



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington Wine Industry Announces Recipient of Allen Shoup Memorial Fellowship *Selection committee awards fellowship to Dennis Fraley*

SEATTLE (August 11, 2026)—The Washington wine industry has named Dennis Fraley of Florence, South Carolina, as the recipient of the 2026 Allen Shoup Memorial Fellowship for Writers and Communicators. Fraley was selected out of a talented pool of applicants by a committee composed of writers and industry leaders.

"Dennis is a creative and thoughtful writer, with an eagerness to learn more about our region. I'm excited to see where this fellowship takes him," said Ryan Shoup, Allen's son and a member of the 2026 selection committee.

Fraley is a wine writer, educator, and judge. He writes "The Bottle Talk," a monthly column in its third year at *The Post and Courier*, with bylines in *Food & Wine* and *Vinum*. He holds the WSET Diploma, chairs the American Wine Society National Tasting Project Committee, and has judged the International Wine Challenge in London and the Winemaker Magazine International Amateur competition, among others. He is a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist by trade.

"I have spent my working life on the idea that no two people respond to the same glass the same way," Fraley said. "Washington may be the rare wine region that believes the same about the people drinking it. The state grows everything, insists on no single story, and lets the wine in the glass matter more than any rule about how you are supposed to taste it. That is the story I have been waiting to discover, and I am honored the committee is trusting me to tell it."

The fellowship was established in 2024 in memory of Allen Shoup, who played a pioneering role in developing the Washington wine industry as the longtime head of the state's largest winery, Ste. Michelle Wine Estates. He later became the founder and owner of the acclaimed winery Long Shadows Vintners. Shoup passed away in 2022.

"Allen knew Washington to be one of the world's great wine regions and understood that bringing its story to a wider audience required writers to experience it for themselves," Ryan Shoup said. "Through this fellowship, emerging writers can spend time in the vineyards, meet the people behind the wines, and develop their own appreciation for our story."

The fellowship awards one or two recipients annually with an immersive trip to Washington's vineyards and wineries, a collection of wine samples, and a stipend. Funded entirely through donations, the goal is to grow and to shape media awareness and the perception of Washington wine by identifying and elevating the wine writers and communicators of tomorrow. It is an industry-wide collaboration that brings together the Washington State Wine Commission, Auction of Washington Wines, Washington Winegrowers Association, Washington Wine Industry Foundation, individuals, wineries, and growers.

The 2026 selection panel was composed of Patrick Comiskey (national wine writer seat); Sean Sullivan, Northwest Wine Report (PNW-based wine writer seat); Kristin Bacon, Sip Magazine, (wine professional at large seat); Freddy Arredondo, Cave B Winery (Washington wine industry seat); and Ryan Shoup, Long Shadows Vintners (Shoup family representative).

The 2026 fellowship received applications from around the world. Applicants were evaluated based on writing samples, an essay, story pitches, and other factors. Applications for next year's fellowship will open in spring 2027 at washingtonwine.org.

About the Washington State Wine Commission:

The Washington State Wine Commission (WSWC) represents every licensed winery and wine grape grower in Washington state. Guided by an appointed board, the mission of the WSWC is to drive growth of Washington Wine through Marketing, Communications, and Viticulture & Enology Research. Funded almost entirely by the industry through assessments based on grape and wine sales, WSWC is a state government agency, established by the legislature in 1987. To learn more, visit www.washingtonwine.org.

About the Auction of Washington Wines:

The Northwest Wine Benefit Foundation, DBA Auction of Washington Wines, is committed to supporting the growth and awareness of the Washington state wine industry through a series of celebrated events benefiting the community. They have raised over \$72 million since their inception in 1988. To learn more, visit auctionofwawines.org.

About Washington Winegrowers Association

Founded in 1983, the Washington Winegrowers Association supports winegrape growers, vintners, and allied members by addressing industry needs and collaborating to enhance the Washington wine industry. Washington Winegrowers Association provides state and federal advocacy and education on industry matters, serving as a unifying voice and stewarding relationships across the wine industry, with its members, growers, vintners, policymakers, educational institutions, and other industry partners. To learn more, visit www.wawinegrowers.org.

About Washington Wine Industry Foundation

The Washington Wine Industry Foundation is a dynamic network of wine industry professionals united by a common vision: to foster a thriving Washington wine industry. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the Foundation facilitates, manages, and distributes funding to confront challenges and invest in solutions including scholarships, industry events, and sustainability such as pest control, clean plants, risk management, safety, and more. Through collaboration and partnerships, the Foundation honors the industry's heritage while forging a path to a flourishing future for Washington wine. To learn more, visit www.washingtonwinefoundation.org.

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