

**Media Contact:** Carl Giavanti Consulting, [cgiavanti@mindspring.com](mailto:cgiavanti@mindspring.com), 971.221.4212

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **All-Star Judging Panel unveiled for 2019 McMinnville Wine & Food Classic – SIP!**

*Preeminent wine buyers, writers, educators, winemakers, and chefs will score the competition*

**Portland, OR, August 8, 2018:** The McMinnville Wine & Food Classic – SIP! has unveiled the final roster of judges for the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary event's wine competition, which will take place **January 19, 2019**. Representing the full spectrum of the wine industry, this year's judges include preeminent wine buyers, wine educators, winemakers and chefs from industry titans like New Seasons Market, The Wine Shack, The Joel Palmer House, and The San Francisco Wine School. Writers and editors for some of Oregon's leading wine media outlets, such as *Great Northwest Wine*, *Wine Press Northwest*, *Sip Northwest Magazine* and the *Oregon Wine Press*, as well as national publications like *WINO Magazine*, *SOMM Journal*, *Tasting Panel Magazine*, and *The Clever Root*, also round out the panel.

"The McMinnville Wine & Food Classic - SIP! wine competition gets fiercer every year, and so do our judges," says Carl Giavanti, one of the competition's co-organizers and honorary judge. "This year's shaping up to be our most impressive yet. We have ultra-qualified industry professionals who also understand consumer preferences. The medals they award will be a huge feather in the cap for the winning producers."

The full panel of judges for 2019 is as follows:

**Michael Alberty**, Wine Editor, *The Oregonian*. Michael Alberty writes about wine for *The Oregonian*, the oldest continuously published newspaper on the west coast. Alberty also publishes a monthly column in the *Oregon Wine Press*. His words also appear – or are about to appear – in *Decanter*, *Sunset*, *Terre*, *Pipette* and *Wine & Spirits*.

**Eric Degerman**, CEO of *Great Northwest Wine*, co-founder of *Wine Press Northwest*, and veteran organizer and judge of international wine competitions.

**Otto Han**, Wine & Beer Program Manager for New Seasons Market, and former purchaser/program manager for Whole Foods Market, Andronico's Community Markets, and Cost Plus World Market.

**Hoke Harden**, veteran wine consultant, writer, and educator who has also worked as a retailer, restaurateur, bartender, buyer, wholesaler, supplier, marketer, and critic.

**Christine Havens**, a former winemaker turned wine writer and marketing director.

**Erin James**, writer, author and editor-in-chief of Sip Publishing — creators of *Sip Northwest*, *CIDERCRAFT* and *Sip's Wine Guide: British Columbia* magazines.

**Ken Robertson**, wine judge, winery tour guide, and industry consultant, as well as long-time columnist for *Wine Press Northwest* and the retired editor of *Tri-City Herald*.

**Steve Sinkler**, owner of award-winning The Wine Shack retail wine store in Cannon Beach, OR, and proprietor of Puffin Wines.

**Fred Swan**, the exhaustively-certified San Francisco Bay Area-based wine and spirits writer, judge, speaker, and educator at the San Francisco Wine School.

**Hilary Berg**, editor of *Oregon Wine Press*, and co-owner of Roots Wine Co.

**Maxine Borcharding**, former sommelier and chef-instructor at the Oregon Culinary Institute, now food and wine travel guide, operations consultant, and wine instructor.

**Christopher Czarnecki**, Chef, Owner and Wine Program director of the acclaimed Joel Palmer House restaurant in Dayton, OR.

**Patrick McElligott**, manager of the much-lauded Oregon Wine Tasting Room for 28 years, now tasting instructor, and sales and marketing manager for Sineann Winery.

**Carl Giavanti**, community organizer, publicist and media consultant for boutique wineries in Oregon.

Held at the Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum in March of each year, the McMinnville Wine & Food Classic - SIP! festival brings together small, independent producers (SIP) of Oregon wine, beer, liquor, food, and art for three days of tasting, toasting, and raising funds for St. James School in McMinnville. Approximately 170 vendors will set up among the artifacts of the space age – jets, missiles, and displays from outer space missions. Winners of the 2019 SIP! wine competition will be able to display their accolades at the consumer event March 8-10, 2019.

### **SUBMITTING WINES FOR COMPETITION**

The SIP! wine competition is limited to current-year Oregon winery participants in the SIP! festival, which is by invitation only. Eligible wineries will be notified of the details and requirements for submitting their wines in the coming weeks.

SIP! will announce the winners on January 19, 2019 at the conclusion of the judging.

For more information on the 2019 judges and past winners, visit [www.macclassic.org](http://www.macclassic.org).

### **ABOUT THE MCMINNVILLE WINE AND FOOD CLASSIC – SIP!**

Nicknamed SIP!, this weekend food & wine festival is a dedicated fundraiser for McMinnville's St. James Catholic School that has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for programs benefiting the school's children. Organized and staffed entirely by volunteers, the Classic is one of the largest community events of the year in McMinnville, and one of the largest and most beloved indoor food and wine festivals in Oregon. For more information, visit [www.sipclassic.org](http://www.sipclassic.org).

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

2019 Judges' Bios: <http://sipclassic.org/sip-wine-competition-judges-mcminnville-wine-food-classic.html>

YouTube Vendor Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVmkF8Luwl&sns=em>

News & Press: <http://macclassic.org/news-press/>

Facebook: [@McMinnvilleWineandFoodClassic](https://www.facebook.com/McMinnvilleWineandFoodClassic)

Twitter: [@MacWineClassic](https://twitter.com/MacWineClassic)

Instagram:

[@macwinefoodclassic](https://www.instagram.com/macwinefoodclassic) Evergreen Aviation Museum link: <https://www.evergreenmuseum.org/>

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