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WSWA ANNOUNCES 2021 WSWA ACCESS ADVISORY COUNCIL BRAND REPRESENTATIVES

WASHINGTON, D.C., 02/25/2021 – Today, Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA) announced the craft, startup and small production Brand Representatives joining the 2021 WSWA Advisory Council. Eleven emerging brands from across the country have joined the initiative that will feature expert guidance, resources and best practices to help brands navigate industry challenges and identify opportunities to get to market.

WSWA welcomes the 2021 WSWA Access Advisory Council Brand Representatives:

- Kat Hantas, [21Seeds](#)
- Patrick Jean-Baptiste, [Crafthouse Cocktails](#)
- Phillip Rawleigh, [Distillery 291](#)
- Scott Neil, [Horse Soldier Bourbon](#)
- Bob Gunter, [Kōloa Rum](#)
- Mimi Buttenheim, [Mad River Distillers](#)
- Alexei Khimenko, [My Story Wine](#)
- Susan Lambert, [Remington Family Distillers](#)
- John Bilello, [Sweet Amber Distilling Co.](#)
- Atlas Cheek, [Treaty Oak Distilling Company](#)
- Subir Singh, [Mico Tequila](#)

“At 21Seeds, we’ve always been about fostering collaboration and connection. To us, that is what the spirits industry is all about: we bring people together over a cocktail to swap stories, make plans and create memories with the people they care about. We also know that we can’t always do that alone, especially after a year like 2020,” said **CEO and Co-Founder of 21 Seeds Infused Tequila Kat Hantas**. “As an industry we are strongest when we work together. That’s why I’m thrilled to be a part of the WSWA Access Advisory Council and join leaders of other craft and startup spirits brands to help navigate challenges and identify opportunities for the years ahead.”

“I’m so very pleased to be included in the WSWA initiative that recognizes, and is interested, the challenges emerging brands are experiencing, and providing a platform for substantive engagement,” said **President of CraftHouse Cocktails Patrick Jean-Baptiste**.

“I am excited to bring 291 Colorado Whiskey's *'Rugged, Refined and Rebellious'* insight to WSWA,” said **Vice President of Business Development at Distillery 291 Phillip Rawleigh**.

“American Freedom Distillery is excited to be invited to be a member of the WSWA Access Advisory Council. We have learned from our previous experiences that if you want to go fast go alone, but if you want to go far - go together!” said **Co-Founder and COO at American Freedom Distilling Scott Neil**.

“I’m honored to have been chosen as a Brand Representative on the WSWA Access Advisory Council and look forward to working alongside the council members to develop the resources, guidance and solutions that will help craft spirits brands succeed in a crowded and often complicated marketplace,” said **President & CEO of Hawaii’s Kōloa Rum Company Bob Gunter**. “We have overcome so many challenges in our 11+ years in business, and I’m grateful for the opportunity to come together with this talented group of craft, start-up and small production wines & spirits brands as we map out a path to future success.”

“Having worked for both boutique wine and craft spirits producers, I’m excited to join the WSWA Access Advisory Council and support small producers in navigating the three-tier system,” said **President of Mad River Distillers Mimi Buttenheim**. “Craft brands drive innovation on a local level, and it’s fantastic that WSWA created this initiative to recognize the power of small brands and help them grow.

“Each Name (brand) has a story... Your Story, yours to tell,” said **MyStory Wine Founder Alexei Khimenko**.

Joining the Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America is an excellent opportunity for us to meet with like-minded leaders in the industry, share ideas, and learn from each other,” said **Chief Marketing Officer/Investor with Remington Family Distillers Susan Lambert**. “As our craft brand grows, we’re eager to offer our products to consumers outside of Texas. We're confident that we will benefit from the resources best practices to help us navigate the compliance issues and distribution channels to expand our footprint in new markets. We’re eager to share our expertise with WSWA members as well and see this as an excellent organization to which we can contribute our energy.”

“I’m honored to be part of the inaugural WSWA Access Advisory Council,” said **CEO of Sweet Amber Distilling Co. John Bilello**. “2020 hit the craft distilling industry extremely hard, from established craft brands to start-ups and small production operations. It's times like these, though, that shows just how strong and resilient our community is, and how willing we are to help one another. I’m proud to be part of this collaborative enterprise.”

“WSWA Access will allow emerging spirits brands to have a voice amongst the largest wholesaler partners in America,” said **Chief Sales Officer at Treaty Oak Distilling Company Atlas Cheek**. “This will enable us to work better together with the ultimate goal of growing our presence in the marketplace while ensuring that all stakeholders have been involved and are in agreement in the process.”

"It's an exciting time for craft spirits. I'm looking forward to participating with this dynamic group to assist brands in their journey," said **Co-Founder and President of Mico Spirits Company Subir Singh**.

About Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America

WSWA is the national trade association representing the distribution tier of the wine and spirits industry, dedicated to advancing the interests and independence of distributors and brokers of wine and spirits. Founded in 1943, WSWA has more than 380 member companies in 50 states and the District of Columbia, and its members distribute more than 80 percent of all wine and spirits sold at wholesale in the United States.

To learn more, please visit www.wswa.org or connect with us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

About WSWA Access

Launched in December 2020, WSWA Access is an initiative by Wine & Spirit Wholesalers of America on a mission to develop and work closely with craft, start-up and small production wine & spirits brands by providing expert guidance, resources and best practices that help labels navigate industry challenges and identify opportunities in an effort to further enhance a smartly regulated and successful U.S. alcohol marketplace.

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