

HOW ONE OF NAPA'S ONLY HISPANIC WOMAN EXECUTIVES IS USING WINE TO CREATE A MORE EQUITABLE US



Susana Cueva Drumright, the co-founder of [Vida Valiente Winery](#) and the [Vida Valiente Foundation](#) is working to champion the next generation of first-gen and low income college students across the US by **reimagining what it means to be a luxury wine brand—using wine as a means for supporting a broader vision of how to create a more equitable future in the US.** The daughter of Guatemalan and Mexican immigrants, Susana’s personal experiences inspired the mission of the Vida Valiente Foundation, which offers **scholarships and mentorship programs to talented, first-generation and low-income students** at prestigious American universities. Susana’s inspiring career path is now serving as a catalyst for the next generation.

Since 2019 Vida Valiente Winery has been producing world-class Cabernet Sauvignon wines in Napa. The name “Vida Valiente” means “valiant life” and was founded in conjunction with the Vida Valiente Foundation, a novel concept in Napa that is leveraging high end wine as a means for supporting a vision for creating a more equitable generation of talent.

As a first-generation Latina American herself, Susana knows the unique challenges faced by the students the Foundation supports, and is all too aware of how rare it is to find Hispanic women in executive positions in the US:

- **90% of first-generation low-income students take over six years to graduate**
- **33% of students in this group drop out after three years**
- **Hispanic women make up just 1.6% of senior executives at the nation's largest companies, while they make up approximately 9.3% of the overall US population**

The Vida Valiente Foundation's mission is two-fold: to alleviate financial pressures and give students a sense of belonging through mentorship and professional development opportunities, accompanying students throughout their entire four-year academic journey. Wine sales largely support the scholarship fund; **\$100 of each bottle's proceeds go directly to the Foundation's scholarships.** The foundation's inaugural class of 33 students began their Stanford journey in the fall of 2022 and the group of scholars has now grown to 73, with 30-40 new students added to the program each year. If you're interested in learning more about the scholars, I'd recommend hearing their own words in [this video](#).

Susana's journey as a first-gen Hispanic woman executive carries immense significance in the context of the broader business landscape and her rise to prominence is not just a personal achievement—it represents a tangible aspiration for the next generation.