

Washington State Wine Commission hires new Executive Director

The Washington Wine Commission just announced the hiring of their new Executive Director, Steve Warner. The Washington Wine Institute was pleased to participate with our industry partners in the search for the new Executive Director and we are excited to share this message with our members.

Washington State Wine Commission hires new Executive Director *Veteran marketing executive joins nation's second-largest wine industry*

We are excited to announce the hiring of Steve Warner as our new Executive Director.

Steve comes to the Commission from Merck & Co., Inc., where he was Managing Director based in Bucharest, Romania. Prior to that, he held General Manager and marketing positions in global and regional marketing in the Asia Pacific region and led teams while living in Seoul, South Korea; Bangkok, Thailand; and several domestic markets.

Steve holds a bachelor's degree in biology from East Tennessee State University and a master's of business administration in international business and finance from Rutgers University.

Born and raised in Washington State, Steve graduated from West Seattle High School before serving in the United States military's Special Operations Command, first as a Sergeant in the U.S. Air Force and then as a Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy.

"I could not be more excited about joining the Commission and the industry at this particular time in our evolution," Mr. Warner said. "We have tremendous opportunity ahead of us, and I look forward to working with our state's growers and wineries to realize our full potential as a unified industry."

Kent Waliser, Chairman of the Washington State Wine Commission, said, "We are very excited that the industry has come together unanimously behind the best possible candidate for the job, and we look forward to adding Steve's extensive marketing and leadership experience to help take our industry to the next level."

"We're proud of the collaborative process that we've undertaken with our industry partners – the Washington Wine Institute and the Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers – to fill this critically important role," he added. "Our industry stands united and ready to greet Steve with open arms."

Marty Clubb, President of the Washington Wine Institute and owner of L'Ecole No 41 Winery said, "Steve's executive management and organizational leadership experience will enable him to be an effective spokesperson for our entire industry at this critical time in our history."

"WAWGG looks forward to the fresh ideas and opportunities from a new executive. We will continue to build strong partnerships that directly benefit our constituency to increase grape and wine sales." added Lynne Chamberlain, Chair of the Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers and owner of Spofford Station Vineyards.

Steve was selected by a hiring committee consisting of representatives from the Washington State Wine Commission, the Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers, and the Washington Wine Institute, and voted for unanimously by the entire WSWC Board. Mr. Warner will join the Commission effective March 12, 2012.

Thanks again for your WWI membership!
We could not do our work without your generous support!