

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Judges Announced For CREATE COOKING CHALLENGE 2018

Top American chefs and last year's contest winner will select the next great food video star!

BOSTON (January 25, 2018) – Some of America's most iconic television chefs, including **Rick Bayless** (*Mexico – One Plate at a Time*), **Ellie Krieger** (*Ellie's Real Good Food*), **Kevin Belton** (*New Orleans Cooking with Kevin Belton*), and **Joanne Weir** (*Joanne Weir's Plates and Places*), will serve as final judges for the CREATE COOKING CHALLENGE 2018. Joining them as a final judge will be last year's CREATE COOKING CHALLENGE 2017 winner, Buki Elegbede. Sponsored by American Public Television, the distributor of Create TV, the Challenge, which seeks America's next great cooking star, opens for video entries on February 6, 2018 and closes on March 6.

These culinary stars enjoy popular success on public television stations nationwide and on CREATE TV, one of the nation's most-watched multicast channels, with more than 46 million viewers annually. As part of his Grand Prize, Buki was awarded a 10-part web series to appear on CreateTV.com. *Baked by Buki* premieres today on the Create TV website, which officially welcomes Buki as the newest among the cadre of Create's chefs.

Open to professional and amateur chefs, the CREATE COOKING CHALLENGE 2018 features the celebrity final judges who will screen user-generated video auditions of two minutes or less, demonstrating an entrant's best recipe, tip or project. The panel will judge submissions based on the entrant's demonstrated culinary knowledge, ability to present ideas succinctly, overall telegenic appeal, uniqueness, and production values. In addition to winning a cash prize and video production equipment, the Grand Prize winner will produce his or her own 10-part video series for CreateTV.com.

Information on rules and how to apply are available for viewing at CreateTV.com/challenge.

About the Judges:

Multiple Emmy Award-winner, recipient of seven James Beard Foundation Awards, public television host, cookbook author, and restaurateur, **Rick Bayless** is recognized for his role in building a national interest in Mexican food. The Government of Mexico bestowed the *Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle* upon Rick – the highest decoration presented to foreigners whose work

has benefitted Mexico and its people. A best-selling author, Rick has written nine cookbooks. He is a leader in the restaurant world, with an empire of dining establishments in Greater Chicago and a new property at the Walt Disney World Resorts. Keenly interested in creating and sustaining local family farms and providing a Mexican-American public school student with full tuition towards a culinary arts degree at a local college, Rick founded the *Frontera Farmer Foundation* and the *Frontera Scholarship*. For his commitment to these philanthropic endeavors, Rick was awarded the Humanitarian of the Year Award by the International Association of Culinary Professionals (IACP) this year.

Ellie Krieger is a leading go-to nutritionist in the media today, helping people find that sweet spot where “delicious” and “healthy” meet. A best-selling author of six cookbooks, Ellie is an IACP and James Beard Foundation Award winner. In addition to being host and executive producer of her series *Ellie’s Real Good Food*, she is a weekly columnist for *The Washington Post*, and is recognized for her columns in a number of national newspapers and magazines. A registered dietitian nutritionist with a degree in clinical nutrition from Cornell University and a Master’s Degree in nutrition education from Columbia University, this New York City resident’s latest book is *You Have it Made: Delicious, Healthy Do-Ahead Meals*.

Self-taught Creole chef **Kevin Belton**, whose family ancestry is a gumbo of English, French, Native American and African, began cooking under the watchful eye of his mother and grandmother in his native New Orleans. Cooking instruction is second nature for Belton, who has spent the last 20 years teaching at the New Orleans School of Cooking. In addition to teaching nearly 7,000 lessons, Belton has offered classes and cooking demonstrations throughout the U.S. and Canada. He has been featured on numerous food programs, including *Emeril Live*, *Ready Set Cook*, *Live Love Lunch*, *Food Fighters*, *Taste of America*, and *Eating in the Bayou*. In 1999, he and British celebrity chef Kevin Woodford co-hosted the BBC series *Big Kevin, Little Kevin*. Kevin was recognized as one of the top 20 Louisiana chefs in 2014. This year, as he premieres his second public television series, *Kevin Belton’s New Orleans Kitchen*, he was named a *Culinary Legend* by the American Culinary Federation.

Awarded the first IACP Julia Child Cooking Teacher Award of Excellence, **Joanne Weir** shares a lifetime of experience that flavors everything she touches. With more than 17 cookbooks published, Joanne has received some of the culinary industry’s most coveted recognition -- from a James Beard Foundation Award to her appointment to the State Department’s American Chef Corporation, a group of selected chefs named to promote world relations through food. With several award-winning public television shows, Joanne is premiering a new 26-part series called *Plates and Places with Joanne Weir* this year and continues to operate her lauded, San Francisco-based restaurant, Copita. For several months of the year Joanne tours the globe sharing her extensive cooking background with regard to nutrition, food theory and technique, with a focus on Mediterranean cuisine and the regional foods of the U.S. She continues to write for numerous magazines, including *Fine Cooking*, *Food & Wine* and *AARP The Magazine*.

The Create Cooking Challenge 2017 Grand Prize Winner, **Buki Elegbede** learned his way around the kitchen early, thanks to parents who believed the entire family should participate in food preparation. Buki’s parents came from Nigeria though he was born in Manhattan. A

journalism graduate of Rutgers University with a keen interest and proven skill to be in front of the camera, Buki has a background in television production. Baking has been a passion in his spare time, though Buki's skills extend into other culinary arts. His 10-part web series launching today on CreateTV.com, *Baked by Buki*, represents a mix of recipes that he hopes will interest public television audiences. In some, he draws upon his parents' Nigerian influence, adding spices to provide unique flavors.

###

Download images of the judges: APTonline.org/press

About Create:

Now in its 13th year, Create® has been the premier lifestyle channel featuring public television's most popular how-to series: cooking, travel, home improvement, gardening and arts & crafts. Create is produced and distributed by American Public Television (APT); WNET, New York; and WGBH, Boston in association with National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA) and PBS. Create TV is carried by 238 local public television stations nationwide, reaching 85% of USTVHH, and is seen in 21 of the top 25 U.S. television markets. Create's companion website CreateTV.com features extensive video, projects, tips, recipes, the Create TV schedule, featured program titles, and hosts.

Contact: Jamie Haines, APT
Jamie.Haines@APTonline.org
617-338-4455 ext 129