FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PROJECT OPEN HAND ANNOUNCES THE
26TH ANNUAL HAND TO HAND LUNCHEON

"TOP CHEF" CONTENDER MICHELLE MINORI
TO HELM CHEFS SHOWCASE

HONOREES INCLUDE MARIE CRINNION, RICHIE McALLISTER, AND
GHIRARDELLI CHOCOLATE COMPANY

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2018
FAIRMONT SAN FRANCISCO

SAN FRANCISCO (November 13, 2018) – Project Open Hand is proud to announce the 26th annual Hand to Hand Luncheon on Thursday, December 13, from 11:00am to 2:00pm at the Fairmont San Francisco (950 Mason Street). The year-end, mid-day celebration features five chef-crafted, custom entrees and five specialty desserts prepared with the attention, warmth, and kind intention brought to all of Project Open Hand's *meals with love*. Funds from the blockbuster event of the year support Project Open Hand programs and outreach efforts that provide nutrition services – including medically-tailored meals – to the sick and vulnerable in San Francisco and Oakland.

Project Open Hand is delighted to welcome "Top Chef" Season 16 contestant and San Francisco culinary sensation, Michelle Minori, as the lead Presenting Chef. A native of Lodi, California, Michelle graduated with honors from the California Culinary Academy Le Cordon Bleu in San Francisco and went on to cook at some of the city's top Michelin restaurants including Aqua, Acquerello and La Folie. She moved on to run the kitchen at Flour + Water where she found a love and respect for handmade pasta, whole animal utilization and bread baking. She later helped open Faith and Flower in Los Angeles where she developed the pasta and bread programs for the restaurant. Michelle returned to San Francisco where she served as Executive Chef of Barzotto, a fast casual, high-quality pasta restaurant.

In 2017, Michelle was named a "Rising Star Chef" in the San Francisco Chronicle. Michelle has since left Barzotto to pursue her own professional endeavors that build community, promote equality, and celebrate the people who grow and make our food. It's the relationships she's developed with farmers and memories of growing up picking fresh veggies in the garden that inspires her to cook with quality ingredients and informs her respect for their origins and history.

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"We are thrilled to have Bay Area Chef Michelle Minori's unique culinary talent to helm our 26th Anniversary Hand to Hand Luncheon," said Project Open Hand CEO Mark Ryle. "Michelle's love of fresh, quality ingredients speaks to the basics of what we do and her support for the local community makes her a perfect fit to prepare a nutritious and delicious entrée for our special guests."

Individual tickets are $250 and include a cocktail reception from 11am to 12pm, seated luncheon with chef-crafted courses from 12pm to 2pm, and music, entertainment, and a live auction. To purchase tickets, visit https://one.bidpal.net/HANDTOHAND2018/ticketing.

Donations may be made at https://one.bidpal.net/HANDTOHAND2018/browse/donation. For information regarding sponsorship opportunities, please contact Helene Sims, at hsims@openhand.org or 415-447-2412.

Emceed by Bay Area radio legend and San Francisco Giants announcer Renel Brooks-Moon, the Hand to Hand Luncheon will feature comments from Project Open Hand CEO Mark Ryle, highlights from a POH client, an awards presentation, and live auction led by Franco Finn. The 2018 Hand to Hand committee chair is POH Board member, Kristofer Konietzko.

The Ruth Brinker Visionary Award 2018 will be awarded to Project Open Hand Volunteers Marie Crinnion and Richie McAllister; and, Ghirardelli Chocolate Company will receive the Outstanding Community Partner Award 2018.

Hand to Hand 2018 Sponsors include:

Master Chef Sponsor: Marcia and John Goldman; Neil MacPhail Family and Friends
Executive Chef Sponsor: Ambassador James C. Hormel; Michael P. Nguyen
Chef de Cuisine Sponsor: Facebook; Jonathan Jump and Hal Marz
Chef de Partie Sponsor: Tim Barabe and Gail Kennedy; Linda Glick; Brian Grabenstein; Brendon Kearney and Dr. Terry Friedlander; Kristofer Konietzko and Peter Borkon; PwC; Recology; San Francisco Giants; Mark Ryle and Steve Reidy; Diane B. Wilsey; Ruth Yankoupe

For more information on Project Open Hand or the 26th Annual Hand to Hand Luncheon, visit www.openhand.org.

HAND TO HAND 2018 LUNCHEON HONOREES:

Ruth Brinker Visionary Award 2018
Marie Crinnion and Richie McAllister, volunteers who deliver meals in the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco, will be recognized for their years of service as dedicated volunteers and enthusiastic fundraisers. Their annual all-day backyard BBQ is one of the many ways they share their generosity by fundraising for the AIDS Walk with us but also their commitment to our community.

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<u>Outstanding Community Partner Award 2018</u>
Ghirardelli Chocolate Company will be awarded for their commitment to our sick and vulnerable neighbors. Ghirardelli tapped Project Open Hand as the sole beneficiary of their landmark Chocolate Festival and our partnership has only blossomed over the years. From providing teams of volunteers to package meals with love to offering sweet treats for staff and clients, Ghirardelli defines how a company can demonstrate a vital part of our mission, "caring for our community".

About Project Open Hand
Founded in 1985, Project Open Hand is a nonprofit organization that improves health outcomes and quality of life by providing nutritious meals to the sick and vulnerable, caring for and educating our community. Our food is like medicine, helping clients recover from illness, get stronger, and lead healthier lives. Every day, we prepare 2,500 nutritious meals and provide 200 bags of healthy groceries to help sustain our clients as they battle serious illnesses, isolation, or the health challenges of aging. We serve San Francisco County and Oakland, engaging more than 125 volunteers every day to nourish our community.

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