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The School of Business and Economics (SBE) at Sonoma State University (SSU) announced that Dr. William Silver, dean, was awarded the 2017 Giving Back Leadership Award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine, a diversity and inclusion monthly and website in higher education with a readership of 300,000. Dean Silver was recognized in the publication’s April issue for “outstanding demonstration of social responsibility; involvement with students, faculty, staff, and the community; and commitment to serving underrepresented populations.” The award is the only national honor for college and university administrators for their commitment to diversity through leadership, and for giving back to their campus and community. Recently, Dean Silver introduced the Rodney Strong Pathways Program and Wine Industry Scholars Program, including a combined initial amount of $350,000 dollars in support of programs and education grants for first generation college students and children and families of winery and vineyard workers.

Rutherford grower Ted Hall of Long Meadow Ranch has been named the 2017 Napa Valley Grower of the Year. Hall will be honored for his contributions to the Napa Valley wine industry and the community on May 12 at the Napa Valley Grapegrowers 42nd Annual Dinner. Ted Hall has been president and CEO of Long Meadow Ranch since 1989, where he and his team have developed a world-class diversified agricultural program. They produce grapes, wine, olives, olive oil, beef, lamb, eggs, fruits and vegetables. Much of what they produce is served at Hall’s farm-to-table restaurant in St. Helena, Farmstead at Long Meadow Ranch, and at the Long Meadow Ranch Winery. Napa Valley Grapegrowers president, Garrett Buckland, noted, “Ted’s contributions to the Napa Valley have been crucial to the continued success of agriculture in the Napa Valley. He inspires others by example and his dedication to agricultural and environmental preservation are unparalleled. We are very happy to recognize him as the 2017 Grower of the Year.”

Viticulture farm advisor Larry Bettiga of the University of California Cooperative Extension, Monterey County, will be this year’s recipient of the American Society for Enology and Viticulture’s (ASEV) Extension Distinction Award. This honor recognizes a current extension educator for outstanding contribution to an extension program or the advanced translation of novel research findings into commercially applicable tools for enologists or viticulturists. Bettiga will share his presentation, “Preparation and Delivery of Viticulture Extension on the Frontier” at ASEV’s 68th National Conference in Bellevue, Washington on June 28, 2017. Bettiga’s research focuses on the influences of cultural practices, rootstock and clonal selection, and canopy management on grapevine growth and productivity, and the use of integrated approaches to solve pest management problems in coastal wine grape production systems.

Donnell Brown has been selected as the new president of the National Grape & Wine Initiative (NGWI). Brown succeeds Camron King as president of the organization. Brown has worked within the wine industry since 2009, operating a private consulting firm, Between the Vines, LLC; served as senior marketing director for Wolffert Estate Vineyard, Sagaponack, NY; and functioned as marketing director for Visit Temecula Valley. During her tenure operating Between the Vines, Brown also served as executive director of Long Island Merlot Alliance and was event planner and board member of Harvest East End, East End of Long Island. Prior to entering the wine industry, Brown had extensive experience in corporate communications for GTE, Verizon Wireless and Amdocs, Inc. WBM