

WINE BUSINESS

Vida Valiente Napa Valley Winery and Foundation Raises Over \$500K for Low-Income Undergraduates at First Annual Auction in Los Cabos



Susana Cueva Drumwright and Hayes Drumwright

Philanthropic St. Helena winery offers 25-35 annual scholarships for talented first-generation low-income students in partnership with Stanford University

NAPA VALLEY, Calif. -- Capping off its first semester providing scholarships for underprivileged students at Stanford University, Vida Valiente raised \$535,000 at its first annual auction, held at Montage Los Cabos, in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico on Saturday, December 10th. Vida Valiente is a St. Helena-based wine label as well as a philanthropic foundation, building bridges for first-generation low-income students with tuition and unparalleled resources to help them succeed.

The Vida Valiente Foundation is partially funded by its eponymous Napa Valley winery's flagship wine – a Cabernet Sauvignon blend called The Movement™, crafted by acclaimed 100-point winemaker Sam Kaplan. \$100 from each bottle sale directly supports the Vida Valiente Foundation (the wine retails for \$250 per 750ml bottle).

Through leadership, financial scholarships and annual retreats, the Foundation gives admitted college students unprecedented exposure to professionals who grew up in similar circumstances, all of whom have made brave moves and can open doors to what's possible.

"We are deeply humbled and gratified by what Vida Valiente was able to accomplish this past weekend," said Susana Cueva Drumwright, CEO and co-founder of the Vida Valiente Foundation. "It was a thrill to debut not only a world-class annual wine experience, but also establish an annual cycle of giving that will have a lasting impact on dozens, soon hundreds, and ultimately thousands of low-income, first-generation students."

Tropical desert breezes welcomed 60 guests to Montage Los Cabos' stunning seaside backdrop at the southern tip of the Baja peninsula. Alongside Vida Valiente The Movement™ Cabernet Sauvignon, a curated selection of Napa Valley wines flowed throughout the live auction event, alongside inspired dinner pairings, fire dancers, and fireworks. Lot highlights included sumptuous luxury hotel packages at the St. Regis Venice – the iconic five-star celebrity hot-spot supremely located beside the Grand Canal – as well as Hotel Arts Barcelona, Victoria House Resort & Spa in Belize, the Montage Cabo Residence, and experiences that spanned from an ultra-exclusive Napa Valley estate private tasting tour to a VIP package at the Kentucky Derby.

Susana, a talented Latina CEO, philanthropist, tech executive, and Napa Valley vintner, is a first-generation daughter of immigrants herself. She and her husband, vintner and entrepreneur Hayes Drumwright, conceived both the Vida Valiente Winery and its Foundation to support students of a similar background who have worked hard to get themselves through school, but who could benefit from direct access to role models who grew up in similar low-income backgrounds.

"Our Vida Valiente scholars are persevering through demanding schedules, leaving their communities for the first time, while, in many cases, worrying constantly about how their families will get by financially without their help," Susana described in her welcome speech on Saturday. "Our financial support is set up to make it possible for students to not have to worry about working so that they can focus on their studies."

In fall of 2022, the Foundation welcomed its first class of 33 scholars, which it will support through their four-year matriculation at Stanford. Vida Valiente will introduce a new class of 25-35 freshmen scholars each year. All scholars have one thing in common – a great deal to overcome. Roughly 90% of first-generation low-income students in the United States take over six years to graduate. 33% drop out after three years. Between courses, jobs, a lack of a mentorship, and the daunting hurdle of leaving home for the first time, it is a wonder even 10% of these brave young adults make it.

The Foundation recently partnered with Stash, an investment platform for beginners that helps everyday Americans invest and build wealth. Stash sets up \$1,000 Stash accounts per student for use on its platform, to help teach Vida Valiente scholars how to smartly invest small amounts of money and develop healthy long-term financial habits.

In addition to hosting an annual offsite, Vida Valiente has plans to host several other leadership programs geared toward networking and internship opportunities. In February of 2023, the Foundation will take its scholars to Andreessen Horowitz, one of the world's most influential venture capital firms, to meet with leadership and discuss internship opportunities.

"With the \$500,000 raised this weekend in addition to the self-sustaining funds from our wines, our goal is to help 100 students in the next two years," said Hayes. "Long term, we hope to have thousands of graduates who actively provide leadership and opportunity to our scholars. Helping students overcome the odds while in college is just our first step. Sending empathetic leaders into the world who pay it forward through the Vida Valiente Foundation model is our ten to 20-year plan. We couldn't be more thrilled with the outcome of this first auction."

About The Vida Valiente Foundation

Vida Valiente translates to "Valiant Life," which speaks to the perseverance, resilience and the bravery it takes to be the first to navigate uncharted territory. The Vida Valiente Foundation was started by Napa Valley vintners and philanthropist Susana Cueva Drumwright and her husband Hayes Drumwright. It supports first-generation students who have worked hard to get themselves through school, but who could benefit from leadership from role models who grew up in similar low-income backgrounds. Funded primarily through proceeds from the founders' Vida Valiente Winery, the Vida Valiente Foundation gives admitted college students unprecedented exposure to professionals who grew up in similar circumstances, all of whom have made brave moves and can open doors to what's possible. To learn more about the Vida Valiente Foundation or to donate, please watch its Inspiration Video featuring its current scholars or visit vidavalientefoundation.org.

www.vidavalientewinery.com

About Vida Valiente Winery

Vida Valiente is a family-owned and operated Napa Valley winery founded by philanthropists Hayes and Susana Drumwright and winemakers Sam and Nancy Kaplan. The winery debuted in late fall 2021 with its release of 2019 The Movement™ (SRP \$250), its flagship Cabernet Sauvignon blend. \$100 from each bottle is donated directly to support the Vida Valiente Foundation. Starting with the 2021 vintage, Vida Valiente wines will be sourced from the Vida Valiente estate vineyard in St. Helena, as well as Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard in Oakville, High Ranch in Coombsville and another St. Helena site (TBA). For more information on the Vida Valiente Winery or to join the mailing list for The Movement™, please visit vidavalientewinery.com.

Companies mentioned in this article:

Vida Valiente Winery

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