



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Honoring and congratulating Philadelphia's James Beard Restaurant and Media Award winners Vietnam Restaurant; Inquirer critic Craig LaBan and photographer Jessica Griffin; and authors David Suro, Gary Paul Nabhan and Danny Childs.

WHEREAS, The James Beard Foundation's mission is to celebrate, support and elevate the people behind America's food culture and champion a standard of good food anchored in talent, equity and sustainability; and

WHEREAS, Each year, the James Beard Foundation Awards, founded in 1990, recognize select chefs and restaurateurs for their inspiring and innovative culinary work. The Foundation also honors writers, journalists, and documentarians whose work explores how gastronomy drives cultural development and policy change. The 2024 Media Awards took place on June 8 and the Restaurant and Chef Awards on June 10, in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's Vietnam Restaurant received the honor of being named an America's Classic, an award that has been given annually by the James Beard Foundation since 1998 to locally owned restaurants that serve quality food, have timeless appeal, and reflect the character of their communities; and

WHEREAS, Owned and operated by the Lai family, Vietnam Restaurant was founded in 1984 by Thuyen Luu and Nhu Lai, immigrants who escaped communist rule in China, fled to a refugee camp in Malaysia, and escaped Southeast Asia by sea, immigrating to Philadelphia to open one of the first Vietnamese restaurants in the City; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Inquirer's food critic Craig LaBan and photographer Jessica Griffin won a James Beard award for travel writing. LaBan and Griffin journeyed to Mexico in 2023 to report a series of articles, including about Cantina La Martina chef Dionicio Jiménez's first post-pandemic trip home to Puebla and a deep dive into tequila and mezcal production led by Tequilas owner David Suro; and

WHEREAS, Two other Philadelphia-based authors won James Beard Awards for books, including David Suro and Gary Paul Nabhan winning for their book Agave Spirits: The Past, Present, and Future of Mezcal; and bartender Danny Childs winning for Slow Drinks: A Field Guide to Foraging and Fermenting Seasonal Sodas, Botanical Cocktails, Homemade Wines, and More; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's rich and diverse history of hospitality, culture and cuisine, with numerous award-winning restaurants and bars, is evidenced by the many small businesses that reflect the landscape of our local culture and the many immigrants that make up our City; and

WHEREAS, The vibrancy of Philadelphia's culinary scene is made tangible for readers and diners through the words and photography made by our City's food writers, photographers, cookbook authors, and restaurant critics, who tell the world the story of Philadelphia's culture through food; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Honors and congratulates Philadelphia's James Beard Restaurant and Media Award winners, including Vietnam Restaurant; Inquirer critic

Craig LaBan and photographer Jessica Griffin; and authors David Suro, Gary Paul Nabhan and Danny Childs.