie with Cherrywood Smoked Salmon, Pan-Seared Potato Gnocchi, Venison Epigrams, Sauteed Lake Perch Goujons, Red Spiced Wagyu Short Rib, and more.

Haight's dish was Rack of Lamb Genghis Khan; in keeping with the charitable nature of the event, the



A DISH IN TIME
The culinary and wine team for Legends of the Stove gather on the staircase of the Detroit Athletic Club, far left. The menu included Venison Epigrams with Sauce Grand Veneur by Chef Paul Grosz, who is joined by Margaret Fleming. Below is a selection of hors d'oeuvres. Chef Luciano DeSignore prepared and served Melanzane alla Parmigiana in the DAC's Georgian Room.



meat was donated by Fairway Packing Co. in Detroit. His students helped prepare the marinade, while undergraduates from Chef Brian Polcyn's (Pike Street, Five Lakes Grill, Forest Grill) class did the butchering.

"When I was at the event, I was struck by the overall positive attitude," Haight says. "I realized it was a snapshot in time to see everyone together who contributed to the restaurants in this town. It was a moment we'll likely never see again. We're fortunate to work in the Motor City, which brought so much here from around the world."

Starting in the 1920s, as local automakers and suppliers expanded beyond North America, executives and managers were introduced to new cuisines, wines, and spirits. At the same time, the region has long attracted people from nearly every country, given Detroit was founded in 1701 and is the oldest city in the Midwest.

Pair that with Henry Ford's decision in 1914 to double workers' wages to \$5 a day. The unprecedented pay hike, which was largely matched by other automakers and suppliers, attracted thousands of workers from every corner of the globe.

As Fanie's filmmaking team notes, metro Detroit is "one of the world's most culturally diverse and unique places to dine." It also "paved the way for

Detroit to introduce a diverse range of dining destinations rivaled only by New York or Paris."

"I really saw Legends of the Stove as a way to celebrate the past, honor the present, and nurture the future," Fanie says. "The event wasn't easy by any stretch, but it was rewarding. We raised money for Gil-da's Club Metro Detroit, Rising Stars Academy, and the Rainbow Connection."

To help defray costs, the participating restaurants and culinary institutes, along with Chef Source in Canton Township, Great Lakes Wine & Spirits in Highland Park, Carmela Foods in Fraser, and the Toni A. Wise Foundation in Novi, among others, donated nearly everything.

Taking it all in, Fanie, who has directed and produced dozens of films, and once appeared on a season of "Survivor," summed up the highlights.

"Our executive producers — Tony and Mary Schimizzi, John and Carole Kulhavi, and Roger and Mary Kreager — played an important role, and we had students participate from the culinary programs at Schoolcraft College, Oakland Community College, and Macomb Community College. When I look back, we might have been crazy to pull everything together in 10 weeks, but it was certainly worth celebrating the present and enlightening the future." **EB**



DBusiness Daily Update: CCS, Schoolcraft College Joining Production of 'Detroit: The City of Chefs' Documentary

By Tim Keenan and RJ King - January 29, 2024



Twenty clay puppets created by CCS student Alexandra Martinescul will be featured in stop-motion animation in "Detroit: The City of Chefs." // Photo by R.J. King

CCS, Schoolcraft College Joining Production of ‘Detroit: The City of Chefs’ Documentary

Twenty clay puppets created by College for Creative Studies student Alexandra Martinescul will be featured in stop-motion animation in “Detroit: The City of Chefs,” a documentary by Wixom filmmaker Keith Famie and his Visionalist Entertainment Productions team.

The film, which will debut on Detroit Public Television/PBS this fall, highlights the rich culinary history of metro Detroit and showcases Detroit’s great chefs, its restaurants, and the hospitality industry.

The clay figures are look-alikes of some of Detroit’s best-known chefs and will be used in a custom-created studio set at CCS to be animated with stop-motion.

CCS in Detroit has dedicated a 15-week semester from January to May 2024 to creating an animated story that will open and close the 90-minute film. Adjunct professor of stop-motion Kevin Coyle and chair and associate professor for entertainment arts at CCS, David Gazdowicz, say they are fully behind the project.

The stop-motion animation is a collaborative effort with the team at Schoolcraft College Culinary Arts Department’s Certified Master Pastry Chef Joe Decker and Certified Executive Pastry Chef Heather Moore. These two chefs will be putting together a three-tiered cake that honors Detroit’s culinary heritage. Viewers will see the chefs putting this together, as well as pretending to create the miniature look-alikes that they will then place on the cake.

As the chefs leave to go home, the clay puppets come to life through stop motion and break into a song created by the sounds that they make with small kitchen utensils in a fun, whimsical way. This piece will end with a chocolate display piece with the title of the film, “Detroit: The City of Chefs” ... Dedicated, Daring, Defiant.

The faculty helping with this project from Schoolcraft College are Program Coordinator and Chef Chris Misiak, Professor and Department Chair Jeremy Salo, and Associate Professor of Animation Josh Harrell. CGT faculty and Salo, in collaboration with the Sound Recording Technology Department, is working on creating the musical score.

Famie and his crew will be at Schoolcraft College today to embark on the first stages of this journey with the Schoolcraft College staff and the students with a recording session to record the sounds of kitchen utensils.

Filming with Decker and Moore will take place at 5 p.m. on Feb. 8. Once that filming is complete, the set then goes to CCS for the duration of the animation process.

For more information on the film, visit detroitcityofchefs.com.

Documentarian Keith Famie Recruiting Sponsors for 'Detroit: The City of Chefs'

By [Tim Keenan and RJ King](#) - October 13, 2023



CCS student Alexandra Martinescul created these clay figures of chefs Milos Cihelka and Dan Hugelier for "Detroit: The City of Chefs."
// Photo courtesy of Keith Famie

Documentarian Keith Famie Recruiting Sponsors for 'Detroit: The City of Chefs'

Wixom-based documentarian Keith Famie is offering an opportunity for businesses and foundations to participate in his newest film, "Detroit: The City of Chefs," and support the work of the Entertainment Arts Department at Detroit's College for Creative Studies.

The film, which will debut on Detroit Public TV/PBS in the fall of 2024, is now in production and includes clay look-a-likes of some of Detroit's best-known chefs. CCS is in the process of creating 12 of these full puppet figures that will be used on a custom-created studio set so they can be stop motion animated.

CCS is dedicating a 15-week semester from January-May 2024 to creating an animated story that will open and close the 90-minute film.

"In order for this story to come to life, we need to gain the support from the business and philanthropy community, who are not only excited about Detroit's and Michigan's culinary heritage but also appreciate the creative design teachings of one of America's most respected institutions — The College for Creative Studies," Famie says.

For more information on how to donate to the film's production, visit detroitcityofchefs.com

Watch the trailer for upcoming documentary 'Detroit: The City of Chefs'



[Melody Baetens](#)

The Detroit News

Published Sept. 21, 2023

As the Detroit dining scene's future looks bright with new restaurants opening up on a nearly daily basis and local chefs getting name-dropped in national publications on the regular, a new documentary is in the works that aims to look back on our area's culinary past.

“Detroit: The City of Chefs” features interviews with major players who were a part of the restaurant scene in the second half of the 20th century. Director, producer and chef Keith Famie wants to tell the story of Michigan chefs de cuisine, master chefs, food critics, Schoolcraft College's culinary arts program and the impact immigrants had on the dining landscape.



Chef Luciano DelSignore is interviewed for “*Detroit: The City of Chefs*”, a documentary from Keith Famie. *Detroit: The City of Chefs*

“It began in the 1960s, with Detroit on overdrive – General Motors, Ford and Crysler were expanding globally and executives from these industry giants, thanks to extensive, work-related travel, became savvy, adventurous diners with a love of fine wine and professional service,” reads the film’s overview.

Narrated by former WDIV personality Chuck Gaidica, “Detroit: The City of Chefs” is set for a 2024 release.

“As Detroiters, we often take for granted the rich history of our culinary heritage,” says Gaidica in the trailer. “In fact, our roots to the extremely diverse restaurant scene can be traced back to those early immigrants.”



Director and producer Keith Famie interviews Joe Muer Jr. at Joe Muer Seafood in Bloomfield Hills. *Detroit: The City of Chefs*

Along with executive producers Famie and Tony and Mary Schimizzi, the documentary features interviews with chefs and restaurateurs like Milos Cihelka, Brian Polcyn, Rick Halberg, Mary Brady, Shawn Loving, Paul Grosz, Luciano DelSignore, Joe Muer Jr. and many more.

Visit detroitcityofchefs.com to learn more about the documentary.

Detroit Free Press

DINING

Documentary film to focus on the history of Detroit's chefs: Watch the trailer



[Susan Selasky](#)

Detroit Free Press
Sept. 23, 2023



Director and producer Keith Famie with restaurateur Joe Muer Jr. *Provided by Keith Famie*

A new documentary is in the works from Keith Famie, a local award-winning producer and director and chef, that will showcase the culinary heritage of metro Detroit's chefs, many of them master chefs, its restaurants and the hospitality industry.

"Detroit's culinary heritage is as important to our city's story as the automobile," according to the film's overview.

Famie and Tony and Mary Schimizzi are the executive producers for "[Detroit: The City of Chefs](#)" a Detroit Public TV documentary.

"I've been wanting to tell this story for 20 years," Famie recently told the Free Press. "These were the guys that were the hot chefs in the '80s and '90s."

And in order to talk about and chronicle Detroit's rich chef and culinary history, Famie who is also a chef, needed to go way back — beginning with the many immigrants who came to Detroit.

"It began in the 1960s, with Detroit on overdrive — General Motors, Ford and Chrysler were expanding globally and executives from these industry giants, thanks to extensive work-related travel, became savvy, adventurous diners with a love of fine wine and professional service," according to the film's overview.

Those interviewed for the film include both past and present culinary influencers: some of Detroit's most recognizable chefs who molded metro Detroit's culinary scene decades ago as well chefs and restaurant owners who are shaping it today.



Keith Famie and Joe Muer Jr. *Provided by Keith Famie*

And Famie knows the story well because decades ago he was part of that group of young and upcoming chefs in metro Detroit.

Many of those chefs worked with and learned from well-known European chefs like Milos Cihelka from Czechoslovakia, French-Canadian chef Douglas Grech, known as "Chef Duglass,

Duglass," and Yvonne Gill, who hailed from New Zealand, Famie said. Cihelka, now 93, is featured in the film, and is known as the "godfather of chefs" in metro Detroit.

The film trailer, narrated by Chuck Gaidica, formerly of WDIV-TV (Channel 4), features Joe Muer, Cihelka and Joe Vicari of Joe Vicari Restaurant Group, which includes Andiamo Italian eateries and Joe Muer Seafood. Others featured are Brian Polcyn, Mary Brady, Luciano DelSignore and Shawn Loving.

"Detroit: The City of Chefs" will also examine how Detroit's chefs and restaurants played a role in supporting local charities, the ethnic community and food purveyors and the front-of-the-house maitre'd leadership.

The film, Famie said, "will step back in time. "

"The auto industry drove a lot of the expectations from a global standpoint because executives traveled around the world," Famie said.

The film will take viewers to iconic restaurants at country clubs, Famie said, like the Detroit Athletic Club (DAC), Pontchartrain and the London Chophouse.

"There was a key point in time when things changed in the '50s and '60s with Duglass, Duglass, Milos and Yvonne Gill," Famie said. "They brought a new feel of professionalism. That expectation, that drive for cooking that set the foundation for who we are today."

Cihelka, Famie said, was responsible for creating and founding in 1970 the Michigan Chefs de Cuisine Association, a professional organization for chefs.

The film will also highlight the role and impact of metro Detroit's culinary arts schools including Schoolcraft College with its many master chef instructors, the culinary arts programs at Oakland Community College and Macomb Community College. Also featured will be those who wrote about Detroit's evolving food scene.

"As the second generation of chefs, the brat pack if you will, were developing a new style, so were the food writers," Famie said. "They were learning to write about food."

The film is due out in the fall of 2024.

To learn more about the film, go to detroitcityofchefs.com.

DBusiness Daily Update: New Documentary from Filmmaker Keith Famie Explores Detroit's Culinary Heritage

By Tim Keenan and RJ King - September 27, 2023



Detroit restaurant legend Joe Muer Jr. discusses Detroit's culinary history with Keith Famie in "Detroit: The City of Chefs." // Photo courtesy of Keith Famie

A new documentary from Wixom-based filmmaker Keith Famie called "Detroit: The City of Chefs" will debut Fall 2024 and be shown on Detroit Public Television.

"Detroit's culinary heritage is as important to our city's story as the automobile," Famie says. "Even during economic downturns, legendary dining spots like the Detroit Athletic Club, the Pontchartrain Hotel, Joe Muer's, the Roostertail, Mario's, and the London Chop House were setting standards of excellence for cuisine and service across the world's stage." The film will cover a wide array of Detroit and Michigan culinary topics, including:

- History of the ethnic community, restaurants, and food purveyors
- The early professional chefs, country clubs, and hotels
- The early food critics
- History of chefs as charitable ambassadors to the community
- History of the Michigan Chefs De Cuisine
- Michigan's culinary colleges
- S. Culinary Olympics
- Ice Carving competitions in Plymouth Township
- Michigan's Master Chefs
- Kitchen designs and how they evolved
- Matri'd's and the wine industry
- Today's leading Metro Detroit restaurants and the next generation of chefs

The documentary by Famie's team at Visionalist Entertainment Productions promises to tell the unfiltered story Detroit's culinary heritage. "Expect to laugh, be inspired, reminisce, and possibly tear up as you join us as we celebrate Detroit's expansive reputation as an international dining destination," Famie says. A charity preview gala is being planned and details will be revealed at a later date.

By R.J. King - January 17, 2024
Photographs by Patrick Gloria

Legends of the Stove

As part of a documentary film to be called “Detroit: The City of Chefs” — to be released later this year on Detroit Public Television by Keith Famie, executive producer and director, and his team at Visionalist Entertainment Productions in Wixom — The Legends of the Stove took place at the Detroit Athletic Club on Jan. 15. The historic gathering of iconic chefs, restauranteurs, and front-of-the-house legends from metro Detroit featured some 40 culinary masters, including Chef Milos Cihelka, Chef Douglas “Duglass” Grech, Chef Shawn Loving, Chef Ed Janos, Chef Jimmy Schmidt, Chef Anthony Lombardo, Chef Luciano Del Signore, Master Sommelier Madeline Triffon, Adrian Lark, Joe Vicari, and more. The evening, which included gourmet cuisine and wine, benefitted Gilda’s Club Metro Detroit, Rising Stars Academy, and the Rainbow Collection.



Chef Austin Hannah,
Chef Mia Johnson



Chef Jim Oppat,
Chef Mike Osinski



Chef Keith Famie, Chef Ed
Janos, Chef Brian Polcyn



Chef Luciano DelSignore



Chef Milos Cihelka, Madeline
Triffon, Steve Allen



Chef Paul Grosz,
Margret Fleming



Chef Shawn Loving,
Chef Milos Cihelka



Chef Tricia Holt,
Chef Terence Tarver



Dylan Walker, Chef Jeff
Gabriel, Austin Hanih



Gino Baratta, Emmet Baratta,
Chef Paul Grosz, Beauregard Nash



Joe Muer, Carl Schiller



Joe Schimizzi, Tony
Schimizzi, Peter Bondi



Paul Johnson, Chef Kelli Lewton



LETTERS OF SUPPORT



August 5th, 2023

Hello Keith,

Over my nearly 40 years of professional culinary experience, I have had the unbelievable opportunity of working with the finest chefs in the Detroit area. Even in my early years it was very apparent, at American Culinary Federation (ACF) regional and national meetings, that our chefs were recognized as leaders in the industry. Your endeavor to produce a documentary about them is entirely appropriate and will shed necessary light on these talented professionals and their influence not only at the local level, but internationally as well.

The best example of how highly regarded our chefs are in the industry is the fact that since 2017, every ACF Master Chef Exam in the United States was administered at Schoolcraft College in Livonia, Michigan not in New York or Los Angeles or Orlando, but here in the Detroit Metro area. What says more about our chefs and their influence in the culinary field than that!!

These chefs shared a common mission to uphold the standard of excellence for the culinary industry, advancing and promoting professionalism, and encouraging leadership. I know that your research will also uncover many successful apprentices under the leadership of these chefs. Their influence on the future of the culinary profession is in good hands.

I wish you the best on your documentary and please let me know if I can help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Misiak C.E.C., C.C.E.", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Christopher C. Misiak C.E.C., C.C.E.
Program Coordinator, Culinary Arts, Schoolcraft
College
2016 ACF National Culinary Ched Educator of
the Year
cmisiak@schoolcraft.edu
734-462-4492



Michigan Chefs De Cuisine

The premier organization for culinary professionals, students, and vendors in Michigan

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American Academy of
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Mr. Keith Famie
Visionalist Entertainment
28345 Beck Road
Wixom, MI 48393

Dear Keith,

I trust this letter finds you in the best of health and spirits. It is with immense enthusiasm that I write to you today regarding the remarkable project unfolding in the heart of Detroit. The prospect of being a part of such an endeavor fills me with great pride and nostalgia.

Reflecting on the bygone days of our shared culinary journey, I can't help but reminisce about the ardor that ignited our passion for this art, driving us to emulate our esteemed mentors. Your return to your culinary origins within the film industry is indeed a testament to your unwavering commitment to the craft.

My own culinary odyssey commenced on the east side of Detroit, where, at the tender age of fifteen, I embarked on my culinary voyage as a cook at Hillcrest Country Club. Remarkably, that humble beginning anchored me in the kitchen for over three decades. Learning about the importance of Detroit Chefs, from Chef Charles "Rocky" Rachwitz, who initially introduced me to Chef Milos Cihelka, CMC, AAC, HGT. The Michigan Chefs de Cuisine Association was founded in 1970 by Master Chef Milos Cihelka, CMC, AAC, HGT, whose vision it was to create one of the most prestigious professional associations in the nation. The chapter consists of about 450 members. It aims to further professional growth by providing educational speakers at meetings to help keep members aware of culinary trends and to provide networking opportunities. Through monthly meetings, working as celebrity chefs, hosting a golf outing, and organizing the annual Christmas party for members and their families, members have an opportunity to get to know each other better, making for a stronger family of culinarians.

Throughout my journey, I have had the privilege of learning from and being inspired by some of the finest culinary minds. The exchange of knowledge, the exploration of new trends, and the refinement of techniques have been the hallmarks of our culinary fraternity. It is a testament to the camaraderie within the culinary world that we have all grown together.

The Detroit culinary scene, as you rightly mentioned, stands as one of the finest in the nation, and I wholeheartedly commend you for spearheading this significant project within our beloved city. I am deeply honored and grateful to be included in this endeavor, which I believe will not only enrich the culinary landscape but also contribute to the cultural fabric of Detroit.

Once again, thank you for affording me this opportunity to be a part of this exciting project. I eagerly anticipate the journey ahead, and I look forward to contributing my knowledge and experience to its success.

Wishing you continued success and prosperity in all your endeavors.

Sincerely,

James Kokenyesdi CEC®, CCA®, AAC®
President ACF Michigan Chefs de Cuisine



October 25, 2023

Dear Keith,

We're thrilled to be part of your upcoming project, "Detroit the City of Chefs."

RSA Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We have multiple programs focused on providing holistic education, training, and support to this community, helping them learn skills to maintain independence and find jobs where they can serve their communities.

As we are a vendor of Macomb Community Mental Health, our Home Hub program serves as a job skill training program teaching work skills and employing our consumers in our commercial bakery, food processing plant, and our coffee shop Gather + Grounds, as well as sending them out to work with our various job site partners.

Rising Stars Academy is a public charter school that focuses on post-secondary education for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our main goal is to provide our students with a well-rounded education, preparing them for future job opportunities and greater independence.

Most recently, we opened Gather + Grounds, a coffee shop and social space designed to provide a safe place for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to gather and practice key social skills as well as receive evening programming focused on social and emotional wellness.

Founded by Mark and Deb Prentiss in 2013, our organization has grown exponentially, both in terms of enrollment in programs and in terms of our many partnerships throughout the city. These partnerships are instrumental in giving our students and clients exposure to various job experiences. Chef Mark's expertise allows us to offer exceptional culinary training to our students, giving them opportunities to work in some of Detroit's top restaurants.

The support of the culinary community in Detroit means a lot to us, and having our work featured in your film will have a significant impact on our students and the community as a whole.

Our Business Manager, Chantel Gaidica, is available to assist you in any way you need throughout the process. Please do not hesitate to contact her at cgaidica@rsaonline.org or 914-329-9068. You can also reach out directly to Chef Mark at mprentiss@rsaonline.org or 586-202-9466.

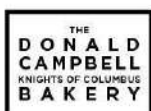
We're excited about the opportunity to collaborate with you!

Sincerely,

The Team at RSA Foundation

23855 LAWRENCE AVENUE, CENTER LINE, MI 48015

586.806.6455 • www.rising-stars-academy.org • TAX ID 46-0834143



· DETROIT · ATHLETIC · CLUB ·

241 MADISON AVENUE, DETROIT, MI 48226

September 23, 2023

RE: "Detroit: The City of Chefs"

Keith,

I am very excited about your project that highlights and documents the culinary history of Detroit through the chefs that helped build the foundation of what we enjoy today.

I am especially excited to see how you bring to life the contribution the Detroit Athletic Club (DAC) has made to the culinary history of Detroit. The DAC has played a significant role in shaping not only the city's culinary landscape but, but also in mentoring and inspiring future generations of chefs and culinarians. Your passion for preserving and celebrating this rich culinary heritage is commendable.

Highlighting the DAC and its renowned chefs, past and present, in a project documenting Detroit's culinary history is a fantastic way to showcase the club's contributions to the city's food culture.

What has set us apart is that we are about more than our amenities and impressive façade. We have become a legacy. And while we call an iconic landmark "home", we are truly about the family within. People connecting with a legendary city that has literally moved the world. And we are still moving people.

This applies to DAC members and employees, and certainly applies to all the chefs and culinarians that have entered our doors over the years.

Dining at the DAC offers a place to connect and experience culinary excellence and personal attention in a distinct variety of settings.

I am appreciative that you have chosen to highlight the Detroit culinary scene, as it continues to be one of the finest in the nation. I am grateful that the DAC will be included in this endeavor, which I believe will contribute greatly to the continued growth and success of the Detroit dining scene. I hope it will help to inspire the next generation of culinarians.

I wish you continued success in this, and all your endeavors.

Sincerely,

Charles C. Johnson
Executive Manager & CEO
Detroit Athletic Club

July 15, 2023

Keith,

I think your idea to trace the culinary history in Detroit is brilliant. Many Detroit area chefs are highly regarded worldwide and have contributed greatly to the advancement of our craft. As a young chef, I remember being inspired seeing Milos on TV, in Life Magazine, it opened a whole new world for me. I had no idea fine cooking could be so grand. I wanted to be just like that, to cook at that level.

Not long afterwards, I was hired as Saucier/Sous Chef by Milos at The London Chop House, which led to my first Executive chefs' position at The Detroit Athletic Club. It was a great period in Detroit history. The auto companies were booming. Restaurants and clubs flourished and the number of cooks and apprentices grew with it.

At least three or four of the chefs who worked under Milos became Master Chefs. Three of the chefs who worked for me are now Master Chefs. Many others in this culinary lineage became experts in their field, professors, charcutieres, restauraners, all of those chefs connected like the many branches on a tree.

This would be a wonderful thread to follow, peppered with dozens of unique personalities. The public would absolutely immerse themselves in it. It would really be a fun tale to tell. As well, it would inspire others, young in their passion for cooking, who might learn of new paths that might lead them to success.

Daniel G. Hugelier
CMC



BACCO

R I S T O R A N T E

Luciano Del Signore
Chef - Restaurateur & Entrepreneur

Bacco Ristorante
Eigalora
Casa D'erci
Laurel Manor

August 2, 2023

Dear Keith,

Thank you for your correspondence regarding the production and launch of the Documentary focused on DETROIT: The City of Chefs. What an exciting opportunity for the culinary creatives in the industry and a genuine tribute to the universal and globally renowned *Motor City*. I have always admired your desire and passion to remain true to our roots in Michigan as we are aligned in that philosophy, and I have founded my culinary career on that foundation.

Detroit being the center of the American automotive industry for over a century, driven by industrial leaders, innovators, alternate established industries, with access to resources and capital, attracting the who's who of banking, automotive and other industries, this city and metropolitan surrounding area has attracted a true melting pot of culinary personalities and passionate chefs to stimulate monumental business relationships and deals that come together across the dining table over a delicate balance of food, wine, ambiance and hospitality –which has been a forbidden secret for many years and therefore not given its proper recognition by culinary enthusiasts. The idea of tracing culinary history in Detroit and highlighting the talent that is here will prove an impactful surprise to the audience and heighten knowledge and education of Detroit's culinary gems that deserve global exposure beyond the automotive industry.

Being born in Livonia, Michigan to Italian immigrant parents, Lina and John Del Signore establishing their Italian roots in the community by sharing, true authentic Abruzzi food, wine, and hospitality at Fonte D'Amore; culinary arts was in my blood as well as the passion for bringing Italy back to the local community where I was born. Offering simple, elegant, and exceptional quality ingredients, prepared and presented with the influence I learned on my grandparents' farm in Abruzzo during the summers when I was a child, I realized was innate and became my passion. The vision and mission continue through today as I create and am authentically honored to work and educate young talent, notably, two protégé's that I feel so grateful to have had the good fortune to mentor are Anthony Lombardo of SheWolf in Detroit (2020's Hour Detroit Restaurant of the Year), and James Rigato of Mable Gray in Ferndale (recognized as 2016's top American New Restaurants).

I, along with my parents are so flattered and honored to have the opportunity to participate in the documentary which we strongly believe will only amplify the investment and footprint that Dan Gilbert and his entire team have continually supported in driving the revival of Detroit. Your dedicated effort to recognize the historic culinary journey and present the current day presence that we, as creatives in this industry, are pioneering and driving the culinary renaissance which is *ripe* to be harvested and showcased on a national and global level. Grazie mille!

With sincere admiration,

Chef Luciano

July 14, 2023

Dear Keith,

I'd like to take a moment and tell you how important it is to document the history of the Detroit food scene. The many great Chefs that immigrated here, trained a generation of culinarians and what's happening now is something that needs to be told.

Having spent the last 45 years of my life in Detroit kitchens, working for the best Chefs, then opening my own restaurants and teaching Culinary Arts at Schoolcraft College for 27 years has provided me a unique perspective on this subject.

The impact of my generation of Chefs (80's, 90's 2000's) was guided through the old guard from Europe then we translated it to contemporary American cooking and now an entire new generation has learned from us and is thriving, doing better, reaching new standards, providing the diner with an exceptional experience. Detroit has long passed its reputation as a fly over city, it is a destination.

Most importantly what has driven this course is the Detroit dining public. They are well traveled and educated about food now more than ever. God bless those hungry people that wanted something new and are willing to take a chance on what some young, passionate, and hard-working Chef is trying to put on a plate.

I applaud and support you wanting to take on this most complicated story, but it is something that should be in the conversation of future Culinarians and the public alike perhaps as a guidebook. You certainly don't know where you're going if you don't know where you came from.

Best,

Chef Brian Polcyn
Restaurateur, Culinary Professor, Author



Mary Brady
Certified Executive Chef

July 19, 2023

Dear Friends,

It is my great honor to be included in Keith Famie's documentary, **Detroit: *The City of Chefs***. Keith had the foresight to embark on this amazing journey to highlight fellow chefs and the restaurants they spearheaded.

Becoming only the second female Certified Executive Chef (CEC) in the state of Michigan, by the American Culinary Federation, was an honor and privilege. To earn this professional accomplishment in the early 90's was ground-breaking for a woman. I was fortunate to have the support and encouragement of many in the Detroit community of chefs that assisted me to reach this goal; subsequently enabling me to mentor others, female and male alike, to achieve their dreams of being the best in their culinary endeavors.

After 45 years in the culinary industry, I've worked and competed in culinary salons with the best of the best and I can attest that the cream of the crop has hailed from none other than Detroit. The highly anticipated **Detroit: *The City of Chefs*** documentary will bring much needed attention and duly shine the spotlight on these fine men and women, who, creatively and collectively built Detroit's food and restaurant scene to what it has become today.

Having the film be seen by Michigan residents and beyond will help draw interest in the heritage and also cultivate a new generation of chefs that will be truly inspired by Keith's vision and depiction of my fellow chefs.

Sincerely,
Mary

Mary Brady, CEC

July 15th, 2023

To whom it may concern,

In 1977 when I graduated from the Culinary Institute of America. the chef scene in America was just beginning to get exciting. I was living in upstate NY while working at the NYT 4-star restaurant, The Depuy Canal House, and loving it.

In 1979, we had just had our first child and my wife, Karen, and I were finding ourselves ready to move back home to Detroit. I had heard rumblings that things in the restaurant world were beginning to change, and I was convinced that I could be a part in the burgeoning culinary scene back in my home town. Well, that turned into a good omen, and I had a pretty successful career for almost 40 years here. In that time, we've seen so much growth that now, Detroit is considered an influential market in the culinary world.

The fact that Keith, (who himself was a huge part of that scene) has hopes of documenting in film the growth and success of that part of Detroit's history is I think a very important project, one that I fully support.

Sincerely,

Chef Rick Halberg

Edward Janos, C.M.C.
Certified Master Chef
Lone Tree, CO 80124

July 15, 2023

Dear Keith,

I am so excited about your project documenting the history of chefs in Detroit. What a great way to explore the city's history from an exciting and vital perspective. Having been born and raised in Detroit, I experienced firsthand the development of the dining scene in the city. I have also had the luxury of traveling and cooking all over the United States and the world, and I appreciate the food scene that developed in Detroit.

Despite the handicap of being a fly-over travel destination and with a metropolitan population outside the top ten, Detroit developed a high-level battalion of chefs. Detroit became home to multiple chefs representing the United States in international competitions; high level craftsman practicing cooking at the highest level on a world stage. Detroit also enjoyed the second-highest concentration of Certified Master Chefs in the country, second only to New York. Detroit is home to award-winning restaurants, chefs, and cookbook authors and has developed a diversified food scene equal to many cities nationwide.

As we all know, the Motor City is built on the backbone of the automotive industry. Detroit's lore, reputation, and local attractions were heavily influenced by what car manufacturing brought to the city. As important as a city's "must-see" local attractions, a city's food, restaurant, and chef scene can also be equally important, generating interest, travel, and tourism. Your project, Detroit - The City of Chefs, will explore the city's culinary heritage, help generate an understanding of our history, and help grow interest in our city's food scene.

I applaud your efforts in exploring Detroit's culinary heritage, and I can't wait to see your finished documentation.

All the best,

Ed Janos

August 1st, 2023

Dear Keith,

I am excited to hear about your project to reveal the rich culinary foundation that helped shape the history of the City of Detroit as well as shape our great country. It is an important heritage story that touches all of our lives. I congratulate your insight and vision to document this history for current and future generations.

As you know, Detroit has a long history in food from its founding, growing quickly as a rich agricultural region to support its exploding manufacturing population. Detroit was also the start of the American Farm revolution with the Fordson tractor leading the way in 1908. This revolution changed farming from “flesh and blood to motors on steel” increasing production that fueled the modern Industrial Revolution in America and the world. This area led the country with these agricultural products that the chefs created into our favorite dishes that became the foundation of our daily lives.

The story starts with the first immigrating chefs bringing with them centuries of culinary knowledge, now applied to the wonderful native ingredients. They shared their knowledge forward through many more generations of chefs, each rising higher and higher. Ultimately, they inspired a new generation of American chefs that combined the culinary history, native ingredients, and creative new dishes founding a New American Cuisine. This was personally celebrated by the Detroit dining guests, American dining public, national press, and the eyes of the world. Detroit was an important crucial part of the birth of the American food scene.

Detroit chefs were an important part of all major American Culinary, Food, Wine, and Spirits industries. Detroit chefs contributed to so many charitable concerns that reached out and touched lives across this region and beyond. These chefs fed the Detroit dining scene’s guests which shaped modern America and preserved our sovereign independence through international conflicts.

Keith, I fully support your efforts and look forward to Detroit - The City of Chefs.

Respectfully,

Jimmy Schmidt
Chef, Food Researcher, Writer, Inventor
<http://jimmyschmidt.com>

July 23, 1923

Dear Keith,

What a wonderful project you are embarking on! It will be great to focus on the history of the Detroit culinary scene. So many films have been made about automobile manufacturing and Motown. It will be a refreshing take on an industry that directly affects most of its citizens. Who doesn't love to eat?

I feel my contribution is unique as compared to most of your chef contributors. As a woman in a man's field back in the early 70s, I navigated the waters of fine dining when I was the general manager of The Money Tree from 1975-1978. I was young, naive, and learned on the fly. My schooling at The Cordon Cooking School in London did not prepare me for the business side of running a restaurant.

In the late 70s, I spent time in the San Francisco Bay area honing my pastry skills and beginning my introduction to catering. In 1980-2008, I managed, baked, cooked, and taught class at Bonnie's Patisserie in Southfield and then at Bonne's Kitchen & Catering in Bloomfield Hills. A career-ending accident forced me into retirement.

Examining women's historical role in creating the present-day Detroit scene could be of interest to many. If nothing else, it should be inspirational to young people, especially women, breaking into the food business going forward. I think I can contribute insight in this arena and am happy to assist.

Good luck, Keith. You are the best one of all of us "old-timers" to get this story right. Your accomplishments in both the food industry and documentary filmmaking will do it justice. We all go back a long way with you to help you fill in the gaps of the true story of how Detroit became a dining destination.

All the best,

Bonnie

Bonnie Fishman
14562 Olive Ave
Morgan Hill, CA 95037
bfishman333@gmail.com
586-612-6126

July 23, 2023

Dear Keith,

This is one of the most exciting projects for Detroit. I remember the good old days of all of us having the passion to become like our mentors. I am so glad that you are returning to your culinary roots in the film industry.

I grew up on the eastside of Detroit washing dishes at a barbecue restaurant at age 15, and never left the kitchen for 55 yrs. My boss was a chef that graduated from the Culinary Institute of America and always told me how great it was. When I turned 18, I received my draft notice so I went down the next day and enlisted in the Navy and became a Navy Cook and Baker for 4 years during the Vietnam Era.

After my military experience, I took advantage of my VA Benefits and went to the Culinary Institute and graduated in 1976. I interviewed with Chef Dan Hugelier at the DAC on the phone from New York. I took the position as Chef Garde Manger.

Chef Dan was my inspiration and Chef Mentor to guide me in many Culinary Competitions, including the Culinary Olympics in Germany 3 times in 1980, 1984, 1988. This experience brought me to work with Chef Ferdinand Metz. At the time, Mr. Metz was the President of the Culinary Institute of America. Mr. Metz encouraged me to pursue the Master Chef exam. I became a Master Chef in 1988.

All the chefs that you named to be part of this project have encouraged me and taught me new trends and techniques, including you, Keith. We all learned from each other.

The Detroit Chef scene is one of the greatest in the country. I applaud you for this important project in Detroit. Thank you for including me in this project.

Best regards,

Jeffrey Gabriel, CMC

July 23, 2023

Kevin Brennan
3283 Green Oak Dr.
Commerce township, MI 48390

Dear Keith,

I would like to start by thanking you for asking me to be part of your new project to recognize the culinary history in the Detroit area. I firmly believe that it will be rewarding for all involved in our chosen profession and furthermore for years to come for future culinarians and restaurateurs.

When I graduated from culinary program at Schoolcraft college in the mid 70's, I had no concept that the culinary scene in Michigan was on the verge of exploding into the world of Gastrome. We were blessed by the chefs that came before us here in Detroit, the likes of Chefs Milos Cihelka, Leopold Schaeli, Leon Korstjens, John Vandervouw. These Chefs all ran kitchens centered in the craft of cooking; brigade training young cooks' station by station. They created a local chapter Michigan Chef d Cuisine, a professional chapter for the American Culinary federation. This gave us apprenticeship programs, local culinary schools and training tools for young chefs. This time also saw the American chef starting to take shape, pulling away from the notion that only good cooking took place with a European chef in charge of the kitchen. It truly was a great time to blossom as a cook and chef, it was a time in which cooking, flavors, taste and presentation took precedent over the continental kitchens of the 60's.

I chose to spend my career of 45 years as a chef in the private clubs throughout the Detroit area, retiring from the Detroit Athletic club in 2021 after 26 years at the helm of this historic icon of the Detroit community. There and in previous clubs I was so grateful to work in, we chose food to be the cornerstone of members satisfaction. This enables me and the chefs of the same like to attract young cooks, apprentices and seasoned chefs to work in our kitchens. My biggest accomplishment as a chef all these years is knowing all the young chefs out in the industry today came through our kitchens to learn and grow in an environment of professionalism.

Thankfully yours
Kevin Brennan, CEC, AAC, HGT



July 28, 2023

Dear Keith,

What a great idea to explore and unveil the story behind Detroit's culinary cuisine. So many people, especially outside of Detroit don't know the culinary background. The social, ethnic and outside influences that shaped Detroit's culinary scene past and present.

I grew up in the 70's, started learning about food in the 80's. I left Detroit to learn outside influences from cities like New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. To learn more, I went to Europe. Spent a lot of time in France but also explored Italy and Spain. I knew I had something to add to the culinary scene here in Detroit that was already happening. I was so excited to bring everything I learned back to Detroit.

With the automotive and computer tech industries prevalent here in Detroit, we host people from all over the world. Detroit has brought worldwide culinary experiences for them to enjoy. The International Auto Show each year brings in thousands of people from all over the world to enjoy our local cuisine from chefs that have been trained all over the world. Chefs from Detroit have been on the national stage for decades.

I welcome and thank you for your efforts to tell "our" story. A story that means so much to so many. "It takes a village."

*Chef Paul Grosz
Chef/Owner Cuisine Restaurant
Chef Instructor Schoolcraft College*

Dear Keith,

I couldn't be more thrilled about this film project, and I believe the story of the Detroit Culinary scene is important to tell and compelling.

Let me take you back to 1975 when I was still in high school and started attending Southwest Vocational Center. Many of the incredible Chefs who are being featured in this project were also there with me, like Chef Keith Famie, Chef Brian Polcyn, Chef Marcus Height, and others. It was during those high school days that my love for cooking ignited.

After graduating, I pursued my culinary dreams at the prestigious Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York. In April of 1980, I proudly earned the title of Chef.

We may have taken different paths, but our stories intertwine in the most intriguing ways. See, while school fueled my passion for creativity, I lacked the business know-how. So, for two whole decades, I worked under other chefs, diligently learning the ins and outs of the restaurant industry, until I opened J. Baldwin's in 2004.

Culinary School was a melting pot of flavors, bringing together chefs from various corners of the globe. When I returned to Detroit, I brought that international influence with me, giving a fresh twist to the typical Midwestern cuisine. Michigan is famous for Perch, Walleye, and hearty meat and potato dishes, and it was here that chefs like myself got inventive, revolutionizing menus across Detroit.

My journey kicked off at Van Dyke Place in Indian Village, Detroit, then led me to the renowned Whitney. Next, I joined forces with the Norm Le Page Restaurant Group, which led me to the East Side at Mac and Rays, where my whole lives.

But you know what I love most about cooking? It's the endless possibilities, the artistry, and the immediate gratification from satisfied guests. Oh, and let's not forget the sheer thrill of filling up a dining room and making a living doing what I adore. Passing on my knowledge to young culinary enthusiasts brings me incredible joy. Witnessing their eagerness to learn and grow is truly rewarding. I learn something new every day from them, and even today, I've learned something new from my son, Chef Michael Baldwin, and Food Network Star (my daughter-in-law) Chef Gabriella Baldwin.

I've been honored to cross paths with culinary icons and celebrities like Wolfgang Puck, Gordon Ramsey, Chef Paul Prudhomme, Chef Milos, Chef Leopold Schaeli, and many others. There was also that time that I was chosen to cook for President Reagan's

second inauguration! Talk about unforgettable experiences. Throughout my career, I've had the pleasure of meeting political figures and catering to esteemed families such as the Fords and Iacocos. Each encounter has left its mark.

This film project, showcasing the outstanding chefs of the 80s, means the world to me. It's like being bestowed with a lifetime achievement award after dedicating 45 years of relentless hard work! The thought of our stories being told, unveiling the challenges and triumphs that have paved the way for the next generation of culinary professionals, is beyond incredible.

I feel truly blessed to be one of the few from my age group still in the hospitality industry. And even though I take immense pride in this, I remain humbled by the blessings that have come my way. You see, our business is called hospitality for a reason. It's about lovingly preparing food, putting in the grit and hard work, being a pillar in the community, and supporting young, aspiring chefs.

I wouldn't be here without my family, and I am so proud to say that my two sons are both helping to run our businesses. My son Jeffrey is our front-of-the-house manager, and beverage director, as well as a level 2 sommelier. My son Michael and his wife Gabriella are both chefs who graduated from the Culinary Institute of America and are doing an outstanding job. My beautiful wife Rose is the marketing genius for the operation.

Telling our stories helps the next generation understand where we've come from, why we do what we do, and what needs to happen next.

Keith, thank you for being part of this journey. Together, let's make this film an engaging and unforgettable tribute to the culinary world.

Warm regards,

Chef Jeff Baldwin



August 4th, 2023

Keith Famie's production of "Detroit, The City of Chefs", is profound for its stories that contribute to the social and cultural fabric of this city. Restaurants through history have been this and in special ways when operated by a personality.

Joe Muer's Restaurant has always had a public image starting with Joseph A. Muer, my Grandfather, in 1929. He was an entrepreneur, an entertainer, member of the Harmony Club, exalted ruler of the Elks and more. My Father, Joe, was the same growing the business out of the Great Depression and WII. Fame spread nationally as the economy grew. Customers would line up out the front door so much that we had to expand within this old building. Then after we completed this expansion in 1967 and surviving the riots, we added a new entrance and parking lot. We became internationally renowned. Ford Motor published a travel magazine, Ford Times, which wrote us up, American Airlines highlighted Joe Muer's in their in-flight brochure, and Triple A wrote article of us often. The restaurant was built on the personalities of the family and its quality as a renowned seafood restaurant with tuxedo attired wait staff in a classic environment. Our notoriety involved us culturally, civically, and charitably. Our forty ft serpentine bar was the business community's meeting ground at lunch. The Advertising business competed at both ends of that storied bar. Story telling never ended. Most interesting was that Jane and I became close friends of many customers being invited into their lives.

My entire career from mopping floors, cleaning and working in the kitchen to owning and operating every facet of the business afforded me a career and an education that few could enjoy. We closed our historic restaurant in 1998 from the economic and social disaster of Detroit and were the last of the great restaurants to survive. However, the link that saved my family's history is Joe Vicari, a longtime customer and friend, who recognized in 2008 that Detroit needed Joe Muer's Restaurant again. I was amazed at this opportunity and in 2010 the name was rekindled in the General Motors building of the Detroit Renaissance Center.

Reminiscing about my family's history and my life and this opportunity to be a part of "City of Chefs" is truly gratifying. I feel like it is a de ja vu moment, reliving my life again.

Sincerely,

Joe Muer IV

August 18, 2023

Dear Keith,

What a fabulous project! *Detroit: The City of Chefs* is sure to become an important testament of Detroit's rich culinary history. While Detroit is well known for the automotive and other industries, most Americans, and even many Michiganders, are not aware of just how many fabulous restaurants have called the Metro Detroit area home.

My parents and I are proud to have been part of the thriving restaurant scene in Detroit dating back to the early 80's. I remember while growing up in Detroit the many fabulous meals we had at iconic restaurants such as Joe Muer's and The London Chop House. Those places were truly special and inspired a generation of young chefs to open their own restaurants and to work together collaboratively to put Detroit on the culinary map.

My father always prided himself in being a pioneer in so many ways in the restaurant world. Over 40 years ago, Jim Lark was the first American restaurateur to write a monthly travel, food and wine newsletter accompanied by a theme, guest chef or wine dinner, the precursor to today's popular "pop-up". He was at the forefront of many culinary innovations as well: using a Cruvinet to hold wine, cooking on an outdoor mesquite grill, offering wine packages with pairings for multi course meals, serving a carte blanche trolley selection of hors d'oeuvres, and introducing Brazilian Barbecue dinners to the United States. And just to show not everything was about fine dining for he and my mom, Jim established the Michigan Chili Society, serving as its chairman and holding the sanctioned Michigan Chili Cook-off at The Lark for many years.

It was through hard work and determination, traits learned growing up in Detroit neighborhoods, that Jim and Mary, with her artistic touches and green thumb, turned the Lark into a world-renowned restaurant, even earning the *Best Restaurant* in North America in the **Condé Nast Traveler** nationwide restaurant poll.

Several talented chefs have contributed to the success of The Lark and moved on to become successful in other Detroit area ventures: you, of course, Marcus Haight, Heinz Menguser, Brian Polcyn, Jason Blastic to name a few. As with many of the historical restaurants you may feature, our story is intertwined with so many others.

Thank you for embarking on this important project, Keith. We're looking forward to its completion!

Yours very truly,

Adrian (and Mary) Lark

EMMY AWARD-WINNING VISIONALIST ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTIONS

WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1997 BY PRODUCER / DIRECTOR KEITH FAMIE. SINCE THESE EARLY YEARS, FAMIE AND HIS TEAM HAVE PRODUCED A WIDE RANGE OF PRIMETIME PROGRAMS.

DOCUMENTARIES

Ice Warriors (2005) An action-packed journey with the Detroit Red Wings' Alumni team through Russia.

Our Italian Story (2006) Progress, passion and promise – Detroit's Italian heritage.

Our Arab American Story (2007) Reverence, resourcefulness and respect- Detroit's Arab American Heritage.

Our Greek Story (2007) Antiquity, modernity, and destiny- Detroit's Greek Heritage.

Our Polish Story (2007) Family, faith and fortitude- Detroit's Polish Heritage.

Our India Story (2008) Amity, diversity and sovereignty- Detroit's Indian Heritage.

Detroit: Our Greatest Generation (2009) A tribute to our Michigan WWII veterans, both men and women, who fought for the freedom of our families and our country.

Our Vietnam Generation (2011) A long overdue welcome home to the men and women who served during Vietnam.

Can You See How I See? (2011) An inspiring look into the life of those who are without sight.

One Soldier's Story (2011) the profound story of Sgt. Michael Ingram, Jr. and his legacy.

The Embrace of Aging: Men's Series (2012) 13-part series on men and 7-part series on women.

The Embrace of Aging: Women's Series (2014) 13-part series on women and 7-part series on men.

The Embrace of Dying (2015) 8-part series on how we deal with the end of life.

Maire's Journey (2016) Follow Maire Kent as she sets sail on an epic journey to fulfill her dying wish.

Death is NOT the Answer (2016) A deep look into the complex world of depression and suicide.

Enlisted (2017) Choice. Adventure. Growth. Why would one enlist in the military?

Those on the Front Lines of Alzheimer's & Dementia (2018) What can be done to stop this truly devastating disease?

Those on the Front Lines of Cancer (2019) Can the uncommon journey that cancer patients undergo result in anything positive?

Blessed Solanus Casey's Journey to Sainthood (2019) How does a humble boy from Irish immigrant parents rise to the rare and distinguished honor of beautification?

Shoah Ambassadors (2021) Bridging the chasm of the younger generation of today with that of the Holocaust generation through the exploration journey that two young non-Jewish individuals go on.

Hospice Care in America Today (2022) Where did Hospice originate? Why is this service so important for end of life care?

Chromosomally Enhanced: What's Your Superpower? (2022)
A story of those living and thriving with Down Syndrome.

Detroit: The City of Churches (2022) The significance the many Detroit churches played on some of the most iconic moments in Detroit's history.

Detroit: The City of Hot Rods & Muscle Cars (2023) A celebration of the unique Detroit hot rod & muscle car community & how Motor City iron has circumnavigated the globe & shaped world culture.

MICHIGAN EMMY AWARD WINNERS

Taste of Taiwan (2006)
On-Camera Talent – Keith Famie

Our Italian Story (2006)
Best Human Interest Special, Best Director

Our Polish Story (2007)
Best Director: Post-Production

Our Greek Story (2007)
Best Cultural Documentary,
Best Human Interest Program Special

Our Arab American Story (2007)
Societal Concerns Program Special

Our India Story (2008)
Best Documentary Cultural

Detroit: Our Greatest Generation (2009)
Best Editor

Our Vietnam Generation (2011)
Best Documentary Historical

The Embrace of Aging: The Female Perspective of Growing Old (2014)
Best Director: Post-Production

Shoah Ambassadors (2021)
Best Director, Best Lighting, Best Editing

Chromosomally Enhanced: What's Your Superpower? (2022)
Best Human Interest - Long Form Content

Detroit: The City of Churches (2022)
Best Director, Best Editing, Best Photography, Best Lighting

PRODUCTIONS IN 2023 / 2024

Detroit: The City by The River - A journey up and down our beloved Detroit River, to uncover the richness of the past and gain a better understanding of where the river's meandering course will take us in the future.

Fork in the Road - Step into the lives of children who are thrust into the world of foster care through a series of life circumstances they had nothing to do with.

The Razor's Edge - A day in the lives of those that live on the razor's edge of society who face poverty and survival every day with many calling the streets their home.

Detroit: The City of Faith- Shining the light on the Christian community and those early immigrants who made their way to the Motor City in search of the American dream.

Detroit: The City of Chefs- The unfiltered story of Detroit's culinary heritage.

AWARDS & HONORS

2016 - **Maire's Journey**- DOCUTAH 2016 – International Documentary Film Festival–Winner

2021 - Shoah Ambassadors-

- Toronto Indie Filmmakers Festival - Best Feature Documentary - Winner
- SR Socially Relevant Film Festival NY– Honorable Mention
- Tokyo International Short Film Festival– Honorable Mention
- Austin Lift-Off Film Festival– Official Selection
- LA Documentary Film Festival– Official Selection
- Miami Jewish Festival–Official Selection
- Santa Monica Film Festival– Official Selection
- Malibu Film Festival– Official Selection

2022 - Chromosomally Enhanced: What's Your Superpower?-

- Grand Rapids Film Festival - Award Winner





Keith Famie **Director/Producer/Author**

Director/Producer Keith Famie was, for many years, known as a celebrity chef and a metro Detroit restaurateur. He was selected as one of America's "Best New Chefs" in 1989 by Food and Wine magazine; Esquire Magazine chose his restaurants as "Best New Restaurant" in America on two separate occasions. Famie was also a finalist on the 2001 reality television series, "Survivor, the Australian Outback."

Keith hosted his own Food Network series, "Keith Famie's Adventures," traveling the world documenting cooking styles from the plains of Africa to monk monasteries of Taiwan, to the lifestyle of Key West. In 2004, the Adventure Chef embarked on a new journey - documentary filmmaking. "I didn't want to be the 'Adventure Chef' guy anymore. I wanted to help people tell their stories."

Since that life-changing decision, Famie has been awarded twelve Michigan Emmys and been nominated several other times for his rich, human-interest storytelling, from ethnic documentaries to military tribute films. He and his team at Visionalist Entertainment Productions create informative, entertaining films that touch a wide audience.

Along with documentary filmmaking, Famie has released several books throughout his career, *Famie's Adventures in Cooking* (2001), *You Really Haven't Been There Until You've Eaten the Food* (2003), *Living Through the Lens* (2019), and *Papa's Rules for Life* (2021).

Outside of documentary production, Keith is involved in charitable projects. In 2003, Keith finished the 25th anniversary Ironman Triathlon World Championship in Kona with Team In Training for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. In 2015, he was awarded the 2015 Diamond Award by the Association for Women in Communications Detroit Chapter. In 2017, Keith was presented the Media Award by the Gilda's Club of Metro Detroit, and in 2023, Keith was awarded a Dove Award from The Arc of Oakland County for Media Distinction. Over the years, Keith has been actively involved in several well-respected, Michigan-based 501(c)(3) organizations that support everything from children with cancer and hunger relief to veterans' issues.

Visionalist Entertainment Productions | www.v-prod.com

