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**FOUNDATION RECOGNIZES FOOD AWARDEES COMMITTED TO PROMOTING
FOOD ACCESS, ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CULTURAL TRADITION**

SAN FRANCISCO— Promoting food access, environmental sustainability and cultural tradition are priorities of the five individuals and one duo receiving this year's Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation Awards in Food, announced today.

The Foundation celebrates three individuals who independently are addressing work at the intersection of food and waters, two individuals (who aren't direct collaborators) working in the tradition of Gullah Geechee cuisine and one duo who are work-life partners farming together and sharing an award.

- **BJ Dennis** is a chef and one of the only cultural preservationists of Gullah and Geechee foodways — cultures that are disappearing because of gentrification, land loss and environmental challenges.
- **Dune Lankard**, an Eyak Athabaskan leader and founder of Native Conservancy, renews Indigenous food traditions of harvesting, processing and sharing nourishment with Native elders while advancing regenerative Indigenous-led ocean farming and guiding future generations.
- **Imani Black**, an oyster farmer and aquaculturist, founded Minorities in Aquaculture to increase representation and leadership of women of color in sustainable aquaculture.
- **Maria Gonzalez and Rudy Jimenez**, partners of Green Thumb Farms on California's Central Coast, grow sustainable produce and support a multi-faceted network of community care, education and intergenerational resilience.
- **Raimundo Espinoza** founded Conservación ConCiencia to support local fishers with science-driven practices to improve marine ecosystems, food sovereignty and economic resilience in Puerto Rico.
- **Valerie Erwin** is a chef and activist who works at the intersection of food and culture to spark dialogue and understanding about the rich grains and techniques present in American foods that trace back to Gullah Geechee traditions.

This cohort of winners marks the Foundation's third year supporting individuals whose hands-on work demonstrates impact, creativity and the potential to substantially advance the field and the broader food ecosystem. The awardees are at a critical point in their career when the award would be catalytic. Maxwell/Hanrahan sought nominees committed to nutrition, education and access; environmental sustainability; and/or craft, cultural knowledge and tradition. Awardees build and celebrate community collaborations as they connect people with land and water, food systems, and the cultures around specific approaches to food harvesting and cooking. These one-time, unrestricted awards provide both recognition and monetary support for the work of these coalition builders, researchers, farmers, scientists, chefs and activists.

The Awards in Food is one of several Foundation programs that support innovative individuals. Maxwell/Hanrahan supports people who explore and ask through fieldwork in natural sciences, create and captivate as they promote mastery in craft, teach and try as they support students in public education, and conserve and connect as they encourage care for our food systems and natural world. Learn more at www.maxwell-hanrahan.org.

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