

# A Message from Courtney DeGraff, Executive Director

## Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association December 1, 2025

Giving Tuesday is a moment to reflect on what binds us together as a community—and what we can do to strengthen that bond. The wine industry is, quietly, one of the most charitable industries in the country. Wineries donate wine, time, staff, and resources to support causes large and small, and most of that generosity is never formally tracked.

Since joining the Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association in 2019, I've had the privilege of seeing that spirit up close. Through our **2019-2025** festivals, auctions, and community initiatives, AVWA has helped raise **\$205,476 for local organizations**—including the Anderson Valley Health Center, Fire Department, Parent Teachers Associations, Mendocino County Resource District, Historical Museum, Skate Park, Housing Association, the Unity Club, and the Community Fairgrounds.

When I began, we had an old roll-up banner sign listing our cumulative contributions at roughly \$400,000. **Today, thanks to you, we've surpassed \$600,000 in charitable impact for Anderson Valley.**

In 2025, we expanded that commitment with the launch of our **AVWA Scholarship Program**, supported by American AgCredit and Atlas Vineyard Management. **We awarded \$7,000** in scholarships to students whose parents work in our local wine industry—the same families who help bring you wines with a story and a sense of place. With continued support from our partners and our White Wine Festival raffle, this program will only continue to grow.

As we look ahead, we see an opportunity to do even more for the community that sustains our vineyards, our businesses, and the pristine landscape we all cherish.

### Introducing the Anderson Valley Wines Community Action Fund

We're proud to announce the launch of the Anderson Valley Wines Community Action Fund, a **501(c)(3) charitable vehicle** established in partnership with the Community Foundation of Mendocino County.

This new fund creates a transparent, **tax-deductible way to give**—through cash or stock—with the sole purpose of supporting Anderson Valley nonprofits and student scholarships. Unlike raffle or auction donations, contributions to the Fund are fully tax-deductible and can be directed toward urgent or mission-focused needs year-round.



Questions? Contact Lia Holbrook

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✉ [lia@communityfound.org](mailto:lia@communityfound.org)

Our inaugural Giving Committee (serving two-year terms) includes:

- Peggy Ridley – longtime winegrower and Boonville community member
- Ashley Palm – owner of Bevel & Hacienda Sequoia Vineyards and Brashley Vineyards
- Myself, representing AVWA and our broader mission

We will make distributions annually and as urgent needs arise.

## This Giving Tuesday: Support the Boonville Food Bank

For our first initiative, we invite you to make a charitable gift to support the Boonville Food Bank. 100% of all Giving Tuesday donations to the Community Action Fund will be distributed directly to the Food Bank.

The Food Bank plays a vital role in reducing hunger and food insecurity for many in Anderson Valley—providing fresh fruits and vegetables, essential pantry items like beans, rice, and pasta, and staples such as eggs and cooking oil. Many of its volunteers come directly from our wine community. One of them, Peggy Ridley, shared why this cause resonates so deeply:



**As Giving Committee member Peggy Ridley shared:**

"The Food Bank touches so many—from families working in vineyards and wineries to aging community members who rely on nutritious meals. I've personally helped arrange food for those in need, and it truly is a pillar of this community."

If you love Anderson Valley—its wines, its families, its sweeping landscapes—this is a meaningful way to give back.

## Make your Giving Tuesday gift today!

**Donation by Credit Card:** Via [this link](#) or scan the QR code here:

**Donation by Mail:**

Community Foundation of Mendocino County  
204 South Oak St.  
Ukiah, CA 95482

Memo: Anderson Valley Wines Community Fund

**Donation by Stock or Other Appreciated Assets:**

Many donors choose to give through appreciated securities, which may offer meaningful tax advantages while maximizing support for our community.



Thank you for supporting a community that has given so much to all of us. Together, we can ensure that Anderson Valley remains a place of care, resilience, and connection.

Warmly,  
Courtney DeGraff



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