

# White House honors sustainable seafood champions

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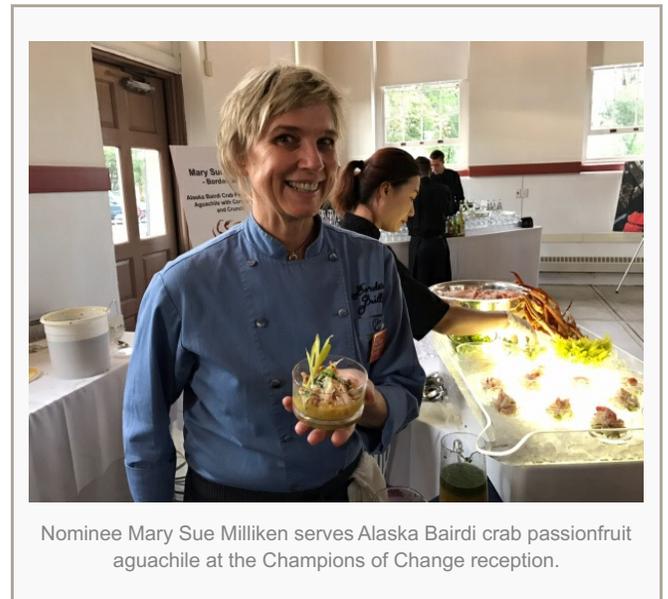
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This week, the White House named 12 “Champions of Change for Sustainable Seafood.” The awards recognize the people at the heart of America’s seafood industry—the fishermen, business owners, entrepreneurs, chefs and coastal leaders—who work tirelessly to support both the economic and ecological viability of our nation’s fisheries.

Thanks to their efforts and strong federal oversight, the U.S. remains [a global model of seafood sustainability](#).

Monterey Bay Aquarium is pleased to count several of the winners and nominees among our Seafood Watch Business and Restaurant Partners, [Blue Ribbon Task Force members](#) and other collaborators. Working with Seafood Watch, they help raise consumer awareness about seafood sustainability and push for improvements in the supply chain.



Nominee Mary Sue Milliken serves Alaska Bairdi crab passionfruit aguachile at the Champions of Change reception.

Congratulations to [all of the Champions of Change](#). We’d like to recognize several in particular:

- [Monica Jain](#) of Fish 2.0, a former Seafood Watch adviser;
- [Bun Lai](#) of Miya’s Sushi, a Seafood Watch Restaurant Partner;

- [Alan Lovewell](#) of Real Good Fish, a Seafood Watch Business Partner; and
- Brad Pettinger of the [Oregon Trawl Commission](#), a leader in West Coast groundfish management and a speaker at the Aquarium's 2015 Sustainable Foods Institute.

Also among this year's nominees are five chef members of Seafood Watch's Blue Ribbon Task Force, who act as spokespeople for sustainable seafood:

- [Michael Cimarusti](#), of Providence in Los Angeles;
- [William Disen](#), of The Market Place in Asheville;
- [Michael Leviton](#), formerly of Lumiere in Boston;
- [Mary Sue Milliken](#), of Border Grill Restaurants in Los Angeles and Las Vegas; and
- [Rick Moonen](#), of RM Seafood in Las Vegas.

These five Blue Ribbon chefs served distinctive, delicious dishes during a special reception for the Champions of Change in Washington, D.C., on Thursday, October 6.



William Disen presents a cooking demo at the Aquarium's Cooking for Solutions event.

Mary Sue presented Alaska Bairdi crab passionfruit aguachile with corn shoots and crunch. William served up his charcoal-grilled Gulf of Mexico red snapper with watermelon panzanella, heirloom cornbread croutons, queso fresco, tapenade and cucumber dressing. Michael Cimarusti put a French twist on West Coast seafood, with California rockfish bouillabaisse; while Rick went traditional East Coast, dishing his New England steamed dinner with Atlantic swordfish and horseradish cream. Michael Leviton unveiled the seasonal flavors of seared Atlantic scallop with smoked dogfish brandade, butternut squash, apples, cider reduction and sage oil.

If your mouth is watering, we don't blame you. But these selections aren't based on taste alone. Each one represents [a recent success story in U.S. seafood sustainability](#)—showcasing how strong, science-based management can revive fisheries and create new market opportunities.

The reception gave the Blue Ribbon Task Force chefs an opportunity to mingle with other seafood leaders, as well as with high-level Obama Administration officials like National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administrator Dr. Kathy Sullivan and Christy Goldfuss, managing director of the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

Dr. Sullivan recognized nominees and winners, thanking them for advancing the sustainable seafood movement and acting as ambassadors to the general public.



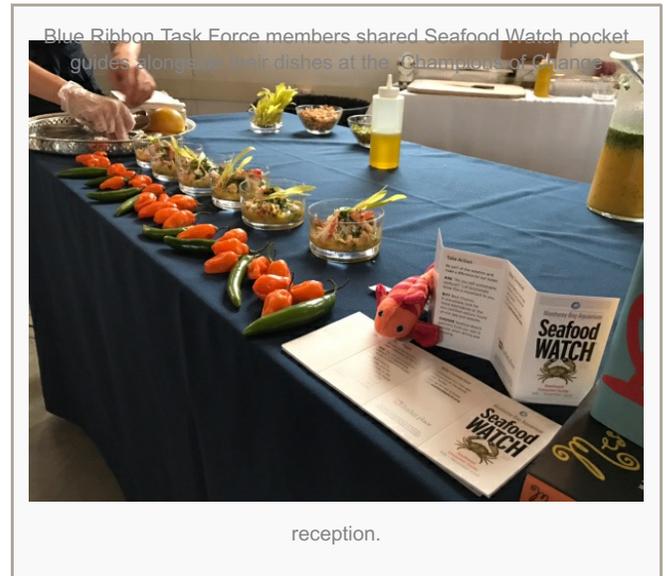
Rick Moonen chats with colleagues during a Blue Ribbon Task Force gathering at the Aquarium.

Administration officials and other attendees crowded around the chef stations, enjoying the chefs' creations. They chatted about how to build on the success of American seafood management to raise the bar for sustainability, both within the U.S. and internationally.

There's a lot to be done. While most U.S. seafood is produced sustainably, Americans import more than 90% of the fish and shellfish we consume.

The next Congress and Administration will play critical roles in improving the health and sustainable management of our ocean. There are no easy solutions to complex international challenges like overfishing and illegal fishing, but strong science and new tools, such as [seafood traceability](#), offer hope for change on the high seas.

The Aquarium's Seafood Watch program is playing an important role in all of these efforts. Our growing influence in the global seafood sustainability movement was recognized last month at [the State Department's Our Ocean Conference](#).



In close collaboration with our partners—including international businesses, [governments](#) and nonprofit organizations—the Aquarium is working to make real change on the water.

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Learn more about [our work for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture](#).

Featured image (left to right): Rick Moonen, Kathy Sullivan, William Dissen, Christy Goldfuss, Mary Sue Milliken, Michael Leviton and Michael Cimarusti celebrate at the Champions of Change reception in Washington, D.C. on October 6, 2016.