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WSWA NAMES BERT “TITO” BEVERIDGE AS 2024 RAY HERRMANN H.E.R.O. AWARD RECIPIENT

WASHINGTON, D.C., 12/20/2023 – Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA) today announced that Bert “Tito” Beveridge, Founder of Tito’s Handmade Vodka will receive the 2024 Ray Herrmann H.E.R.O. Award at Access LIVE next month. Tito was chosen by the selection committee for the qualities that make him a H.E.R.O. (Humanitarian, Ethical, Respectful, and One-of-a-kind).

“We’re honored to recognize a titan in our industry and a household name as a H.E.R.O.,” said WSWA CEO and President Francis Creighton. “From the beginning, Tito built his brand and company around an ethos of philanthropy that persists to this day. Tito is a larger-than-life inspiration to us all.”

"The Ray Herrmann H.E.R.O. Award honors transformational leaders in our industry who, like Ray, have made an enormous impact not just in business, but through their character and deep connections with others. Tito Beveridge is one such person, whose larger-than-life personality and infectious energy impacts all those he meets," said Charlie Merinoff, Co-Chairman of Breakthru Beverage Group. "Over the years, Tito has earned a strong reputation as an industry leader in philanthropy and community engagement and has consistently responded to challenges with compassion and a huge heart to help others, just like Ray. At Breakthru, we are proud to work with such a partner and congratulate him on receiving this incredible honor."

“There are very few industry names in the past 100 years that have become synonymous with a spirits category, and Tito Beveridge is one of them,” said WSWA Chairman Doug Shaw. “This award recognizes a one-of-a-kind, true gentleman for his inspirational entrepreneurial spirit only rivaled by his philanthropic heart and dedication to community,” he added.

Tito Beveridge founded Tito’s Handmade Vodka in the mid-nineties. Inspired to do what he loved, Tito pursued a career in the spirits industry, risking it all until he sold his first case in 1997. Dreamed up and distilled in Austin, Texas, Tito’s is known for its high-quality product, charitable contributions, and goal to make people happy while making the world a better place.

“Ray Herrmann was an icon in our industry, and he was always willing to listen, share his insights, and build the sort of relationships that stretched beyond our business,” said Bert “Tito” Beveridge, Founder of Tito’s Handmade Vodka. “He was someone whose friendship and mentorship I valued immensely, and I took to heart the significance he had on people. I truly appreciate this incredible honor and thank WSWA and Breakthru Beverage for the opportunity to donate the \$20,000 award to the Robert Qualls Scholarship Fund, and match it with an additional \$20,000 gift.”

WSWA Educational Foundation's Robert Qualls Scholarship Fund is in memory of Robert Qualls, an extraordinary hospitality and spirits industry veteran and a beloved Tito's and distributor employee. The Robert Qualls Scholarship Fund honors Qualls' legacy of hard work, generosity, and selflessness by allowing students to follow in his footsteps.

For more information about the Robert Qualls Scholarship Fund, visit [the WSWA Educational Foundation website](#).

About Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America

WSWA is the national trade association representing the distribution tier of the wine and spirits industry, dedicated to advancing the interests and independence of distributors and brokers of wine and spirits. Founded in 1943, WSWA has more than 380 member companies in 50 states and the District of Columbia, and its members distribute more than 80 percent of all wine and spirits sold at wholesale in the United States.

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