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Press Release

Andy and Betty Beckstoffer Donate \$1 Million to Center for Wine and Viticulture at Cal Poly

by press release

Nov 15, 2021

(Rutherford, Calif.—November 15, 2021) – Andy Beckstoffer of Beckstoffer Vineyards announced that he and his wife, Betty, have donated \$1 million to the Cal Poly JUSTIN and J. LOHR Center for Wine and Viticulture to fund the Beckstoffer Vineyards Fermentation Hall. The Center, completed in September 2021, will open to students in the winter quarter. This is the largest completely donor-funded capital project in CSU history.

Beckstoffer Vineyards employs four graduates of Cal Poly who are key members of the management and viticulture teams: Dave Michul, President & CEO (1984), Brandon Axell, General Manager, Mendocino (1998), Blake Wood, Vineyard Manager, Napa Valley (2006) and Leonel Soto Mora, Viticulturalist, Red Hills (2018).

Andy Beckstoffer commented, “Cal Poly is a wonderful university, and their viticulture program is excellent. This new facility will further enhance that program. Cal Poly has produced some of the most talented viticulturalists and vineyard managers in the world, and we are especially proud that they allowed us to be a part of this program. We made this gift to honor the program, the four Cal Poly graduates that form the major part of our viticulture team and all of the Cal Poly graduates who contribute so much to the premium wine business.”

The Beckstoffer Vineyards Fermentation Hall in the Winery is the largest space inside the JUSTIN and J. LOHR Center for Wine and Viticulture, and it provides a place for students to gain hands-on winemaking experience using state-of-the-art equipment and industry practices. Here they will produce Cal Poly’s commercial wines as well as their own experimental varieties and blends. Every wine and viticulture student will gain invaluable learn-by-doing experiences in the Hall, preparing them for a successful career in this ever-changing industry.


Cal Poly has the largest undergraduate wine and viticulture program of its kind in the nation with nearly 300 students enrolled. It is the only program to emphasize the three major elements of the wine industry: viticulture, enology, and wine business.

ABOUT CAL POLY’S COLLEGE of AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Cal Poly is a nationally ranked, comprehensive polytechnic university. The university’s College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences is comprised of expert faculty members who take pride in their ability to transform academically motivated students into innovative professionals ready to solve the complex challenges associated with feeding the world in sustainable ways. Students have access to state-of-the-art laboratories, including organic and conventional crop land, orchards, vineyards, forests, and rangeland, all of which provide the basis for Cal Poly’s Learn by Doing methodology. It is the fifth-largest college of agriculture in the country with more than 4,100 undergraduate students. For more information visit [CAFES.calpoly.edu](#).

ABOUT BECKSTOFFER VINEYARDS

Named “Napa’s most powerful grape grower” by both the Wall Street Journal and Wine Spectator, Beckstoffer Vineyards was founded in 1970. Beckstoffer Vineyards is firmly rooted in the soil of Northern California’s wine country, with Andy Beckstoffer playing an integral role in the evolution of the wine grape industry since 1970. Beckstoffer Vineyards’ goal is to produce the highest quality grapes in Northern California that form the foundation of exceptional wines, as well as a passion for preservation of the land and viticultural expertise.

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