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Helping People,
Building Community

CHEF AKIRA HONORED FOR PHILANTHROPY WORK AT SAKE TASTING FUNDRAISER

LOS ANGELES, CA (May 22, 2008) – Chef Akira Hirose of Maison Akira will be honored for his life-long community involvement during the Little Tokyo Service Center's (LTSC) "La Vida Sake", a Sake & Food Tasting event - its third annual fundraiser and awards gala at the Petersen Automotive Museum. Chef Akira has been involved with LTSC and other community based organizations for over 12 years, and will be receiving the "Fu Re Ai" Award in recognition of his community involvement.

Born in Kyoto, Japan, Chef Akira has studied in France under world-renowned Chef Joel Robuchon. After working in France for eight years, he worked in Los Angeles and opened his first restaurant in Japan. And for nearly 10 years, Chef Akira has been creating a unique fine dining experience at his very own Maison Akira in Pasadena where he features the merging of French cuisine with a Japanese flair.

Voted Chef of the Year in 1998 by the Southern California French Chef Association, Chef Akira's philosophy of success is to not only aspire to maintain a successful business but to generously give back to the community. "To put it short & simple, I believe that in life, the most valuable thing is to be able to help others," says Chef Akira, "Being an immigrant myself, I would like to help those people that came to Los Angeles from another country after I moved here." To which he has participated in LTSC benefit events for over 12 years of which some notable ones include the L.A. Tofu Festival, Sake & Food Tasting, and the VIP reception for the premiere screening of Ken Watanabe's "Memories of Tomorrow".

Like Chef Akira's cuisine, "La Vida Sake" is the intersection of two cultures crossing: the Japanese culture and the Los Angeles Lowrider culture. Guests will cruise through sake stations from breweries in Northern Japan, which will be paired with food from top L.A. restaurants amidst over 20 candy painted lowriders. "We try to make our events fun as well as fund raising so we hope everyone who comes will have an enjoyable evening and also be secure in the knowledge that they are supporting a worthy organization," says Bill Watanabe, Executive Director of LTSC.

"La Vida Sake" is on May 22nd, awards reception at 6pm, main event at 7pm, Petersen Automotive Museum, 6060 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036 with sake generously provided by Mutual Trading Co. Hop to LTSC.org/sake for info and tickets or contact Jennifer at 213.473.1615.

LTSC Community Development Corporation is a non-profit community-based organization, which has been providing services for over 29 years to the greater Los Angeles community. Programs include but are not limited to: assistance for victims of domestic violence, support groups, child abuse and neglect outreach, emergency food and shelter assistance, affordable housing, and community redevelopment.

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