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A Taste of Linfield on Third Street

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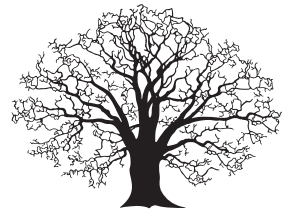
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A taste of Linfield on Third Street

By Kristie (Patterson) Rickerd '97

Linfield students have a new way to grow their creative and professional skills with the opening of Acorn to Oak Wine Experience, now open on McMinnville's historic Third Street. A collaborative vision born of students' desire for a deeper look into the wine industry as well as faculty and staff professional expertise, this new learning lab brings a taste of Linfield to the local community and visiting wine enthusiasts. Acorn to Oak opens on Sept. 9, 2023, and will be open regularly from Thursday through Monday every week. With multiple student engagement opportunities – for wine studies students and others – and partnership from the local wineries, this new venture is truly, like its slogan says, “where education meets taste.”



News-Register photo by Rusty Rae '68

FEATURING STUDENTS: Alison Hmura '26, an art major from Salem, won a contest to have her mural installed and on display at Acorn to Oak for its opening.

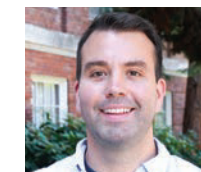
Ways Linfield students will be involved:

It's all in the name – Acorn to Oak Wine Experience. Not just a tasting room or a wine bar, several academic programs are involved in providing an enjoyable experience for guests and hands-on learning opportunities for Linfield students, regardless of major. These include:

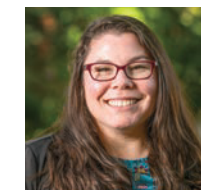
- Pouring and serving wines (for those ages 21+) and learning customer service and hospitality skills.
- Managing inventory and building business-to-business relationships.
- Creating and executing marketing and promotional plans.
- Adjusting pricing based on cost analyses.
- Hosting public poetry readings, live music and other performances by students in the space.
- Featuring student-created art or photography throughout the facility.

Get to know the managers:

Two professional staff members collaborate with student employees, ensuring seamless operations and a constructive learning experience.



PAUL JOHNSON joined Linfield in August as the hospitality, tasting room and wine club manager. No stranger to Oregon wines, Johnson has worked on the business and cellar side of some of the region's top brands, including Duck Pond Cellars, Alit Wines/Rose & Arrow and Domaine Roy & fils. Johnson also owns and produces the wines for Satyr Fire Wines in Dayton, which he started in 2019 in the Eola-Amity Hills AVA.



STEPHANIE MITCHELL '23 is the Acorn to Oak project manager. She has overseen the creation and design of the space with students. Mitchell has worked in a variety of hospitality roles including as a beverage director and in marketing and sales for wine brands and importers. She earned a master's degree from Linfield in May. She is now a wine studies instructor and manages the Wine and Spirit Educational Trust courses at Linfield. Mitchell is WSET Level 3 certified and is working on her Master of Wine.



What's pouring downtown?

Acorn to Oak serves wines from the Willamette Valley. Each of the 20 participating wineries are also partner wineries of the Oak & Vine Society, Linfield's wine benefits club that raises scholarship money for students in the wine studies program.

“The tasting room will serve as a place for guests to enjoy and receive education on wines from a range of outstanding wineries in Oregon,” Johnson said. “The Acorn to Oak team looks forward to curating a diverse and exciting list of wines that represent the ongoing narrative of the Oregon wine industry.”

Guests can choose from the day's selection or request a tasting flight to compare wines from different wineries or vintages. A selection of snacks, including charcuterie and cheese plates, can be ordered to complement customers' wine selection.

Acorn to Oak Wine Experience is located at
546 NE Third Street, McMinnville.

acorntoakwine.com