INTRODUCING THIS YEAR’S NEFS KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

SUNDAY KEYNOTE

STEPHEN KAUFER
PRESIDENT & CEO,
TRIP ADVISOR, INC.

MONDAY KEYNOTE

CHEF ROBERT IRVINE
HOST, FOOD NETWORK’S
RESTAURANT IMPOSSIBLE

TUESDAY KEYNOTE

JOHN TAFFER
HOST AND EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, BAR RESCUE

For more keynote details, click here.

DON’T MISS THIS YEAR’S LINEUP OF INCREDIBLE SPEAKERS, CENTER STAGE CULINARY DEMOS & IMPRESSIVE EDUCATION SESSIONS!

2018 NEFS has keynote presentations from the best and the brightest in our industry covering business, culinary and mixology. From the business aspect, come listen to Stephen Kaufer, President and CEO of TripAdvisor, arguably the most relevant new application to drive customers to your establishment. On the culinary side, it gets no better than Chef Robert Irvine, host of Restaurant Impossible. His no nonsense approach to success in the restaurant business will engage and entertain all! And on Tuesday, don’t miss Jon Taffer, host of Bar Rescue, who’s insights have helped thousands of bar programs reach their full potential, one guest at a time.

(Continued on page 4)
Dear Members,

Well the champagne corks have popped, the graffiti has been swept up, and we can now officially tie a bow and close the calendar on 2017. While it did not approach the prior several years in terms of business growth for most, it still was nonetheless a pretty decent year. Many operators I have spoken with have been flat to modestly positive in year over year sales. That is the good news – but the cost of those sales is the truly challenging part of the story and will be a major obstacle as we approach 2018 and beyond.

For the first time I certainly can recall, food costs are now at least equal to and in many cases exceeded by the cost of labor in our restaurants. In well run restaurants, those two costs likely exceed 70 cents of every dollar we take in. The remaining thirty cents has to pay for everything else, from the cost of the building, utilities, insurance, advertising and so on, this leaves an ever tightening bottom line, as we know all too well.

We are going to need to come together again in 2018, as the legislative agenda is very challenging to our industry once more. Minimum wage, or as we have started referring to it more appropriately as, “Starting Wage”, is before us through two different roads. Outside of our industry labor activists have gathered enough signatures to support a ballot question which would raise the wage from the highest in the nation $11.00 to $15.00 over 4 years in equal installments starting on 1/1/19. In addition, the tip wage would rise to $9.00 in the same time, and both would be indexed thereafter. Meanwhile, in the State House, a bill before us would also raise the minimum wage to $15.00, while eliminating the tip wage altogether.

At the same time, we are faced with the possibility of the first in the nation Paid Family Medical Leave. Again, on this front both roads of the ballot and through the State House are also being traveled with slightly different variations of the same legislation.

We already know, the state of MA has begun a “temporary” healthcare assessment to all employees. More important to employers, are employees who receive subsidized care through Mass Health. The Tier Two assessment would max out at $750 per year on the first $15,000 of each employee’s earnings.

The MRA is completing its “Costs of Labor Toolkit” for members to be able to reference and use in communicating with our elected officials about the effects of both of these new legislative efforts. We will need a concerted effort once again, as our efforts in 2013 were partially successful is reducing the proposed dramatic increase or possible elimination of the tip wage.

Thanks in advance for your assistance. Working collaboratively, I am faithful that #TogetherWeWin.

Pat Lee
MRA Chairman
plee@themassrest.org

The nomination process is open for the 2018 MRA Annual Awards. Please click here for the link. The awards dinner will be held on Monday, February 26, 2018 at The Seaport Hotel, Boston.
REGULATIONS FOR EMAC SUPPLEMENT

Unemployment rate notices for 2019 will include information regarding temporary increase in EMAC and EMAC Supplement. Operators and business owners will be receiving 2019 UI rate notices in the next couple of weeks. Click here to see the notice, which details the changes in the EMAC calculation for the next two years.

As a reminder, Massachusetts is using a 2-tiered approach that builds off of the existing employer medical assistance contribution (EMAC) to cover the cost of public coverage for employed individuals.

The employer contribution will sunset at the end of calendar year 2019.

Collections under both tiers would be administered by the Department of Unemployment Assistance, the agency responsible for administering the existing EMAC.

TIER 1

• Broad based, raising the current EMAC rate from 0.34% to 0.51% of annual wages, up to the annual wage cap of $15,000.
• Applies to all employers currently subject to EMAC (employers with 6 or more employees).
• Raises the maximum per-employee contribution rate from $51 to $77

TIER 2

• Introduces a targeted payment that would require employers to pay an additional 5% of annual wages for each non-disabled employee on public coverage, up to the annual wage cap of $15,000.
• Would apply to all employees with non-disabled employees on MassHealth (not in premium assistance) or subsidized Connector coverage (ConnectorCare). This will not include employees who have coverage from other sources (spouse, parent, etc)
• Would result in an annual maximum per employee contribution rate of $750.

Click here to see notice, click here to see regulations.

MINIMUM WAGE RATES REMINDER

Minimum wage rates are unchanged January 1, 2018. Click here to see the rates.

TIP-POOLING REGULATION DOES NOT APPLY TO MASSACHUSETTS

There has been a lot of attention recently regarding a change in how DOL regulates tip-pooling.

Unfortunately, this regulation will have no impact in Massachusetts.

The Massachusetts’ tips law still states that only employees that meet definition of wait staff employee can share in a tip pool. The headlines of these articles are misleading as it stems from a ruling and subsequent lawsuits within states that have no tip credit.
2018 NEFS LINEUP (continued from cover page)

Check out the amazing cooking demos on Center Stage delivered by the region’s best chefs including Justin Walker from Cape Neddick Inn, Collin Lynch from Bar Mezzana, Kevin O’Donnell and Michael Lomardi from SRV, Carolyn Johnson at Mooncusser and Rich Silver from The White Horse Tavern.

And this year we throw in a twist, each chef will be accompanied by one of the region’s best mixologist to pair a cocktail with the chefs offering. Expect great creations from Christiano Souza from Saltie Girl, James Cleland of UNI, Jordan McCusker from The Smoke Shop, Tenzin Samdo from Café ArtScience, Eli Shapiro from The Rail Stop and Ryan Hidecavage from The White Horse Tavern.

At our Ed Quarters and Tech Pavillion, get indepth industry knowledge from the best in the hospitality business with 15 incredible sessions that include T.J. Schier from SMART Restaurant Group, Keith Harmon from Tres Gatos, Heather Leisman from Trip Advisor and Ed Doyle from RealFood Consulting.

To see the whole lineup from the Ed Quarters, click here and for the Tech Pavillion, click here.

NEFS KIDS CAMP

No one under the age of 18 is allowed on the NEFS floor. So, NEFS invites busy parents to drop their children at Kids Camp, our exclusive onsite children’s experience.

KIDS CAMP HOURS: Sunday, February 25th and Monday, February 26th, 10am - 5pm
Tuesday, February 27 10am - 3pm

Click here for more info.

The Toast - New England Food Show After Party

Save the Date
THE TOAST
NEW ENGLAND FOOD SHOW AFTER PARTY
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 25th @ 5PM

—— THE ———

GRAND

58 Seaport Blvd Suite 300
Boston, MA

Tickets will be available soon!
More details to come.

Live performance by Kara DioGuardi

Toast Event Sponsors:
Fun Facts about Val’s Restaurant & Lounge:

1. Val’s is the longest run restaurant, solely owned and operated by a woman in Massachusetts.

2. Valerie James stars in the feature film documentary, A Fine Line, exploring why only 6% of head chefs and restaurant owners are women. She is in the company of world-renowned chefs such as Lidia Bastianich, Dominique Crenn, Barbara Lynch and many more. For more info, go to www.AFineLineMovie.com

3. Val’s Restaurant is nearing its 30 year anniversary.

4. Val’s employs 60 team members.

5. Longest standing employee is 20 years.
MRA WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

The holidays brought a new face to the MRA Family, as we welcomed Jennifer Almeida as our new Director of Education. Jen was born and raised locally and graduated from Bridgewater State University. While attending school, she worked at two member restaurants, the Charlie Horse Saloon as well as The Fireside. Jen has a theatrical and singing background and has performed in numerous regional productions. In addition, she has been a music teacher in two different school districts. She has a passion for education and hospitality, and is a terrific addition to our team. Feel free to reach out to her at jalmeida@themassrest.org or 508-573-4192 and join us in welcoming her to the MRA and the MRA Educational Foundation.

JENNIFER ALMEIDA
Director of Education

2018 SERVSAFE TRAINING SCHEDULE

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<td>MRA</td>
<td>3-7 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 7th &amp; 21st</td>
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<td>MRA</td>
<td>4-8 pm</td>
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SEXUAL HARASSMENT AWARENESS TRAINING

The MRA is offering Sexual Harassment Awareness Training in 2018. This course will be an interactive session designed for restaurant owners and managers, in which attendees will receive handouts and quizzes, and participate in case studies for discussion in small groups.

WHERE - MRA Office: 160 East Main Street, Suite 2, Westborough, MA. 01581
CLICK HERE FOR DIRECTIONS.
WHEN - Mon. January 29th 10-2pm MRA Office
PRICE - $150 for members. $250 for non-members.
TO REGISTER, CLICK HERE.
**NEW ENGLAND FOOD SHOW EDUCATION SESSIONS**

New England Food Show education programming keeps you up-to-date in a swiftly changing industry. From technology to workforce development to culinary trends and more, we’ll help you sharpen your competitive edge.

**FIVE PROFIT-GENERATING ESSENTIALS FOR POS SYSTEMS:** Point of Sale (POS) technology continues to evolve from electronic cash registers to cloud-based systems. Learn five steps that will help turn your POS system into a profit-driver.

**HOW TO DOUBLE YOUR LOYAL REGULARS:** How can you win new customers, boost sales and outsmart the competition? Learn a proven formula from an operator who successfully leverages automated marketing strategies and trains other business owners to do the same.

**CANNABIS AND THE CULINARY FRONTIER:** Several states in New England have voted to legalize cannabis for either medical or recreational use. Learn about legal issues, responsible consumption, and cooking techniques from a leading chef in the cannabis culinary movement.

**BUILDING A TEAM OF TOP PERFORMERS:** It’s no secret that finding and retaining great employees is a big challenge. Learn how to attract the best employees and discover how culture, values, and other unique and meaningful benefits can make you the employer of choice.

**FINANCIAL TOOLS TO LET YOU DO WHAT YOU LOVE:** You didn’t open a restaurant because you love financial statements. Four restaurant operators share their tips for systems that will free you from the drudgery of financial business and let you focus on your great food and guest experience. Check back [here](#) for detailed schedule.

**NOW ACCEPTING 2018 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS**

Spread the word to culinary students that scholarship applications are now available online. *GET THEM IN EARLY!*

**Deadline to apply: April 7, 2018**

Click [here](#) to fill out the short contact form. After submitting this info, you will have access to the 2018 application.

**SAVE THE DATE:**

**2018 PROSTART STUDENT INVITATIONAL**

Tuesday, March 6, 2018
Mechanics Hall, Worcester
WELCOME NEW MRA MEMBERS!

FOOD & BEVERAGE OPERATORS

Craft Table & Bar
107 Porter Street
Boston, MA 02128
Mike Winthrop

Gianni Figs Ristorante
6 Elm Street
South Deerfield, MA 01373
Gianni Calabrese
(413) 350-5940

The Greyhound Tavern
39 Broad Street
Bridgewater, MA 02324
(508) 982-8006

Molinari’s
789 Adams St
Boston, MA 02124
Jeff Cincotta
(617) 825-1700

BUSINESS PARTNERS

Staffing Services(Hospitality)
Restaurant Development Experts, LLC.
19 Jane Road
Marblehead, MA 01945
Larry Strain, CCIM
(770) 265-1237

ATTENTION MEMBERS:
Our new address is
160 East Main Street, Suite 2,
Westborough, MA 01581
Please update all records so we receive your communications in a timely manner. Thank you!

THANK YOU TO OUR 2018 ANNUAL SPONSORS

Massachusetts Restaurant Association
160 East Main Street, Suite 2, Westborough, MA 01581
Phone: (508) 303-9905   Fax: (508) 303-9985   www.themassrest.org

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