

KANE'S BEVERAGE WEEK

The marketing, regulatory and financial news that matters . . . when it matters
for bev/al executives and their advisers

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Fine Dining 3rd Most Popular Venue as U.S. Reopens; Nielsen Finds Bev/Al Spending Same as Before Covid for 49%

A new report, issued just this morning by Nielsen CGA, finds consumers are returning to food-oriented venues — independent restaurants (23%), casual dining chains (20%) — as markets reopen following Covid restrictions. Bars are getting only 9% of first visits, as are fine dining locations. Sports bars are attracting just 6% of visits.

Most often, they return with their spouse or partner, suggesting the initial return — especially for fine-dining facilities — is a romantic occasion or celebration. But neighborhood bars are particularly popular for returning with friends.

And, most often, they are returning first to their favorite location. However, about 10% indicate a desire to “finish” a plan they had before the pandemic erupted. “This shows how important it can be to have a viable market presence so consumers can be reminded of someplace they had planned to visit but had to hold off on because of Covid.

Beer dominates in neighborhood and sports bars as well as independent restaurants, but sparkling wine and cocktails do well in fine-dining restaurants, and spirits do well in drinks-led venues.

More than half of consumers say they spent as much on their first visit as an average pre-Covid visit. Spending on celebratory occasions is down, probably because of smaller group sizes, Nielsen CGA found.

About 17% of consumers say they visited a hotel bar or restaurant at least once since reopening. This, Nielsen says, offers hope for travel venues.

Adults aged 35-54 are most likely to spend more than usual on alcohol on their initial return visit: 35% of 35-54 year olds say they spent more than usual on alcohol on visits on-premise compared to 19% of all consumers.

Hackers Attack Molson Coors, May Delay Shipments

Molson Coors Beverage Co. said it experienced a systems outage that was caused by a “cybersecurity incident.” Molson Coors said it engaged leading forensic information technology firms and legal counsel to assist the Company’s investigation into the incident and is working around the clock to get its systems back up as quickly as possible.

The attack caused a delay or disruption to parts of the Company’s business, including its brewery operations, production, and shipments, the company said in a filing with the Securities & Exchange Commission.

DISCUS Applauds Biden for Signing Covid Rescue Bill

The Covid-19 relief package provided \$28.6 billion for the Restaurant Revitalization Fund, which gives qualifying entities grants to offset revenue losses in 2020 compared to 2019.

An eligible entity includes: a restaurant, saloon, tavern, bar, lounge, tasting room, taproom, licensed facility or premise of a beverage alcohol producer where the public may taste, sample, or purchase products, or similar facility.

Grants may be used for payroll, mortgage or rent payments, utilities, maintenance expenses (including construction to accommodate outdoor seating), supplies (including protective equipment), food and beverage expenses within the scope of normal business practice, covered supplier costs, operational expenses and paid

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sick leave.

"This critical funding provides hope and optimism for millions of restaurant, bar and craft distillery owners and hospitality workers who have hung in there over the past year waiting for brighter days. Help is on the way, and with the progress on the vaccine front, these hospitality businesses will begin to bounce back and thrive once again. We commend President Biden and Congress for recognizing the importance of reviving the hospitality industry and the role these businesses play in creating jobs, supporting local communities and bringing people together."

In a White House address to the nation last night, Biden said all Americans will be able to receive the Covid-19 vaccine by July 4, which he said should be the U.S.'s "Independence Day" from the virus.

"If we do our part, if we do this together, by July 4th there's a good chance you, your families and friends will be able to get together in your backyard or in your neighborhood and have a cookout and a barbecue and celebrate Independence Day," the president said.

All three approved vaccines have been shown to be 100% effective at preventing death and hospitalization. There is some evidence that suggests they may also help prevent vaccinated persons from spreading the disease.

Off-Premise Likely to See 15% Drop In St. Patrick's Sales As On-Premise Opens

A separate Nielsen analysis projects bev/al sales will shift to off-premise for the St. Patrick's Day week.

The analysis noted that Covid last year resulted in many closures just before the St. Patrick's Day celebrations. That drove up off-premise sales by 38.2% overall. Beer/FMB/Cider rose 28%, Wine, 48.7% and Spirits 51.8%.

Growth was significant across many alcohol categories, but led by Light Lagers (+18%), Hard Seltzers (+391%), Whiskey (+50%), Tequila (+71%), and Vodka (+55%).

Ready to drink across Beer, Wine, & Spirits also drove significant growth, up 96% vs. year ago

"Given the surge in off-premise sales around the holiday last year, we anticipate year-over-year declines of more than 15% in off-premise sales this St. Patrick's Day, represented in part by a likely shift back to bars and restaurants, as several states are beginning to lift restrictions," said **Danelle Kosmal**, VP-Beverage Alcohol at NielsenIQ.

"It also will be more representative of purchase behaviors in this "next normal," with a decrease in the levels of pantry loading that we saw in March 2020.

"We should still expect strong growth from segments that typically receive a lift around this holiday, including Irish whiskey, as well as big beer brands and imported Irish beers. We should also see impressive growth from the leaders throughout the pandemic, including hard seltzers and ready-to-drink cocktails, tequila and American Whiskey, Kosmal added.

Craft Beer Drinkers Interest in DtC Is Boosted by Covid Experience

An overwhelming majority (84%) of regular craft beer

drinkers — defined as those who drink craft beer at least once per month — say they want to be able to legally purchase beer via direct-to-consumer shipping to their homes.

This is in contrast to the fact that interstate direct-to-consumer beer shipping is only legal in 13 states. Additionally, the survey found that more than seven in 10 regular craft beer drinkers (73%) say the pandemic has increased their interest in purchasing craft beer via DTC shipping.

That's according to the new [Direct-to-Consumer Beer Shipping Report](#) released by **Sovos ShipCompliant** and the **Brewers Association**. The report analyzes the results of both a consumer poll and a craft brewer survey conducted in the first quarter of 2021.

"It's perhaps no surprise that craft beer drinkers' interest in having their favorite beverages shipped to their doorsteps grew amid the COVID-19 pandemic," said **Larry Cormier**, vp-general manager, **Sovos ShipCompliant**.

"Consumers got a taste for DtC beer shipments, and these attitudes and interests are here to stay. Brewers and regulators alike have a great opportunity to learn from the success of the \$3.7 billion DtC wine shipping channel that has grown — compliantly — over the past 15 years."

Other notable findings in the report centered on craft beer drinkers' attitudes toward DtC shipping and associated regulations:

- ✓ Four in five regular craft beer drinkers (80%) report they would be more likely to try new beer brands if they were able to purchase the beer via direct-to-consumer shipping to their homes.
- ✓ Nearly three in five (57%) regular craft beer drinkers say they have purchased craft beer from a brewery and had it shipped directly to their homes via a third-party carrier.
- ✓ Since COVID-19 pandemic restrictions began in March 2020, there was a slight uptick in the purchase of craft beer for DtC shipping. Nearly half of regular craft beer drinkers (48%) say they purchased craft beer directly from a brewery and had it shipped directly to their homes via a third-party carrier before the pandemic, and just over half (51%) say they did so since the pandemic began.
- ✓ An overwhelming majority of regular craft beer drinkers (84%) say they want to be able to legally purchase beer via direct-to-consumer shipping to their home — a practice currently allowed for consumer purchases from most domestic brewers in just 13 U.S. states.
- ✓ The same proportion (84%) say that current beer shipping laws in the U.S. should be updated to make it legal to ship beer direct-to-consumer in more states than the 13 U.S. states in which it is currently legal.

Beer lovers may be eager to receive DtC shipments of craft beer from markets outside their local areas, with more than three-quarters of regular craft beer drinkers (78%) saying they have tried a beer while traveling that they wish they could purchase, but it is not available near their home.

Just 13% of craft brewers are engaged in direct-to-consumer shipping, according to the Brewers Association survey of 141 U.S. craft brewers in 38 states. Most still focus close to home, with 89% of breweries that do some DtC shipping (via common carrier) reporting that their home

states are their primary markets. That said, some breweries are finding markets outside their own states, with 11% now saying they sell more volume DtC out-of-state than in-state.

Given the challenges and opportunities facing breweries, 70% said they would consider using direct-to-consumer shipping to go to market if it were legal in their states (or if it already is). This research further reveals the disconnect between consumer interest and availability of brewery-direct interstate shipments, which are only legal in 13 states.

“Craft brewers across the country are interested in the market access afforded by all types of direct-to-consumer sales, including DtC shipping,” said **Bart Watson**, chief economist, Brewers Association. “This is not only a pandemic-induced pivot but a response to the growing demand we see from beer lovers to access their favorite beverage — online and shipped to their homes — the same way they do countless other goods in today’s e-commerce era.”

Diageo Acquires Far West Spirits LLC, Owner Of Lone River Ranch Water Hard Seltzer

Diageo said it acquired **Far West Spirits LLC**, owner of the **Lone River Ranch Water** (‘Lone River’) brand. Lone River is a hard seltzer that takes inspiration from the popular classic Texan “Ranch Water” cocktail. Terms weren’t disclosed. It’s a cash transaction.

Lone River was founded in 2019 by native Texan, **Katie Beal Brown**. Katie will retain a minority interest and continue to lead the business on a day-to-day basis, as Chief Executive Officer of the brand. She will work closely with Diageo North America leadership to build further on Lone River’s success. The brand has three offerings:

Original: The Original Ranch Water hard seltzer flavored with organic blue agave nectar and lime juice

Spicy: Ranch Water with a kick of the Texas state pepper, jalapeño

Rio Red Grapefruit: Ranch Water with a squeeze of Rio Red Grapefruit juice, the Texas state fruit

Debra Crew, president, **Diageo North America**, said:

“We are excited to bring this vibrant young hard seltzer brand into our growing ready-to-drink portfolio. Lone River captures the magic of Americans’ love for agave flavored beverages combined with their desire for light, convenient refreshment. This acquisition is very much in keeping with our strategy to acquire high growth brands in fast-growing categories and we look forward to working with Katie and her team to drive Lone River’s continued momentum.”

Katie Beal Brown, Lone River founder/CEO, said: “We started Lone River with the dream of giving people a taste of Far West Texas. We are so grateful for the diverse set of communities that have embraced our brand, extending far beyond our small place on the map. We found in Diageo a world-class partner who believes in our vision to bring the spirit of Far West Texas to as many as we can.”

Treasury Wine Estates Taps Wine Group for Some U.S. Sales

Brands involved in the long-term licensing agreement are **Beringer Main & Vine**, **Beringer Founders Estate**, **Coastal Estates** and **Meridian** brands. Terms weren’t disclosed.

Treasury Wine Estates noted that Beringer remains a core brand within the TWE portfolio and it hasn’t any intention of disposing of any other Beringer brands in future transactions.

The Wine Group will acquire existing inventories associated with these brands on a progressive drawdown basis and will assume responsibility for related future bulk wine supply contracts.

TWE’s chief executive, **Tim Ford** said the transaction “will be of mutual long-term benefit to our respective organizations. For TWE, this transaction is a significant milestone towards our plans to deliver the future state premium US wine business and we can now focus solely on continuing the growth of our premium brand portfolio to drive future performance in the Americas”.

“The Wine Group is a leader in the industry with strong wine brands that deliver unbeatable value.”

Cate Hardy, CEO of The Wine Group said “The acquisition of these popular brands further positions The Wine Group as a global leader in wine. Adding these brands complements TWG’s leadership in the value segment along side our growing portfolio of premium wines, introducing more consumers to our high-quality wines at every price point.”

Terlato Wine Group, Champagne Lanson Sign Long Term Sales and Marketing Pact

Terlato Wines today announced an exclusive sales and marketing agreement with **Champagne Lanson**, one of Champagne’s oldest Houses. The agreement becomes effective April 1, 2021.

François Van Aal, President of Champagne Lanson noted, "Champagne Lanson and Terlato Wines are two family-owned companies sharing common values about wine quality and constant search for excellence. This long-term

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partnership reflects Champagne Lanson's ambitions in the biggest Champagne market worldwide and represents a milestone in the new brand vision."

Owned and operated by the Terlato family, Terlato Wine Group is comprised of several businesses specializing in the marketing and production of exceptional wines, artisanal spirits, non-alcoholic beverages and water. **Terlato Wines International** is a preeminent fine wine importer and vintner that represents a diverse selection of global beverage brands and is a leading fine wine marketer in the U.S.

Commenting on the new partnership, CEO **Bill Terlato** said, "My father and grandfather instilled in us that we should focus on quality. We are particular about the brands and families we choose to align ourselves with. The philosophy of Champagne Lanson is rooted in putting quality at the forefront. Both of our companies share similar values and beliefs and we are looking forward to a long and successful partnership together."

Nelson's Green Brier Expands to Maryland, Illinois, Florida from Nashville

The expansion of the Constellation Brands' product to Maryland, Illinois, and Florida is the first step in taking **Nelson's Green Brier Tennessee Whiskey** national by 2022.

Originating in 1860 and created by distilling pioneer Charles Nelson, Nelson's Green Brier Tennessee Whiskey was the first and largest selling brand of Tennessee Whiskey in the world, producing more than 2 million bottles a year. That demand was a result of Charles Nelson's dedication to creating a whiskey from the finest ingredients through a precise process. Filtered through a mellowing bed of sugar-maple charcoal and aged in charred oak barrels, Charles Nelson's unique wheated mash bill and meticulous process set the standard by which all future Tennessee Whiskeys would be judged.

Now, for the first time since the distillery shuttered during Prohibition in 1909, Nelson's Green Brier Tennessee Whiskey is available and made using the original process and recipe, paying homage to the masterful hands that first created it, and maintaining its founder-made reputation for seven generations.

Revived by three great-grandsons of Charles Nelson, Andy and Charlie Nelson, Nelson's Green Brier Distillery made its 21st Century debut in Nashville in 2014. As co-proprietors, the two brothers have since launched several award-winning small batch spirits, and most recently, their namesake Tennessee Whiskey, which until recently has only been available in Nashville.

Created according to the 110-year-old recipe of Charles Nelson's initial bottled whiskey, Nelson's Green Brier Tennessee Whiskey is aged between two and five years, bottled at 91-proof, and has a nose of caramel, vanilla, nutmeg, chocolate, cinnamon, and nougat. Its unique mash bill is a combination of corn, wheat, and barley.

Latitude Beverage Launches Tequila Zarpado

Latitude Beverage, the company behind a growing portfolio of wine and spirits brands including **90+ Cellars** and **Wheel Horse Whiskey**, has launched its first Te-

quila with Tequila Zarpado. A handcrafted premium Blanco Tequila, Zarpado was created in partnership with boutique distillery Cavas de Don Max and Master Blender Dan Becherano, whose family has been perfecting the art of Tequila-making for nearly four decades.

Tequila Zarpado has an SRP of \$24.99 and is launching in Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island.

Tequila Zarpado is crafted from hand-harvested mature blue agave grown in the Los Valles region of Jalisco. Double-distilled in small batches, this Tequila brings true craft quality at an everyday price point. Zarpado is a modern expression of traditional Tequila-making methods combined with the Becherano family's award-winning practices, resulting in its signature smooth taste. Rich and flavorful, Zarpado has an earthy sweetness balanced by warming spices and full-bodied agave flavor.

Truly Hard Seltzer Launches Extra, A Higher-ABV Option

Truly Hard Seltzer (Boston Beer) launches Truly Extra Hard Seltzer, a hard seltzer that clocks in at 8% ABV, giving drinkers an *extra* kick.

Truly is one of the first movers in the category to launch a higher ABV option. After its 2020 test launch received overwhelmingly positive drinker feedback, Truly Extra is now officially available nationwide in two flavors, Black Raspberry and Peach Mango. Unlike competitors that are packed with sugar and artificial ingredients, Truly Extra has only 1 gram of sugar and just 220 calories in a 16 oz can.

Reservoir Distillery Enters Kentucky, Georgia

Reservoir Distillery, the third U.S. distillery to make bourbon and whiskey outside of Kentucky said it will begin distributing its craft spirits in Kentucky. **Heritage Wine & Spirits** will oversee distribution in Kentucky, effective immediately. **Georgia Crown** will oversee distribution in Georgia beginning April 1, 2021.

"This is a milestone moment for Reservoir," said **Dave Scheurich**, Master Distiller for **Boondocks Brands** and retired General Manager and Distillery Manager for **Woodford Reserve Distillery**. "Their Virginia grain-to-glass products are distinctively unique from most traditional Kentucky whiskeys," he continued. "I think bourbon enthusiasts throughout the state will be excited to discover something new."

"On the heels of a successful launch in Tennessee last year, we couldn't be more excited about our continued growth," said **Dave Cuttino**, co-founder of Reservoir Distillery. "Our distribution partners have welcomed us, and we look forward to shaking things up with our Virginia whiskey in the great states of Kentucky and Georgia," he continued.

Nearly One-Third of Wine Shipments Into Michigan Are Illegal: Wholesalers

That's according to the **Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers Association**, which said that of the 2,233,800 bottles of alcohol shipped into the state, 734,365 were

shipped illegally, according to data compiled by the **Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers Association**.

"This data adds to the growing mountain of evidence that some out-of-state retailers have no problem breaking state laws and ducking paying taxes at a time when our state needs every penny of tax revenue," said Spencer Nevins, president of the MB&WWA. "Thankfully, Attorney General Dana Nessel and the Michigan Liquor Control Commission have stepped up enforcement and have caught several of these bad actors red-handed."

Last year, Nessel sued two companies, Vintners Collective LLC and Go to Gifts Inc., for illegally shipping alcohol to consumers in Michigan. In February, judges in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan entered consent agreements with both companies. Neither will be able to ship alcohol into Michigan unless they become eligible to get a license and must prevent their websites from accepting orders from Michigan. Both companies will also have to pay \$10,000 each in fines.

"Every bottle of alcohol illegally shipped into our state hurts mom-and-pop retailers that are proud to call Michigan home, pay taxes and give back to their communities," Nevins said. "We encourage Attorney General Nessel and state regulators to continue cracking down on out-of-state retailers — like Vintners Collective and Go to Gifts — that have been brazenly thumbing their nose at state law for years."

Uncle Nearest Becomes Best-Selling African American-Owned and -Founded Spirit Brand

Nine straight quarters of triple-digit gains catapulted the Tennessee whiskey distillery to become the best-selling African American owned and founded spirit brand in history, selling nearly 1.5 million bottles of its sought after super-premium whiskey.

The company's whiskey portfolio, available in more than 21,000 locations, is currently made up of its small batch whiskey (SRP \$49.99), its rare single barrel whiskey (SRP \$119), and its core aged whiskey offering (SRP \$59.99).

"The spirits industry has never seen anything like this in all the years that data has been tracked through the three major data collection agencies for the industry," said **Donn Bichsel**, founder of [3 Tier Beverages](#), a spirits data collection and analyzation company. "No African American founded-and-led spirit brand has ever come close to what the Uncle Nearest brand and team have done. We analyzed every piece of credible data and Uncle Nearest is undoubtedly the top seller of all time, with the rest of the top 10 being so far behind, that they barely registered."

Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey debuted in July 2017 and expanded into all 50 states in less than two years. Built on its knack for sourcing the best of Tennessee Whiskeys and Bourbons, the whiskey is made using a non-temperature-controlled aging process and a unique post-aging double filtration method, which is then blended to perfection by fifth generation Nearest Green descendant and Uncle Nearest's master blender, **Victoria Eady Butler**.

This process, in part, has led to the whiskey garnering

more than 160 awards in its first three years, including Double Gold at the 2020 San Francisco World Spirit Competition and back-to-back honors of "World's Best" at *Whisky Magazine's* World Whiskies Awards, who last month presented Butler with their coveted Icons of Whisky award for Master Blender of the Year. Additionally, the groundbreaking company was a 2020 *Inc. Magazine* Best in Business honoree, and earlier today was named one of the top ten Most Innovative Companies in the North America category on *Fast Company's* prestigious annual list of the Most Innovative Companies for 2021.

In the fourth quarter of last year, Uncle Nearest was forced to throttle its growth, according to **Fawn Weaver**, CEO/founder. "Our bottling and distilling partner did an incredible job of ensuring every area of the distillery was socially distanced and followed the strictest COVID-19 guidelines, which meant we could only move so quickly and had to cap our third full year at 120,000 cases sold," said Weaver. In spite of that, the company recently announced to investors its ninth quarter in a row of more than 100% growth over the same time the previous year and is on track to make that ten.

This month, Uncle Nearest greatly increased its shipping and bottling capabilities at its **Nearest Green Distillery** in Shelbyville, Tenn., with the company on track to sell 250,000 cases this year, only its fourth full year since their debut.

NM Senate Sends Liquor Reform to Governor

The measure allows home grocers and restaurants to deliver alcoholic beverages to homes, creates a new restaurant liquor license category making it easier for restaurants to sell liquor.

It bans the sale of mini bottles for off-premise consumption but doesn't include a 2% tax on retail sales. The measure also allows Sunday sales to start at 11 a.m. Among the restrictive provisions: a ban of liquor sales at convenience stores in McKinley County; the bill's sponsor said McKinley has more liquor licenses per capita than New York City.,.

The measure allows home grocers and restaurants to deliver alcoholic beverages to homes, creates a new restaurant liquor license category making it easier for restaurants to sell liquor.

Rum Chata Limon Intros 375ml Bottle

In anticipation of the summer season, Agave Loco said its Rum Chata Limon flavor will be available nationally and introduced both a 375ml bottle and a 100ml three-pack.

"RumChata Limón introduced consumers to the realization of being able to enjoy a cream liqueur during a warm and sunny day – and they love it," said **Tom Maas**, Rum-Chata Founder and Master Blender. "The light and bright flavor of RumChata Limón goes against the normal thinking that cream liqueurs are rich and heavy and only consumed during cold weather seasons."

SRP for a 750ml bottle is \$21.99, for a 100ml three-pack, \$11.99 and a 375 ml bottle is \$15.99.

Volley Tequila Seltzer Launches in Mass., RI

Volley Tequila Seltzer appoints **M.S. Walker, Inc** to service the Massachusetts and Rhode Island markets. It claims to be the first hard seltzer of its kind crafted without added sugars, natural flavorings or preservatives, Volley launched this past July, stirring up the booming ready-to-drink category.

In addition to Massachusetts and Rhode Island, Volley is now available in New York, New Jersey, Georgia, Florida and Tennessee at a suggested retail price of \$14.99 for a four-can variety-pack or single flavor four-pack.

Nude Beverages Debuts Hard Iced Tea in U.S.

Nude Hard Iced Tea is currently available in Illinois, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, with additional states coming soon.

The debut follows a successful Canadian launch. The product is described as a "true American-style iced tea with zero carbs, sugar, caffeine, or carbonation — unlike others on the market that are just tea flavored hard seltzers. Brewed with **black tea leaves**, this vodka-based beverage is made with only premium and all-natural ingredients.

"We tested over 500 formulations of the iced tea before landing on our final formula, and it's that attention to detail that makes us a category leader," said Nude Beverages CEO and Founder **Julius Makarewicz**. "We saw that consumers were wanting more sugar-free options, and so we knew the next step was to bring Nude Hard Iced Tea to the U.S. We're excited to introduce our American fans to a new line and expect even more expansion to come this year."

Nude Hard Iced Tea is available in Instagrammable matte gold cans and in three flavors: Lemon, Peach, and Raspberry. All three flavors come in a 12-pack ranging in price from \$15.99-\$17.99. Nude Hard Iced Tea is sugar-free, sweetener-free, and carb-free, just like the rest of the Nude lineup.

Nude's entire product line consists of vodka soda, gin soda, hard iced tea, tequila soda, and hard seltzer. More than 85 million cans of Nude have been sold since the brand's launch in 2017, in which the brand was the first of its kind in the Canadian market.

WSWA, Tito's, Southern Glazers Establish Robert Qualls Scholarship Fund

WSWA Educational Foundation (the charitable arm of **Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America**), **Tito's Handmade Vodka** and **Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits** today announced the launch of the Robert Qualls Scholarship Fund in memory of Robert Qualls, an extraordinary hospitality and spirits industry veteran.

The scholarship fund will award a total of \$100,000 in scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students pursuing a hospitality degree over the next five years, which will be funded equally by Tito's Handmade Vodka and Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits.

Four students per year pursuing studies in the hospitality space will be awarded \$5,000 each to help fund their education expenses.

Full-time or part-time students with an eligible connec-

tion to an alcohol producer, wholesaler or retailer may apply for the scholarship starting today through May 31 via the application link at <https://www.wswa.org/scholarships>. Details on eligibility are at the link. Winners are slated to be announced in August 2021 and will be selected by an independent panel of judges through a competitive application process.

Qualls started his career in the hospitality industry as a distributor sales representative. Throughout his 40-year career, which included impactful leadership roles at Southern Glazer's and Tito's Handmade Vodka, Robert helped to build brands, manage complex businesses and mentor the next generation of spirits industry professionals.

The sponsors encourage Qualls friends to donate to the fund at <https://www.wswa.org/scholarships>

Orgins Organic Imports Intros Corvezzo

Origins Organic Imports, Miami, introduces **Corvezzo**, a leading name in organically grown, vegan wines from northeast Italy's Veneto region. Family-owned and-run Corvezzo has the largest acreage in Italy of organic Glera and Pinot Grigio. All Corvezzo wines are 100% estate grown.

Corvezzo makes its U.S. debut with three wines: a Pinot Grigio 2019 delle Venezie DOC, a Prosecco DOC Treviso Extra Dry, and a Prosecco DOC Rosé Extra Dry Millesimato. Available nationwide, all three are line-priced, with an SRP of \$13.

"**Giovanni Corvezzo** and his family farm 380 acres — large enough to be a reliable supplier, small enough for that hands-on, quality touch. This is in keeping with our philosophy at Origins Organic, which is to deliver excellent quality organically grown wines at an affordable price," said **Labid Ameri**, Co-owner, Origins Organic Imports

Founded in 1960 and based in the village of Cessalto near Treviso, Corvezzo was awarded organic certification in 2017. Transition to 100% organically farmed vineyards began under third-generation owner/winemaker Giovanni Corvezzo, soon after he took over at the helm in 2009. According to Corvezzo, who describes his winery's signature style as fresh and bright, organic farming ultimately results in thicker grape skins, leading to heightened aromas, greater balance, and superior quality wines.

NABI Applauds 4-Month Tariff Suspension in the Airbus and Boeing Subsidy Disputes

"Actions speak louder than words" said **Robert M. ToBIassen**, president, **National Association of Beverage Importers**, on the formal implementation of the four-month suspension of the Airbus and Boeing tariffs.

Tobiassen praised the Biden/Harris Administration for its efforts early in the term to build back better the relationships with the traditional trade partners. "The early nomination and confirmation hearing for Katherine Tai as the 19th United States Trade Representative and the recent mutual suspensions announced by the United Kingdom, European Union, and United States are outstanding outcomes of the new Administration's skills at multi-tasking crucial policy challenges on COVID vaccine distributions, economic relief, supply chain sustainability, and trade policies. With Ms. Tai's pending confirmation by the Senate, the future of trade for the U.S. feels so much more positive" he added. NABI

commends and appreciates the trade work of the European Commission that brings us to these mutual suspensions.

Moving forward there is still much work still to do in the next four months to foster a successful settlement negotiation of the large civil aircraft subsidy scheme. NABI wishes USTR Nominee Tai and European Trade Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis an earnest and successful discussion.

"NABI really hopes that as the four months of negotiations rigorously move forward" said Tobiassen, "that good faith negotiations will lead to good relations and trust that foster the EU to consider suspending the doubling of the steel and aluminum tariffs in June."

This week, USTR announced a conclusion with the EU on WTO quota adjustments for the EU resulting from the UK departure from the EU. He added, "Building off of these early successes with the EU creates confidence and good will to take on enormous pending trade policies on Digital Services Tax (DST) and worldwide steel and aluminum overcapacity down the road."

Bombay Sapphire Debuts Canned Cocktails

Bombay Sapphire Gin & Tonic and **Bombay Sapphire Gin & tonic Light**– hitting shelves on National Gin & Tonic Day on April 9th, for upcoming coverage consideration.

Available in 250-milliliter cans in a four-pack, the convenient new offering combines the premium London Dry Gin with the perfect balance of tonic water in a sleek, ergonomic blue can.

The brainchild of Bacardi Limited's Master of Botanicals Ivano Tonutti and Bombay Sapphire Master Distiller Anne Brock, the new line of ready-to-drink cocktails answers the growing demand for a product that doesn't compromise taste and quality for convenience.

The portable serve was designed specifically to stay chilled during the time of consumption, ideal for summer sipping whether indoors or outdoors.

The new collection provides all the convenience of a pre-mixed beverage with the unmatched premium flavor of a classic hand-crafted cocktail just in time to kick off the spring season.

Samuel Adams Joins Low Alcohol Movement

Samuel Adams (Boston Beer) brewers spent two years crafting **Just The Haze**, a world-class IPA for beer lovers that just happens to be non-alcoholic.

The sheer research and brewing innovation behind Just The Haze inspired the creation of something equally as revolutionary to help drinkers pace with taste during drinking occasions much like long-duration basketball tournaments, The Insulated Pacing Apparatus (also known as The I.P.A.), a first-of-its-kind device that gives drinkers an easy and fun way to swap in a non-alcoholic beer like Just The Haze during marathon bracket busters.

The Insulated Pacing Apparatus (The I.P.A.) is a high-tech beer cooling and counting device that prompts drinkers when it's time to swap in a "pacer" beer to extend their beer drinking occasions. With built-in motion sensors, a vibration system and LED lights, The I.P.A. "activates" after every second beer, signaling that it's the perfect time for a Just The

Haze non-alcoholic IPA. The I.P.A. also features cooling insulation to keep beer chilled and has a USB port so drinkers can recharge it ahead of their next beer drinking session.

"We knew we had to do something big to introduce our first non-alcoholic beer to drinkers nationwide," said **Matt Withington**, Director of Marketing, Samuel Adams. "Innovation is in our DNA and illustrated at its best not only in this revolutionary beer, but in how we're bringing it to drinkers.

"As the Official Beer Sponsor of the Big East Tournament, we know Sam Adams drinkers are looking to stay in the game longer, so with Just The Haze and The Insulated Pacing Apparatus, we set out to prove that non-alcoholic beers can fit seamlessly into any drinking occasion and even extend good times."

As a beer lover, drinker and brewer, the challenge of creating a non-alcoholic IPA was one myself and my team took very seriously," said Christina Hahn, Manager of Brewing R&D, Samuel Adams. "We seized the opportunity to bring a full-flavor, craft non-alcoholic beer to drinkers, taking notes from international brewing experts and adapting brewing technology to meet our highest expectations. We didn't just settle for good enough; we brewed countless iterations before arriving at the rich, complex and balanced beer that is Just The Haze: an uncompromising, world-class IPA that just happens to be non-alcoholic."

Drinkers can rotate in Just The Haze to their drinking sessions and get more out of their days, their nights and every cheers in between.

Covid Claims Another Victim: Kentucky Bourbon Affair 2021

Kentucky Distillers Association announced late yesterday (3/11) it had cancelled this year's Kentucky Bourbon Affair owing to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"While we are encouraged with vaccinations and declining cases, it would be difficult to hold such intimate, elegant events that attract people from all over the world," KDA President **Eric Gregory** said. "It would not be fair to all involved – from our loyal KBA fans to our distillery employees."

Gregory said several factors weighed in the difficult decision, including travel issues, limits on attendance, CDC and social distancing guidelines, uncertainty about variants and conditions in the fall and caution around distillery workers and resources that are currently off-limits.

"This is the second year we have had to cancel this event, but it is the right and responsible decision to make," Gregory said. "We are getting closer every day to beating the pandemic. This simply isn't the time to let our guard down or take any chances with people's health and safety.

"It takes time to craft our great Kentucky Bourbon. We can afford to wait one more year."

The Kentucky Bourbon Affair each year welcomes thousands of Bourbon aficionados, enthusiasts and visitors to the Commonwealth for an exclusive week of behind-the-scenes experiences, rare tastings and unique culinary events at the world's most famous distilleries.

Deadline to Register for NABCA Legal Convo

Registration for NABCA's 28th Annual Symposium on Alcohol Beverage Law & Regulation closes today (3/12). COVID constraints has resulted in this being a virtual event, which will run March 15 – 16.

The Symposium offers attorneys, government officials and industry professionals a carefully curated agenda of topics that demonstrate the transformational trends that affect the alcohol beverage industry and its future growth.

Presentation highlights include:

Un-Masking the New Normal of Alcohol Regulations: In this session, panelists will discuss legal, regulatory, and operational lessons learned throughout this pandemic and the changes in enforcement priorities or drafting which have proven most effective during these times.

Cannabis Confusion: During this timely session regulatory attorneys will deliberate the interplay between current state and federal law, the contours of the federal agencies' authorities (FDA, TTB, ATF, etc.), and the emerging issues states should address as they debate this policy issues.

This is in addition to five other hot-topic presentations, some of which will be concurrent in the morning and afternoon.

CRŪ Winery Launches Scholarship With California State University System

Cru Winery is launching a scholarship inspired by winery founder **Richard Spencer's** Aunt May. The scholarship will support undergraduate students pursuing degrees in Viticulture and Enology at California State University Fresno.

Aunt May encouraged Spencer to go after his dreams, financing his first deal and partnering on a renovation that ultimately kick-started his successful construction business. She was quietly accomplished, generous, witty, sometimes a hot mess but pretty much always brilliant. CRŪ Winery also produces a limited release Chardonnay in her honor.

Each year a junior enrolled in the Fresno State Department of Viticulture and Enology that embraces the characteristics and spirit of Aunt May will be chosen to receive the scholarship which will fund two years of tuition.

Educating wine professionals and wine lovers on how quality wines are crafted has long been a pillar of CRŪ and the introduction of this scholarship takes this pillar one step further. Winery CEO **Nathan Stern**, "We are delighted to partner with the California State University system and the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology at Fresno State to help pave the way for students pursuing careers in Enology and Viticulture. This scholarship will allow passionate, and at times underrepresented, students to become educated in the intricacies of growing and making world-class wines. We look forward to helping today's students become tomorrow's wine industry leaders."

KYLA Hard Kombucha Names Magrino PR As U.S. Public Relations Agency of Record

KYLA Hard Kombucha, one of the founding brands of the premium hard kombucha category, named award-winning, New York-based Magrino Public Relations as its new agency of record, with an emphasis on public relations strategy and brand advocacy in the U.S. market.

Hotaling Taps Access for Brand P.R.

Access Brand Communications, San Francisco and New York, is now representing **Hotaling & Co.**, the San Francisco-based distiller and importer of artisanal spirits, focusing on their corporate business, **Luxardo** spirits & Luxardo Maraschino cherries, as well as a new super-premium tequila brand coming to the US market in spring/summer 2021.

American Vineyard Foundation Honors Fred Franzia for Service

Franzia is CEO of **Bronco Wine Co.** and a founding member of the American Vineyard Foundation in 1979. Since its founding, the AVF has raised and contributed over \$33,000,000 to grape and wine research in the US. Franzia is stepping down from the AVF board, and will be succeeded by John Allbaugh, Bronco's Director of Winemaking and Wine Production Operations, on the Board.

Steven Spurrier Dies; Organized 1976 Judgment of Paris

It was the Judgment of Paris that put California wine on the map, promoting the expansion of wine in the New World. Spurrier himself was a champion of French wine, and, as such, was as surprised at anyone about the results of the 1976 tasting. He also found Academie du Vin, France's first private wine school, and Christie's wine course and authored several books. He died at home March 9.

Who & What –

Ranch Rider Spirits hires **John Scarborough** as CEO. He joins from **Deep Eddy Vodka**, where he was president. The hiring coincides with Ranch Rider's upcoming expansion with Republic National Distributing Company across eight new markets, including California, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Georgia and Florida.

Continued Success,
KANE'S BEVERAGE WEEK



JOEL WHITAKER, Editor