

LEADER TO LEADER



Advocating for African American Vintners

Regine T. Rousseau



Meet the Author: **Regine T. Rousseau** is the founder and CEO of Shall We Wine, a strategic marketing company. Rousseau is a wine and spirits entrepreneur, writer, presenter and media personality, focusing on making wine knowledge accessible to people at all levels of proficiency. She is recognized as a 2022 "Leader in the Wine Industry" by *WineBusiness Monthly*, a nominee for the 2020 *Wine Enthusiast* "Wine Star Awards," "Wine Educator of the Year," a WSET Level 3 with Merit, an International Sommelier Guild Level II and an Executive Bourbon Steward, Stave and Thief. She has authored and/or been featured in articles in *The Drop*, *New Yorker*, *Wine Enthusiast*, *Black Enterprise*, *Black Food and Beverage*, *Wine Spectator*, *Forbes* and *Chicago Tribune*.

Editor's Note: This is the first in a new series in which 2022 Wine Industry Leader Regine Rousseau and WBM Managing Editor Erin Kirschenmann interview other honorees about what makes a good leader, how to grow in the wine business and how to foster a brighter future for others in the industry. Find the full interview on our YouTube channel and LinkedIn, and read a small summary here in the magazine.

IN THIS EDITION OF Leader to Leader, Regine T. Rousseau sits down with *WineBusiness Monthly* (WBM) 2023 Leader, Angela McCrae, the executive director of the Association of African American Vintners and founder of Uncorked & Cultured. Angela, a media communications and content expert, spearheads efforts to build strong relationships between members and the public, increase donations, and foster entrepreneurship within the wine industry.

As the Association of African American Vintners experiences significant growth of 500% in membership since June 2020, Angela's leadership is pivotal in

propelling the organization forward. Her primary focus lies in empowering members, advancing their wine-related businesses, and serving as a voice for the African American vintner community.

When asked about her leadership style and aspirations, Angela describes herself as an advocate. Her passion stems from the fulfillment she derives by helping others and amplifying their voices. Being an advocate enables her to address the unique challenges faced by the African American vintner community and contribute to their overall success.

The conversation delves into Angela's approach as an impactful leader. She emphasizes the importance of understanding and working closely with her team, members, and community. By considering diverse perspectives and actively listening, Angela ensures that the decisions made benefit all parties involved. Her dedication to comprehensively addressing the needs of vintners and wine professionals alike sets her apart as an influential leader.

As Angela continues to champion African American vintners' cause, her commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive environment remains unwavering. Through her leadership, the Association of African American Vintners is making remarkable strides in promoting diversity and excellence within the wine industry.

*This interview was recorded in 2023. The program mentioned at the end of the interview has ended. To learn more about how to support AAVV, visit www.aaavintners.org. **WBM***



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