



## **Court of Master Sommeliers, Americas Announces Seasoned Assembly of New Additions to Board of Directors** *New Appointees to Provide External Perspective and Support Organization's Mission*

**Napa, CA (January 20, 2022)** – The Board of Directors for the Court of Master Sommeliers, Americas is excited to announce four new members to join the Board of Directors. The new members include **Thomas W. Dortch, Jr.**, Chairman, 100 Black Men and CEO, TWD Consulting, **Douglass Miller**, Faculty at Cornell University, Nolan School of Hotel Administration, **Adrienne Segundo**, Co-founder of the National Credentialing Institute, Chairman/COO of Limitless Solutions, and **Melanie L. Steinbach**, Chief People Officer at Cameo. With these new external additions to the Board of Directors, the Court of Master Sommeliers hopes to bring a renewed vision and leadership to the organization as it enters its next chapter.

“We are thrilled to be welcoming a ‘dream team’ of individuals from all different backgrounds to the Court of Master Sommeliers, Americas Board of Directors,” says Julie Cohen Theobald, Executive Director of CMS-A. “After a thorough vetting process of leaders across the nation, we are confident these volunteer directors will continue to build the expertise, capability, and diversity of our Board. Having external and objective perspective is so important in bringing the Court of Master Sommeliers, America into a new era.”

As the Court of Master Sommeliers, Americas ushers in a new year, each of the new external board members will utilize their unique skills to help prioritize different aspects of the organization's growth. Thomas Dortch's expertise in mentoring will help reach new audiences and foster a community of support within the organization. Douglass Miller's experience in academia will be key for CMS-A to expand its education focus and offerings as well as provide a link to the next generation of young professionals entering the hospitality field on college campuses. Adrienne Segundo, a credentialing expert, will help CMS-A objectively review and modernize its examination process, leveraging best practices of the certification field. Finally, Melanie Steinbach will help CMS-A to grow through recruiting and retention of students, candidates, and professional staff by helping to build an organizational culture that is safe, nurturing, and professional, utilizing best practices of human resources.

### **Thomas W. Dortch, Jr., Chairman, 100 Black Men and CEO, TWD Consulting**



Thomas W. Dortch, Jr., is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of TWD, Inc. In 1990, he became the State Director and served as Chief Administrator for United States Senator, Sam Nunn. Mr. Dortch was the first African-American to serve in this capacity for any U. S Senator. Mr. Dortch is also the author of *The Miracles of Mentoring: How to Encourage and Lead Future Generations*, a book he wrote with the 100 Black Men of Atlanta that shares the successful blueprint of its **Miracles of Mentoring** program, from which more than 100,000 children of all colors have benefited. Mentoring is very important to Mr. Dortch and he truly believes that giving one's time, experience, and wisdom to a young person, sows the seeds of confidence, pride, and accomplishment. Some of Mr. Dortch's other accomplishments include: founding the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame Foundation, Inc., co-founding the Georgia Association of Minority Entrepreneurs (GAME) to fill a void as an advocacy organization for minority business development, and co-founding the Greater Atlanta Economic Alliance as a capacity building and business development organization for the

construction and transportation industries. Dortch has been civically active for many years, serving as chairman of 100 Black Men of America's national board of directors.

**Melanie L. Steinbach, Chief People Officer at Cameo**



Melanie is an accomplished business executive who is passionate about connecting business and people strategies to drive growth. Her work fostering an environment for diverse, global talent to thrive has been critical in supporting the strategic and cultural evolution across a range of organizations, including global brands, family businesses, and startups. Melanie currently serves as the Chief People Officer at Cameo, the leading online marketplace building personal relationships among talent, fans and brands through custom video messages and merchandise. She joined Cameo as the company's first-ever Chief People Officer in November 2020, where she is responsible for human resources strategy and operations as Cameo builds a strong culture of high connection while committing to a work from anywhere environment. Prior to Cameo, Melanie held the title of Senior Vice President and Chief People Officer, McDonald's

USA, after joining McDonald's in 2017 as Vice President and Global Chief Talent Officer.

**Adrienne Segundo, National Credentialing Institute, Limitless Solutions**



Graduate of the US Chamber of Commerce - Institute for Organization Management (IOM) program in Athens, GA; Adrienne Segundo has over twenty years' experience in the association industry with her most recent move to opening her own boutique AMC that specializes in the development and maintenance of certification and education programs. Limitless Association Solution Resource is based in Littleton, CO and she serves as the COO/Chairman of the business. In addition, Adrienne is co-founder of the National Credentialing Institute (NCI). NCI was developed to provide the association, non-profit or

chamber professional with assessment-based, professional development based on industry best practice for current and emerging industry professionals. Prior to that she served as the Director of Credentialing & Operations for the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA). Adrienne has extensive experience in exam development, accreditation, advance credentialing, and marketing of many credentials.

**Douglass Miller, Professor, Cornell University Hospitality**



Douglass Miller has over 30 years of industry experience in restaurants, hotels, resorts, and education. He has worked around the country including Las Vegas, San Francisco, New York City, Hawaii, Santa Barbara, CA, Philadelphia, and Washington DC with Four Seasons Resorts and Hotels, Wyndham Hotel, Marriott, and several independent companies. He is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America (CIA), SUNY Empire State College, and University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he holds a Master's of Hospitality Administration. Currently, he is a lecturer in food and

beverage management at the SC Johnson College of Business, School of Hotel Administration (SHA). Before Cornell University, he was a professor of hospitality and service management at the CIA. Mr. Miller is a Certified Specialist of Spirits (CSS); Society of Wine Educators, Certified Beer Server; Cicerone, and has taken the Introductory Sommelier Course; The Court of Master Sommeliers. Also, he has spoken at several conferences including Tales of the Cocktail, Craft Brewers Conference, Great American Beer Festival, and Menus of Change.

“With these appointments, the CMS-A is now more than ever committed to driving both internal and external change and furthering its mission of creating a more equitable space for wine education,” said Emily Wines, Chair of the Board of Directors.

**ABOUT COURT OF MASTER SOMMELIERS, AMERICAS**

The Court was established in England in 1977 and sets the global standard of excellence for beverage service within the hospitality industry with integrity, exemplary knowledge, and humility. The first Master Sommelier Diploma Exam to be held in the United States was in 1987. The Americas chapter, which serves both North and South America, was established in 1987. Since then, 172 professionals have earned the title of Master Sommelier as part of the Americas chapter. The title Master Sommelier marks the highest recognition of wine and spirits knowledge, beverage service abilities, and professionalism in the hospitality trade. Education was then, and remains today, the Court’s charter. For more information, please visit [www.mastersommeliers.org](http://www.mastersommeliers.org).

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