



napa valley vintners

PRESS RELEASE - for immediate release

Contact: Teresa Wall, Senior Director of Marketing Communications - 707-968-4210, twall@napavintners.com

NVV Makes Historic \$1 Million Commitment to Increase Diversity in Wine Industry

9/15/2020 - (Saint Helena, CA) -- Napa Valley Vintners today announced it is investing more than \$1 million in new scholarship and mentorship programs to increase diversity, inclusivity and opportunity in all aspects of the wine industry.

NVV is partnering with [UNCF](#) (United Negro College Fund) to create a new scholarship program for people of color to pursue college degrees in wine industry subjects ranging from grape growing, winemaking, marketing, business and more. UNCF has been managing scholarships for minority students for 75 years and is the largest and most successful minority organization of its kind. The NVV has committed \$200,000 to the fund each year for the next five years and will begin a fundraising effort with its members to build the fund beyond that initial investment.

The non-profit trade organization also announced it will invest more than \$100,000 in two new mentorship programs being created by industry organizations [Wine Unify](#) and [Bâtonnage](#). The mission of Wine Unify is to welcome, elevate and amplify the voices of underrepresented minorities. Bâtonnage fosters solutions for a more positive, inclusive course forward wherein women and ethnic and racial minorities achieve equal representation, equal opportunities and equal leadership positions within the wine industry.

“The NVV represents one of the world’s premier wine regions and strives to be a leader in all aspects of the industry,” said Linda Reiff, president and CEO. “We recognize our nation is at a critical moment to finally end centuries of racism and to dramatically increase diversity, inclusivity and opportunity, including in the wine industry. The NVV believes our community and industry should be open and welcoming to people of color, whether working here, visiting the valley or enjoying our wines anywhere.”

This builds on NVV’s longtime commitment to mentorship programs in Napa County with organizations such as Boys & Girls Club, Aim High and On the Move. This year alone, the organization provided nearly \$2 million in funding to nine non-profit organizations whose missions are to close the achievement gap and help at-risk youth succeed in life. These programs together reached 40,000 children in Napa County.

A consideration for grant giving going forward through Auction Napa Valley proceeds will be notable actions taken by organizations that work on enhancing diversity, inclusivity and opportunity for others.

“We are proud of work being done in our community and we look forward to making a meaningful difference toward long-lasting change in our industry,” said Reiff.

In June, the NVV organized a virtual town hall meeting for its members to learn from community leaders of color. Following that session, a task force of diverse vintners and community leaders was formed to examine what the organization could do. Through research and in-depth discussions, the task force and board of directors developed a set of actions which included focusing on education and mentorship.

The NVV is seeking donations from its members and others interested in supporting this work to build the scholarship program beyond the initial five years, and to match the support for Wine Unify and Bâtonnage.

Donations to the scholarship program can be made directly via UNCF: <http://give.uncf.org/2020NVV>

To learn more about the industry mentorship programs, donate or sign up to be a mentor or mentee:

<https://www.wineunify.org/general-inquiry-form->

www.batonnageforum.com/mentorship-program

###

[The Napa Valley Vintners](#) nonprofit trade association has been cultivating excellence since 1944 by inspiring its 550 members to consistently produce wines of the highest quality, to provide environmental leadership and to care for the extraordinary place they call home.

[UNCF](#) (United Negro College Fund) is the nation’s largest and most effective minority education organization. To serve youth, the community and the nation, UNCF supports students’ education and development through scholarships and other programs. UNCF administers more than 400 programs, including scholarship, internship and fellowship, mentoring, summer enrichment, and curriculum and faculty development programs. Today, UNCF supports more than 60,000 students at over 1,100 colleges and universities across the country. Its logo features the UNCF torch of leadership in education and its widely recognized trademark, “*A mind is a terrible thing to waste.*”[®] Learn more at UNCF.org or for continuous updates and news, follow UNCF on Twitter at @UNCF.

[Wine Unify](#) is a platform that champions diversity and inclusion for underrepresented minorities in the wine industry. Armed with three initiatives – to welcome, to elevate, and to amplify underrepresented minorities – Wine Unify seeks to create more visibility and opportunity for people of color. For media inquiries, [Hello@wineunify.org](mailto>Hello@wineunify.org).

[Bâtonnage](#) strives to educate wine professionals as well as wine industry supporters on the unique challenges and opportunities that women in the field--winemakers, vineyard workers, writers and marketers, salespeople, sommeliers, collectors, and drinkers--have faced both historically and present-day. We simultaneously seek to propose pragmatic solutions for charting a positive, inclusive course forward. For media inquiries, contact Stevie Stacionis, stevie@baygrapewine.com.