



Governor Hogan's 2022 Buy Local Cookout

PRESS KIT

2022 CHEFS BIOS

- **Nashville Hot Catfish Tacos**

- **Chef: Johntay Bedingfield, La Food Marketa (Baltimore County)**

Johntay Bedingfield is the chef at La Food Marketa in Pikesville. Johntay spent his early career as a childcare worker before entering the culinary field. Cooking professionally for the past 9 years, he passionately enjoys cooking heartwarming food. Starting on the ground floor as a line cook, Johntay advanced quickly through the restaurant hierarchy. Competition isn't new to Chef Johntay, in 2017 he won Maryland's Farm to Chef event and in 2019 competed on Food Network's Chopped and took first place!

- **Producer:**

Richfield Farm- *Carroll County*

- **Chesapeake Blue Catfish Ceviche with Shrimp, Peaches, Cilantro, Red Onions and Jalapeno**

- **Chefs Angel and Martin Fajardo, Botanas Fajardo (Anne Arundel County)**

Botanas Fajardo was started in 2013 in Honolulu, Hawaii by Angel Fajardo. Botanas is not their name. It's actually the Spanish word for appetizer/snack. All the food they make is easy to eat while mingling and most of all tasty! A military spouse with a love for cooking, Angel started by making her most craved appetizer....Queso Blanco. They would take orders and deliver fresh chips and queso to customers across the island of Honolulu. Ten orders a week turned to 40...50...60...100+ and just kept growing. Unfortunately, medical issues with their daughter led to the business taking a brief hiatus while they tended to their daughter's medical needs. Once she was better, the Navy moved Angel and Martin to beautiful Annapolis. After about 18 months in Annapolis, the Severn Sailing Association reached out and asked if they would be interested in running their on-site snack bar. Within months they quickly expanded the menu to include local Mexican favorites like burritos, tacos, quesadillas. As Angel became closer to her customer base, she started offering desserts, tamales, soups and poke bowls. The following in Annapolis has been amazing. The local restaurant owners and residents have shown overwhelming support for the business and their family. In 2021 they were awarded the Best Fish Tacos in Annapolis prize by Peake Social.

- **Producer:**

Baughers Orchards and Farm - *Carroll County*

- **Crispy Blackened Catfish w/ Local Corn & Bacon Succotash, Chesapeake Jasmine Rice, Local Peach Chutney & Chipotle Aioli**

- **Chef: Jonathan Hicks, Cozy Cafe (Howard County)**

Chef Jonathan Hicks is a Maryland native, who went to school at Johnson and Wales University Rhode Island. After some time in the New England area, he has returned home and has been making a name for himself back in Maryland for the last decade. Chef John loves to compete!

- **Producers:**
One Straw Farm- *Baltimore County*
Zahradka Farm- *Baltimore County*

- **Savory Watermelon Gazpacho with Smoked Cheese, Local Tomato, Local Cucumber and Lime**

- **Chef: Keema Johnson, Keema Cooks**
Chef Keema is a professionally trained chef, recipe developer, and culinary historian. Her culinary experience includes working in fine dining restaurants, culinary production team for a James Beard Award Winning television series, and owning her own private chef business. Chef Keema is an avid advocate for food allergy awareness, as well as, women’s inclusion and mentorship in the culinary industry. She enjoys spreading the knowledge of food history and food allergy awareness to our young and the young at heart. Her motto is “Keep It Tasteful” and she sincerely believes that “All is fair in love and food and love for food.” Born and raised in New Jersey, The Garden State, she left home in 1999 to serve in the Navy at eighteen years old, as a Signals Intelligence Analyst / Cryptologist. Here is also where she met her husband; together they have three beautiful children and have settled in Maryland. Upon completing her time in the military, she transitioned into a civilian contractor as an Intelligence Analyst. Some years later, after discovering that one of their children has severe food allergies and with the encouragement of her husband, Keema decided to take her passion of cooking to the next level. She graduated with honors from culinary school and began working at some of the best fine dining restaurants in the DMV area. Later, she started her own private chef company and hasn’t looked back. She is also a proud of Just Call Me Chef, an organization that supports sisterhood of black women chefs

- **Producers:**
Deep Cove Farm-*Anne Arundel County*
Schillinger's Farm-*Queen Anne's County*

- **Chesapeake Blue & Bacon Rose Wraps**

- **Chef: Katriel Menendez, Argentine Chef**
Chef Katriel Menendez began cooking for his family at an early age, learning from his grandparents how to cook traditional dishes from Spain and Italy, as well as cuisine from his first home, Argentina. As he built his career, Katriel traveled around the world studying a variety of cultural foods from five continents – areas like Patagonia, Dominican Republic, Dubai, Thailand, Senegal, France, Spain, and Italy. Katriel, who now calls the United States home, believes everyone can cook healthy food with worldly flavor. That’s why in 2017 he started Argentine Chef, LLC and began offering American families Nativo Condiments & Seasonings: handcrafted, signature blends of herbs and spices. He hosts cooking classes regularly for all ages as well as events centered around Argentine culture and cuisine. His latest project is Tango Pastry, which is a bakery offering traditional Argentinian pastries and comfort food, right here in the DMV.

- **Producer:**
Pleasant Hill Produce - *Frederick County*

- **Pescado A Lo Macho**

- **Chefs: Martha Quispe, Caliente Grill (Anne Arundel County)**
Martha Quispe from Cuzco, Peru has been the Chef at Caliente Grill since March 16, 2020, and

has been at Caliente Grill since Oct. 2016. Chef Martha grew up learning to cook the traditional Peruvian cuisine; at a young age she moved from her natal Cuzco to Lima, Peru. She is passionate to share her culinary skills and learn about other authentic Latin cuisine as she has accomplished with Salvadorean and Mexican dishes served at Caliente Grill. Chef Martha is a member of PACHA - Peruvian American Chef Association, and was recognized for participating in the celebration of the Bicentennial of Peru in the Maryland State House. Chef Martha enjoys the outdoors, and spending time with friends and family

- o **Producer:**
Good Luck Farm-Anne Arundel County

- **Chicken Fried Deviled Eggs**

- o **Chef: Zack Trabbold, The Local (Harford County)**
Chef Zack Trabbold earned a degree in Culinary Arts from Walnut Hill College in Philadelphia. His kitchen experience began at the early age of 13, starting with prep and line cook positions, and has since evolved to sous chef and Executive chef positions. He's traveled the country, opened several restaurants, and won numerous awards, and currently serves as Executive Chef of University of Maryland Medical Centers. He now owns and operates The Local in Fallston, Maryland.
- o **Producers:**
Grandview Farm- Harford County
Family Farm- Harford County
Brad's Farm- Harford County
Hummingbird Farms- Caroline County

- **West Baltimore Peanut Stew**

- o **Chef: Greg Brown, The Land of Kush (Baltimore City)**
Gregory Brown was born in what might be considered the typical African American household in Baltimore. Gregory grew up eating a typical American diet. Filled with fried highly processed foods, very little concentration on vegetables and nutrition. Gregory decided to one day challenge this pattern of living by changing his way of living. After listening to a KRS song he began researching a new way of thinking, a new way of living, a new way of eating. Gregory began a journey of spiritual expression which eventually led him to become a vegan; then years later creating the idea for opening the revolutionary vegan soul food restaurant called The Land of Kush. Since then Gregory has pushed himself to influence others in his family community, and broader environment to change their way of looking at life through food. Along with his wife Najjha, he's not only successfully grown The Land of Kush but has done numerous outreach in the African American community, speaking to young and old about the benefits of changing their diet and concepts of health and nutrition. Gregory has been a speaker, teacher, mentor, and leader to many and continues the fight for better ways of living by teaching the plant-based lifestyle. Gregory is a board member of the Black Veg Society. Gregory, also, sits on the board of the Visit Baltimore Education and Training Foundation.
- o **Producers:**
Strength To Love 2 - Baltimore City
The Greener Garden - Baltimore City
The Plantation- Baltimore City
Whitelock Community Farm - Baltimore City

- **Grilled Veggie Quesadilla with Avocado Crema and Farm Fresh Salsa**

- **Chef: Aaron Dixon,**

Aaron is a local, private Chef to the DMV area. He was born and raised in Baltimore and attended Baltimore International College for a stint.

- **Producer:**

Third Way Farm- *Harford County*

- **Vintage Family Farms Tomato Dashi with Succotash and Slippery Dumplings**

- **Chef: Gregory James, The Inn at Perry Cabin (Talbot County)**

With an impressive culinary career that spans 25 years and both sides of the country, Chef James wholeheartedly calls the Eastern Shore of Maryland his home. He has brought sophistication and precision to the culinary programming of STARS at Inn at Perry Cabin. A devout advocate of watermen and farmers, Chef James brings the rich bounty of the Chesapeake Bay to life by sourcing locally. He also just won Chef of the Year for 2022 from the Restaurant Association of Maryland.

- **Producers:**

Vintage Family Farms- *Caroline County*

Sweet Corn- *Caroline County*

- **Summer Spaetzle**

- **Chef: William Low, Rathskeller (Howard County)**

After taking over the Rathskeller in Elkridge at the height of the pandemic, Chef Low became the "reluctant chef." He had no previous kitchen experience. Faced with no staff, no money, and an increasing demand, Chef Low was forced to try his hand in the kitchen. He had to channel years of restaurant experience, friendships with chefs, countless hours of watching food shows, and numerous trials and errors. Being a reluctant chef means that he likes utilizing simple cooking techniques and uncomplicated ingredients. Chef Low likes to partner with Myrtle Woods Farm, a family owned organic farm just across the street from his restaurant.

- **Producer:**

Myrtle Woods Farm- *Howard County*

- **Southern Sweet Potato and Kale Soup**

- **Chef: Que Richardson, Creole Soul Restaurant (Baltimore City)**

Chef Shunquita "Que" Richardson, co-owner of Creole Soul located in Baltimore, is a 24 year military veteran whose New Orleans and Atlanta roots have sparked a food craze in her city. With her famous Oyster Po'Boys, Seafood Gumbo, Mamie's Shrimp & Grits all made with her number one ingredient...Love! Her moniker is bringing families back to the dinner table one bite at a time! "Spice for your Life, Food for your Soul"! 🍴

- **Producers:**

Black Bottom Farm Collective - *Anne Arundel*

- **Pupusas with Curtido and Aji Verde**

- **Chef: Catina Smith, Just Call Me Chef (Baltimore City)**

Catina Smith is a Baltimore based chef, cooking for over 16 years in all facets of the culinary industry. She is the founder of Just Call Me Chef and co-owner of Our Time kitchen.

- **Producers:**

Liberty Delight Farm - Baltimore County

McCarthy Farm - Caroline or Crooked Fence in Baltimore?

- **Acorn Squash Ravioli**

- **Chefs: Nicole and Brian Youse, Crossroads Bistro (Baltimore County)**

Crossroads Bistro is owned and operated by two food lovers, Brian and Nicole, who are passionate about providing the local area with quality food at a great price! Nicole Youse is a trained culinarian from The Pennsylvania School of Culinary Arts. Apart from their shared passion for food, Brian and Nicole, now share the same last name as of October 2016! Prior to Crossroads, Nicole also worked at The Greenbrier as an Apprentice, giving a 120% and multitasking is no challenge for her. Having a knack for turning “any drab classic into a mouth-watering favorite” she can make any Wedding or Event a day or night to remember!

Brian is a trained culinarian from The Pennsylvania School of Culinary Arts. Prior to Crossroads, Brian worked at The Greenbrier Resort as the Lead Chef in the Main Dining Room. Having prepared fine dining cuisine for 400, Brian feels confident that he can take on the truck’s or the restaurant’s lunch or dinner rush, and any of your catering needs! Specializing in “taking food to FlavorTown!” He is looking forward to sharing all his favorite recipes with you!

- **Producers:**

Jones Family Farm- *Harford County*

Broom's Bloom- *Harford County*

- **Vegan Carrot Hot Dogs with Chimichurri and Pickled Red Onions**

- **Chef: Heather Smith, Swill (Baltimore City)**

Baltimore native, Chef Heather Smith, began her culinary career in Baltimore’s most exclusive clubs and restaurants. After beginning a Private Chef Service, traveling with clients, Chef Smith achieved a long-held goal to teach children. After over five years in education, the opportunity for travel presented itself, and Chef Smith headed to South America. In Bahia, Brazil, she had what she describes as a defining moment of clarity regarding her life, career path and purpose. Like many people from the African Diaspora, Chef Smith acknowledges not truly “knowing” where her ancestors were from. Through her culinary art, she studies the spices, preparations, celebrations and culture of food on the Continent of Africa and beyond. As part of her practice she’s present and open to any preparations, rituals, feelings that stand out as an ancestral memory. She bringing her expertise and stories to each dish and the community at large. Presently, Chef Smith has a cult-like following of food lovers and she continues to bring her flavor and style to pop ups and catering events.

- **Peaches and Cream Tacos**

- **Chef: Amber Croom, And 4 Dessert Confectionary (Baltimore City)**

Classically trained at The Culinary Institute of America, Amber Croom has worked with, and learned from great chefs throughout her 11 years of experience - mastering her craft and gaining an appreciation for pushing boundaries in search of the extraordinary. Originally from Birmingham, Alabama, Croom started off as a Naval Architecture & Marine Engineer in New Orleans, LA. After Hurricane Katrina changed the course of her path, Croom decided to go to culinary school to pursue her true passion of baking. In 2011, After receiving an internship with Rimini Gelato and Chocolates in Vail, Colorado, she was given her first job - where she learned the fundamentals of artisan gelato and chocolates. A few years later she went on to be the confectioner for Silver Sea, the acclaimed cruise line known for luxury and opulence. In 2014 she then moved back to Birmingham, AL to oversee the pastry department at Bellini's Ristorante and Bar. In 2016, Croom competed on season 3 of Food Network's Holiday Baking Championship. She then left the deep south to open the Sagamore Pendry Hotel in Baltimore, MD. Croom then was offered a chance to return to her first love, chocolate, as the Head Chocolatier at the largest catering company in Washington, D.C. Now, Croom is all-in on her own brand, And 4 Dessert. Famous for decadent visuals and innovative flavor palettes, And 4 Dessert was featured on the inaugural season of Food Network's Chopped Sweets where she came out a champion. Her dream with And 4 Dessert is to provide artisanal pastries and chocolates, private chef services, catering, consulting and teaching on a grander scale.

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