

For Immediate Release

Contact: Gabrielle Langholtz  
(347) 668-4323 or [glangholtz@gmail.com](mailto:glangholtz@gmail.com)

## Vilcek Foundation Names Recipients of 2010 Annual Prizes Celebrating Immigrant Achievement

*Culinary Innovator José Andrés Honored; Jury Included Dan Barber, Ruth Reichl  
and Dana Cowin*

*Laos-Born Pastry Chef Varin Keokitvon Recognized for Demonstrating Creative  
Promise*

**New York, NY, March 1, 2010** - The Vilcek Foundation is pleased to announce the 2010 winners of its annual prizes honoring the contributions of foreign-born individuals in the United States.

The fifth annual Vilcek Prize for the Arts, this year bestowed in the field of culinary arts, is awarded to celebrated Spanish-born culinary pioneer José Andrés, credited with bringing Spanish culture to the forefront of American cuisine. Dana Cowin, editor-in-chief of *Food & Wine*, will present his award - \$50,000 and a sculpture by Stefan Sagmeister - at an awards presentation dinner on April 7. (For information on the 2010 Vilcek Prize in Biomedical Research, visit [www.vilcek.org](http://www.vilcek.org).)

The Vilcek Prizes epitomize the mission of the Vilcek Foundation, which raises awareness of the contributions of immigrants to the sciences, arts, and culture in the United States. "Immigration is central to the spirit of our country and has played a major role in securing America's leadership position in the world," said Dr. Jan T. Vilcek, President of the Foundation. "Our prizewinners are excellent examples of how immigrants continue to fuel innovation and enrich our society."

Chef Andrés's groundbreaking restaurants include *Jaleo* and *minibar by José Andrés* in Washington D.C., and *The Bazaar* in Los Angeles, while his PBS food-and-travel series *Made in Spain* brought the various regions of his beloved homeland to American culture. Chef Andrés's emphasis on the link between culture and cuisine reflects the Vilcek Foundation's values of enriching American society through the infusion of immigrant culture and talent. He also champions the role of chefs in the national discussion on hunger and nutrition issues.

Panels of experts selected the prizewinners after months of research and deliberation. The culinary arts jury included Cowin; Ruth Reichl, then-editor-in-chief of *Gourmet*; Dan Barber, executive chef and co-owner of *Blue Hill* and *Blue Hill at Stone Barns*; and Susan Ungaro, President of the James Beard Foundation.

The Foundation also recognizes the accomplishments of younger immigrants who have achieved notable success early in their careers. The 2010 Vilcek Prize for Creative Promise in the Arts is awarded to Laos-born pastry-chef Varin Keokitvon; a Chef Instructor for the Seattle-based

*FareStart*, he trains homeless and struggling individuals for careers in the culinary arts. Mr. Keokitvon will receive a \$25,000 cash award.

In addition, four finalists will each receive cash awards of \$5,000:

- Malaysia-born Michael Cheng, Director / Associate Professor of Culinology at Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall, MN.
- Japan-born Yoshinori Ishii, Tasting Menu Chef at *Restaurant Morimoto* in New York, NY.
- India-born Nandini Mukherjee, Chef/Owner of *Aamchi Pao*, New York, NY.
- Russia-born Boris Portnoy, Consulting Pastry Chef, *Candybar, California Walnut Commission*, Blue Bottle, San Francisco, CA.

The Foundation's fifth annual awards presentation dinner will be held at the Mandarin Oriental in New York City on Wednesday, April 7, 2010.

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## THE VILCEK FOUNDATION

The Vilcek Foundation aims to raise public awareness of the contributions of immigrants to the sciences, arts, and culture in the United States. The Foundation was established in 2000 by Jan and Marica Vilcek, immigrants from the former Czechoslovakia. The mission of the Foundation was inspired by the couple's respective careers in biomedical science and art history, as well as their personal experiences and appreciation for the opportunities offered them as newcomers to the United States. In addition to awarding annual prizes in the biomedical sciences and the arts, the Vilcek Foundation showcases the work of immigrant artists, filmmakers, and others, at its headquarters at 167 East 73rd Street, New York City. For more information about the Vilcek Foundation, the Vilcek Foundation Prizes, or the prizewinners, see [www.vilcek.org](http://www.vilcek.org).