



AWSEF OFFICERS 2026

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NEWSLETTER

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WELCOME

Welcome to the first edition of the AWS Educational Foundation Newsletter.

The goal of your AWS Educational Foundation Board of Trustees is to publish this quarterly, and we may increase the frequency as required.

Expect updates and features on our scholarship and silent auction campaigns. You'll also find highlights on scholarship recipients and the generous donors, including AWS chapters, individuals, or companies. The Board of Trustees will also provide updates.

Please feel free to pass this newsletter along to anyone who might be interested.

WHAT IS THE AWS Educational Foundation

The AWSEF was established in May 1993 as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization and has the following mission:

...support educational and research activities that will advance the viticultural and enological sciences to achieve a world-class North American wine industry.

Any member in good standing of the American Wine Society is eligible for membership in the AWSEF. So, in other words, all AWS members are members of the AWSEF.

The other category of membership is that of Affiliate. Any person or organization, not a member of the American Wine Society, that has made a qualifying donation to the AWSEF is eligible for "Affiliate" membership in this Foundation.

Questions about membership can be directed to Kristen Lindelow, AWSEF President at president01@awsef.org or Walter Rachele, AWSEF Treasurer at treasurer01@awsef.org.

The AWSEF is a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. All contributions to AWSEF are tax deductible to the maximum amount permitted by law.

AWSEF Opens Applications for 2026 Graduate Scholarships

The application is now open for 2026 and can be accessed at [American Wine Society Education Foundation](#).

To date, the AWSEF has awarded about \$600,000 in scholarship support to deserving students. The foundation is accepting submissions from full-time graduate students pursuing degrees in enology, viticulture, or the health aspects of wine who intend to work in the industry upon graduation and who are permanent residents of North America.

In 2025, AWSEF awarded seven \$3,500 scholarships and one \$5,000 scholarship.

New this year! AWSEF will provide a one-year AWS Student membership for all scholarship recipients.

Eligibility

1. Must be a full-time graduate student
2. Must be a North American citizen or permanent resident
3. There is a three (3) scholarship limit – This means that previous AWSEF scholarship recipients may apply again in open competition with new applicants, but students are limited to receiving three (3) scholarships during their academic career. Students may apply every year if they are eligible.
4. March 31, 2026, is the scholarship application deadline

Screening Procedure

The American Wine Society Educational Foundation's (AWSEF) Vice President for Scholarships leads the selection committee. Their responsibilities include promoting the scholarships, communicating with applicants, and addressing questions as needed.

Further, the AWSEF President or Vice President, Scholarships will communicate the committee's decision to the applicants and announce the winners to those people and organizations involved.

Evaluation criteria

- Research Project's Importance to the North American Wine Industry
- Statement of Professional Intent
- Advisor and Other Recommendations

- Shows Promise of Working in the Wine Industry or Education
- Academic Record
- Overall Evaluation

A list of Past Scholarship Recipients is available at <https://awsef.org/scholarships/past-winners/>

You may also watch videos of recent recipients on AWSEF YouTube channel.
<https://www.youtube.com/@AWSEducationalFoundation>

If you have any questions on these procedures, please contact Dr. Isabelle Lesschaeve at vpscholarships01@awsef.org for further assistance.

If you, your chapter, or employer wishes to establish a scholarship, please contact the AWSEF Treasurer, Walt Rachele at treasurer01@awsef.org.

Silent Auction Help Needed!

The AWSEF Silent Auction takes place each year at the AWS Conference and is a significant fundraiser for your Foundation.

The AWSEF needs volunteers in several roles. In 2025, this event raised \$5,770.00.

If you are interested in volunteering, contact Vice President, Private Development, Therise Collier at vpprivatedev01@awsef.org

Board Member Profile

Meet the AWSEF President, Kristen Lindelow



Pictured Above: AWSEF President, Kristen Lindelow

Kristen discovered AWS in 2010 when she joined the N. Alabama Chapter.

While she was a Regional Vice President, she assisted with founding five chapters in North Alabama and Mississippi.

Kristen is a Graduate of the AWS Certified Wine Judge program and has judged for wine competitions across the U.S. and in Europe.

She is a Certified Specialist of Wine through the Society of Wine Educators, a French Wine Scholar and Spanish Wine Scholar through the Wine Scholar Guild and has completed the WSET Level 2 (intermediate) with merit.

She enjoys educating others about wine, she lives in Huntsville (Rocket City), Alabama with her husband, Phillip. Lately, however, you'll find her traveling with Phillip in their small "glamper"!

Email Kristen at president01@awsef.org

Leave a Legacy

Any time there are personal income tax planning issues, AWSEF gifts should be considered.

Among these is the opportunity to gift appreciated assets (e.g., stocks, bonds, mutual funds, real estate) to qualifying organizations, such as the American Wine Society Educational Foundation.

Such gifts are normally tax-deductible to the donor at full market value.

The AWSEF has three fund types established to support both operations of the Board of Trustees and to provide scholarships.

These funds are.

- The **General Fund** that supports the AWSEF operation,
- The **Endowment Fund** that provides the AWSEF scholarships into perpetuity, and
- **Special Scholarship Funds** that bear the name of an individual, group or corporation.

As a tax-qualified 501(c)(3) organization, the AWSEF welcomes charitable gifts. Contributions should be tax deductible but to be sure please check with your tax advisor.

Find more information here. <https://awsef.org/giving/>

Sponsors

Thank you to our sponsors: **Banfi and Elevage Digital.**

Banfi

Banfi has had a long-standing involvement with the AWSEF, which is very much appreciated.

Founded in 1978 by the vision of Italian American brothers John and Harry Mariani, Banfi represents a marriage of winemaking passion and technological innovation. Through collaboration with Ezio Rivella, one of Italy's most eminent winemakers, the land purchased in Montalcino was transformed into a crucible of quality and potential.

The acquisition of the historic Piedmontese winery Bruzzone subsequently further enriched the portfolio, integrating the sparkling wine tradition of Piedmont into the Banfi world. Information about Banfi can be accessed at <https://www.banfi.it/eng/>

Elevage Digital

Elevage Digital provides affordable WordPress services, using best-practice tools and techniques for website accessibility, website management, performance, and SEO. Elevage can be reached at <https://elevagedigital.com/>

Interested in supporting the AWSEF?

If your company is interested in sponsoring AWSEF activities, you can contact Bill Ellis at vpcorporatedev01@awsef.org.