

The Court of Master Sommeliers, Americas (CMS-A) is taking action to increase diversity and inclusion throughout the hospitality industry and at every stage of the journey to becoming a Master Sommelier. Our Diversity Committee is hard at work exploring new ways of reaching and sharing knowledge with current and future sommeliers in the BIPOC and minority communities.

Together, the Board of Directors and the Diversity Committee look forward to crafting the road map of our organization's future with the engagement of our entire membership. We are working on a daily basis toward evolving the CMS-A as it continues to set the global standard for beverage service and also becomes more accessible and inclusive for all who wish to pursue beverage education.

Progress

We are bringing meaningful change and lasting impact to the CMS-A and the beverage industry. Recently completed efforts include:

- Released a statement supporting Black Lives Matter and formed the Diversity Committee
- Procured (and are currently implementing) implicit bias training for our members in partnership with [Azure Antoinette](#)
- Granted scholarships for BIPOC students to attend the recently launched CMS-A online learning program
- Using some of the proceeds from our online learning programs, the CMS-A funded \$10k in educational scholarships for BIPOC Wine Professionals. The scholarships will be administered by the newly formed [Black Wine Professionals](#) in partnership with [SommFoundation](#). Stay tuned for announcements on the application process as scheduling for courses and examinations resumes in the fall

"CMS Conversations" Series

One of our primary and ongoing goals is to improve communication both internally with our membership and externally with the broader community. The Diversity Committee launched an Instagram Live series on our CMS-A Instagram ([@mastersommeliers_americas](#)) as a space to discuss, learn, and grow while highlighting the diverse backgrounds of our members and non-member wine industry leaders. The **CMS Conversations Series** began **Monday, July 13th at Noon CST** on Instagram Live and will continue every other week. Our inaugural broadcast featured two members of the Diversity Committee: June Rodil, MS and Carlton McCoy, MS. We will look for participation from all interested members and leaders in the wine industry. Our next one will be on July 27th with Emily Wines MS and Vincent Morrow MS. If you missed our discussion this past Monday, you can watch it in full [here](#). We encourage everyone to tune in every other Monday.

On the Horizon

We recognize there is, and will always be, more work to do. The Committee has outlined additional ongoing efforts and they look forward to sharing more details in the coming weeks.

1. Scholarships and Financial Aid for wine education and expansion of accessibility to underrepresented communities.
2. CMS-A HBCU Expansion: The CMS-A has pre-existing tuition-free Introductory Level programming partnerships with several colleges and universities around the United States. We are working on expanding this programming to HBCU campuses and on-campus BIPOC organizations within our current partnerships.

3. The Diversity Committee will continue to work closely with the Board of Directors and membership on increased accessibility and fair representation throughout the organization.

Throughout all discussions, the Diversity Committee refers to its purpose statement as a compass for moving forward:

The Diversity Committee exists to make wine education more accessible and inclusive to underrepresented communities so that the Court of Master Sommeliers can inspire current and new generations of wine professionals.

Every discussion and measure put forth is vetted through this statement to ensure it is representative of our promotion of diversity and inclusivity. The steps taken so far are just the beginning. The Board of Directors and the Diversity Committee are dedicated to improving every day and creating lasting, meaningful impact in the beverage industry. We will continue to update you on our progress and welcome all thoughts and suggestions on this journey forward. Please feel free to reach out to the Diversity Committee at diversity@mastersommeliers.org.

Court of Master Sommeliers, Americas



The Court of Master Sommeliers sets the global standard of excellence for beverage service within the hospitality industry with integrity, exemplary knowledge, and humility.

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