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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## **MEALS ON WHEELS SAN FRANCISCO RAISES \$3.3 MILLION DURING 32<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL STAR CHEFS & VINTNERS GALA**

*FUNDS RAISED WILL PROVIDE 640,000 MEALS FOR HOMEBOUND SENIORS*



**San Francisco, May 21, 2019** – Meals on Wheels San Francisco (MOWSF) is pleased to announce that \$3.3 million was raised by supporters during the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Star Chefs & Vintners Gala held at Fort Mason Center Festival Pavilion on May 19. The income from this gala is enough to provide 640,000 nourishing meals to homebound seniors in San Francisco and represents approximately 22 percent of MOWSF's \$15 million annual budget.

"We are honored to have Northern California's most acclaimed chefs and vintners come together for one evening of culinary excellence to support our mission to fight against senior hunger and isolation in San Francisco," said Meals on Wheels San Francisco CEO and Executive Director, Ashley McCumber. "The level of generosity in the room in general, but especially from our Board and Honorary Board, was awe-inspiring. We are so grateful for everyone's support of our mission."

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The weekend's stormy weather did not dampen the spirits of more than 900 guests who gathered inside for a VIP reception and walk-around tasting of culinary masterpieces, incredible wines, and hand-crafted cocktails prepared and served by 150 of the region's best [chefs](#) and [vintners](#). During the VIP Reception, the well-heeled crowd perused over silent auction items and entered their chances at winning a two-year lease on a 2019 Mercedes-Benz GLC350E plug-in hybrid.

Guests attending the dinner portion of the evening enjoyed a four-course dinner that included a plated dessert. The lively Fund-a-Route and live auction generated \$2.19 million. During the evening, MOWSF Board President and Capital Campaign Co-Chair Russ Flynn, and MOWSF Board Member and Capital Campaign Co-Chair José Allen, addressed the audience and unveiled a 3D video virtual tour of the new state-of-the-art kitchen and production facility. They announced that 80-percent of the funds have been secured for the \$41 million kitchen and construction will take place this summer with an estimated opening by the last quarter of 2020. The new kitchen will allow MOWSF to expand its capacity from producing up to 8,000 meals a day currently, to the ability to produce 20,000 meals daily to meet the need. Allen challenged the audience to support the capital campaign and join in the mission of feeding homebound seniors in San Francisco for generations to come.

"Here's the simple truth – with no new kitchen, we will have no expanded ability to meet the wave of seniors and need we now confront," explained McCumber. The new kitchen will secure meals for vulnerable seniors in San Francisco for the next 30 years.

The population of seniors in San Francisco, many of whom have little-to-no resources to meet their basic needs, is expected to grow by 23 percent by the end of 2020. According to a recent Department of Aging and Adult Services report, nearly 61-percent of the estimated 136,000 people over 65 living in San Francisco do not have enough money to meet their basic needs to include purchasing food.

MOWSF has a long history of providing meals and social work services that help thousands of seniors live independently and maintain their general health daily. Within the past decade, the meals delivery program has grown from 527,000 meals to 2.1 million meals in 2018.

Excitement filled the dining room as guests raised their paddles to bid on 17 live auction lots that included exclusive culinary experiences, exotic overseas getaways, and wine packages. The top 5 items raised a total of \$612,000 and included:

- A once-in-a-lifetime Buy-in Dinner with 8 James Beard Nominees
- Luxury Winter Holiday Vacation in St. Barth
- 4 nights and a personally guided trip in Italy with Gala Chef Chair, Chef Nancy Oakes
- A modern Morocco in-home dinner for 8 prepared by Michelin-Starred Chef Mourad Lahlou
- Evening in Napa at BOND with dinner for 8 prepared by Chef Laurent Gras of Saison

Special thanks to this year's Diamond-Star sponsors First Republic Bank and Silicon Valley Bank as well as all of the [event sponsors](#), patrons, and this year's group of chefs and vintners organized by Gala Chef Chair, Chef Nancy Oakes, who gave generously of their time, culinary talents, and shared passion to the MOWSF mission.

### **About Meals on Wheels San Francisco:**

Since 1970, Meals on Wheels San Francisco (MOWSF) has provided seniors residing in the City with what they need to live independent and dignified lives – nutritious meals, professional social work services including wellness checks, and a friendly visitor. MOWSF can deliver two meals daily to senior clients, something no other program does in San Francisco. In 2018, staff and volunteers delivered 2.1 million meals to 4,700 seniors and adults with disabilities – that's approximately 6,000 meals a day on average. Learn how you can get involved at [MOWSF.org](#).

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