

The Press Democrat

North Bay Business Journal's Women in Wine of 2024

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May 28, 2024





North Bay Business Journal’s annual Women in Wine Awards celebrate the achievements and contributions of female winemakers and wine industry professionals in the North Bay. This is the second year for this event with nominations in categories that include: Impactful Leader, Rising Star, and Excellence in Sustainability.

"I am honored to celebrate the extraordinary contributions of women in the wine industry through our Women in Wine Awards 2024," said Lorez Bailey, North Bay Business Journal publisher. " This event not only highlights their remarkable achievements but also inspires the next generation of female leaders in wine. We are thrilled to host this prestigious event at the historic MacMurray Ranch, providing a beautiful backdrop to honor these exceptional women who have made indelible marks on the wine world."

Award winners were selected by a panel of judges and assessed by their excellence in wine growing achievements, leadership, and career impact. They will be honored at a networking and awards event June 6 at MacMurray Ranch in Healdsburg.

Inspirational Leader Award: Honoring a trailblazing woman within the wine industry who not only excels in her role but also serves as a source of motivation and empowerment to others.

– Rachel Ashley, senior vice president of supply, Treasury Wine Estates

- Anisya Thomas Fritz, proprietor, Lynmar Estate Winery
- Leslie Frank, co-founder, Frank Family Vineyards

Excellence in Winemaking Award: Recognizing a female winemaker who has demonstrated exceptional skills, innovation, and consistency in producing high-quality wines.

- Jessica Koga, winemaker, Schramsberg Vineyards
- Maggie Kruse, head winemaker, Jordan Vineyard & Winery
- Akiko Freeman, co-owner and winemaker, Freeman Vineyard & Winery

Rising Star Award: Awarding a promising newcomer who has already shown remarkable potential and early accomplishments in any area of the wine industry.

- Melissa Smith, owner, Enotrias

Excellence in Sustainability Award: Recognizing a woman who has made significant strides in promoting and implementing sustainable and environmentally responsible practices within the wine industry.

- Sarah Wuethrich, winemaker, Maggy Hawk and WindRacer
- Chris Kajani, president and winemaker, Bouchaine Vineyards

Trailblazer Award: Celebrating a woman's pioneering spirit, groundbreaking contributions, and forward-thinking innovations that have pushed the boundaries of winemaking, viticulture, or the wine business. It honors the role of a visionary driving positive change and setting new standards within the wine world.

- Philana Bouvier, president, Demeine Estates
- MJ Dale, CEO, Customer Vineyard

Impactful Leader Award: Recognizing a woman who has significantly influenced and positively transformed her field. Through her actions, innovations, and dedication, she has left a lasting mark on the industry and inspired others to drive meaningful change.

- Lauren Wong, vice president of sales and marketing, Aperture Cellars
- Jessica Limon, senior manager of trade and consumer hospitality, E. & J. Gallo Winery
- Violet Grgich, president and CEO, Grgich Hills Estate Winery

Heart of the Community Award: Celebrating a woman who has made significant contributions to her local wine community through advocacy, events, and outreach.

- Drea Helfer, president, DH Wine Compliance
- Linda Mayberry-Chavez, CEO, Chavez Family Cellars

Excellence in Winegrowing Award: Recognizing those who demonstrate exceptional skill, innovation, and dedication in wine growing, celebrating their expertise and commitment to cultivating the finest quality grapes.

- Karin Warnelius-Miller, proprietor, winegrape grower and winemaker, Garden Creek Ranch Vineyards & Winery

Legacy Award: This distinguished award honors a woman whose enduring contributions and lifelong dedication to the wine industry have left an indelible legacy. Through her leadership, vision, and unwavering commitment, she has shaped the industry's future, paving the way for future generations of women in wine.

- Kimberlee Nicholls, winemaker, Markham Vineyards
- Linda Trotta, vice president for global winemaking and sourcing at WX Brands, winemaker at Bread & Butter Wines

To purchase tickets: [Get tickets here.](#)