

ISLANDWIDE

Top chefs help fight LI hunger

9 will create unique dinners to raise funds for food bank

BY OLIVIA WINSLOW
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Nine acclaimed Long Island chefs have come together to form “Chefs Against Hunger,” a unique dinner series to raise money for Long Island Cares — The Harry Chapin Food Bank at a time when, advocates say, hundreds of thousands of Long Islanders are food insecure.

“There’s currently 313,880 food insecure Long Islanders, based on our own studies,” said Kaylin Wasilchuk, Long Island Cares’ corporate philanthropy manager.

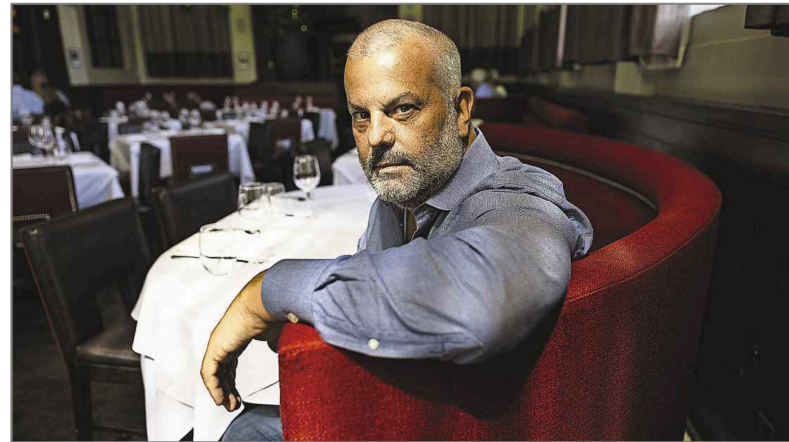
Long Island Cares is “satisfying a need on Long Island,” said Michael Bohlsen, who is spearheading the chefs’ campaign. He is co-owner, with his

brother Kurt, of the Bohlsen Restaurant Group. One of their Islip venues — Tellers Next Door, an event space adjacent to Tellers: An American Chop-house — will be hosting the fundraising dinners in October and November.

“Long Island is an expensive place to live,” Bohlsen, a member of Long Island Cares board of directors, said on Friday. “People sometimes have to choose between rent and food.” Those in need, he said, “come from all different walks of life, all different ages, all different backgrounds. . . . A lot of them are gainfully employed. They are contributing members to Long Island society.” And yet, he said, “they are down on their luck and need a little help.”

This will be the second Chefs Against Hunger fundraiser for Long Island Cares, Bohlsen said.

“We actually did one in 2019, [a] Chefs Against Hunger dinner series. That was my first introduction to Long Island



Michael Bohlsen at Tellers Next Door in Islip, where he will host a “Chefs Against Hunger” event.

NEWSDAY/ALEANDRA VILLA (OPPOSITE)

Cares,” Bohlsen said. That fundraiser brought in about \$25,000, he said. “Then the pandemic hit. This is the first time we’re doing it again.”

Bohlsen said other premier chefs on the Island were eager to help and were donating the food, the wine and their talents. They will be preparing special dinners on eight days spanning October and November with a ticketed price of \$195 per person. The dinners, served from 6:30 to 9 p.m., will seat 30, he said.

The chefs who are on tap to create what officials say will be unique, multicourse meals paired with wine, and their partner wineries, are: John Fraser, of North Fork Table & Inn, and Macari Vineyards on Oct. 6; Stephen Gallagher, the Trattoria Restaurant, and Anthony

Nappa Wines on Oct. 7; Ben Hoffman and Julio Genao, Prime: An American Kitchen & Bar, and Raphael Wine on Oct. 27; Thomas Gloster, Trahanas Hospitality, and Palmer Vineyards on Oct. 28.

And in November, the chefs and their partner wineries are: Eric LeVine, 317 Main Street, and RG/NY on Nov. 3; Gregg Lauletta, Louie’s Prime Steak & Seafood, and Bedell Cellars on Nov. 4; Armond Joseph, Leon 1909, and Channing Daughters Winery, Nov. 10; and Francis J. Derby, The Halyard, and McCall Wines, Nov. 11.

Gallagher, of Trattoria, said Friday: “I’m still working out the menu right now, but it’s going to be a five-course tasting menu paired with Anthony Nappa wines. It’s going to fea-

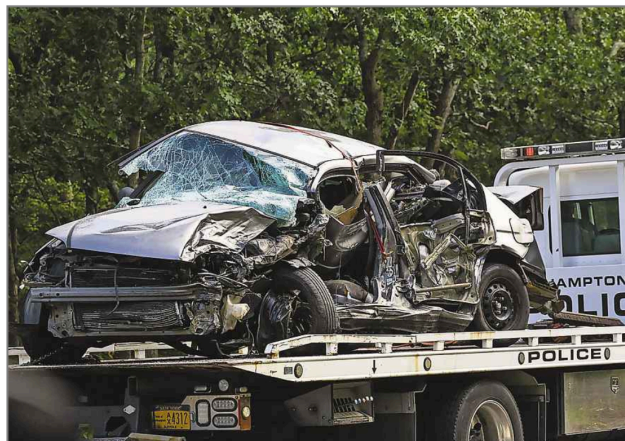
ture seasonal local ingredients.” He added, “Michael Bohlsen reached out to me and asked if I was interested in participating. He’s a pleasure to work with. . . . It’s a great cause and really good people involved.”

They hope to raise \$50,000 for the food bank, Bohlsen said.

The \$195 ticket price equates to 122 meals, Wasilchuk said. “When people buy a ticket, they’re essentially buying 122 meals for Long Islanders in need. If Michael achieves his full \$50,000 goal, that equates to 31,500 meals.”

She added, “we appreciate him [Bohlsen] and the chefs. . . . They’re all helping to put food on the table of Long Islanders.”

Tickets are available at the food bank’s website licares.org.



Police tow one of the vehicles involved in an early Sunday crash in Southampton.

RIVERHEAD MAN DEAD, TWO PASSENGERS CRITICAL AFTER FLANDERS CRASH: POLICE

A Riverhead man died and his two passengers were hospitalized in critical condition after a two-car crash early Sunday, the police said.

Juan Camilo Alape-Penuela, 23, was pronounced dead at the scene after the crash about 2:39 a.m. at Flanders and Birch Creek roads, Det. Sgt. Tim Wilson of the Southampton Town Police Department told Newsday on Sunday.

Alape-Penuela was driving a 2025 Honda four-door sedan when it collided with a 2025 Chevrolet Malibu, Wilson said. The crash occurred in Flanders.

One passenger in the Honda was ejected and first responders found the other trapped inside the vehicle, Wilson said. The passenger ejected, a female, was trans-

ported to Peconic Bay Medical Center in critical condition, according to Wilson.

Flanders Fire Department firefighters extricated the trapped passenger, also female, from the Honda before she was airlifted to Stony Brook University Hospital in critical condition, he said. The driver of the Malibu was treated for a head injury at Peconic Bay Medical Center.

Alape-Penuela and his two passengers graduated from Hampton Bays High School in 2022, Wilson said. Police did not release the names of the passengers or that of the Malibu driver.

Both vehicles sustained “catastrophic damage,” he said, adding that the crash investigation was ongoing.

— JOSHUA NEEDELMAN