



## SOMMFOUNDATION AWARDS THE SECOND ANNUAL DEBBIE LEWIS WOMEN IN WINE SCHOLARSHIP TO JESSICA NORRIS

SommFoundation congratulates Jessica Norris, recipient of the 2021 Debbie Lewis Women in Wine Scholarship. Jessica has been awarded \$5000 to be used toward pursuing the Court of Master Sommeliers, Master Sommelier Diploma.



**DEBBIE LEWIS**

This scholarship was created to honor the life of Debbie Lewis. Debbie was the eldest of four daughters. She grew up in California's Central Valley, spending childhood summers at the family ranch, where they grew Bartlett pears and row crops. She eventually took over management of the ranch, worked as a kindergarten teacher, got into retail sales and then co-managed the oldest wine bar in San Francisco, The London Wine Bar. In the late 1970's Debbie met Randy Lewis at a wine tasting and they eventually married. In 1992, she and Randy co-founded Lewis Cellars. Together they built a legacy and in 2016, the Lewis 2013 Napa Cabernet was named "Wine of the Year" by Wine Spectator.

Debbie was the rock of her family and provided the steady hand that built Lewis Cellars. She was involved in every aspect of vineyard management, winemaking, sales, distribution, and she spent many days on the road, building relationships all over the country. Debbie had a life-long passion for mastering the business of wine and set an inspiring example of dedication and hard work to all those around her.

Jessica Norris is the Vice President of Strategic Customer Relations for Vineyard Brands, where she is responsible for developing their e-commerce channel. She joined them in July 2020, after her tenure as Vice President of Beverage for Front Burner Restaurants where she led beverage operations, program development and education for seven restaurant concepts. During this time, she was honored with the [Keggy Award](#) for her work on sustainable wine packaging.

As a noteworthy leader in the wine profession, Jessica spent over ten years with the Del Frisco's Restaurant Group, rising through the ranks at the Double Eagle Steakhouse in New York from server to sommelier and finally to Wine Director in 2012. From 2012 to 2016 she



**JESSICA NORRIS**

led the sommelier team to \$8 million dollars annually in wine sales, a Wine Spectator Grand Award, and she was named one of Wine Enthusiast's 2015 "40 Under 40 Tastemakers in America". In 2017, Jessica was promoted to Director of Beverage, overseeing beverage programming and education for all 53 restaurants under the Del Frisco's Restaurant Group umbrella. Through her love of wine education, she helped mentor and prepare over 150 students for their CMS & WSET Wine Exams.

Jessica was born in Anchorage, Alaska and raised just south of Seattle, Washington. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA and a Master of Music in Opera Performance from Manhattan School of Music in New York, NY. She passed the Master Sommelier Diploma Theory and Service exams in 2019 and will sit the Master Sommelier Diploma Blind Tasting exam in the fall of 2021. Jessica currently lives in Austin, TX, with her husband and one-year-old son. She enjoys playing tennis and gardening in her spare time. Follow Jessica on Instagram [@sommjessnorris](#)

The mission of SommFoundation is to assist wine and spirits professionals to achieve the highest level of proficiency and accreditation in the food and beverage industry. SommFoundation provides enrichment opportunities and scholarships to sommeliers, restaurant professionals, wine journalists, and winemakers to further their knowledge about the world of wine and spirits.

