



2020  
LEGACY  
INDUCTEE



## JAMES LEMONS

**Pitmaster, Restaurateur, Chef**

James Lemons was the last of three brothers-Myles, Bruce and James-who founded the legendary Lem's Bar-B-Q on Chicago's south side, which runs to this day as one of the most popular and successful black food businesses in Chicago. James Lemons helped create a regional style of BBQ in Chicago built on ribs, rib tips and hotlinks as the central food and the "aquarium smoker" glass pit as a unique tool. Coming from Indianola MS in the 1940s, he joined his brothers in starting a chain of barbecue stands, the original of which is still on 75th street and busy every day.

In 1954, two brothers, Bruce and Myles Lemons had a dream. A dream for their future, a dream of hope, a dream of destiny... It was a dream of entrepreneurship. With this dream, they opened their first store on the south side of Chicago. Myles, a formal chef created Lem's original Bar-B-Q sauce and its magical spices. Once people had a taste of the secret sauce, they kept coming back for that unique flavor. And as a result, Lem's Bar-B-Q House was a success!

After fourteen successful years, the company decided to open another location. Myles and Bruce idea of having a second location; included their brother James, also a formal chef. In 1968, the second Lem's Bar-B-Q House opened in the historic Chatham Neighborhood.