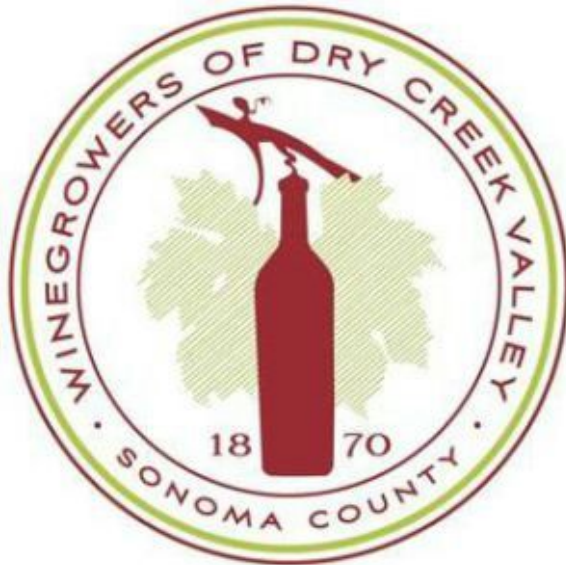


# ADVISOR

## WINE INDUSTRY NETWORK

### **Winegrowers of Dry Creek Valley Raise Over \$20,000 for Early Childhood Education** *The Funds Will Support Programs to Improve Literacy among Local Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten Students*

By the Wine Industry Network Advisor, October 8, 2015



HEALDSBURG, Calif. (October 8, 2015)—Winegrowers of Dry Creek Valley (WDCV) raised more than \$20,000 this year in support of preschool education for local youth, in a new partnership with Healdsburg Unified School District (HUSD). Following 12 years of granting scholarships to graduating high school seniors, the WDCV is expanding their focus to provide support for children with the greatest financial need early in their development.

Ann Petersen, executive director of the WDCV says, “This vital new program will benefit underserved preschool children living in the Dry Creek watershed and surrounding area by emphasizing literacy at the beginning of their formal education.”

The first fundraiser for the program was a silent auction held at the Annual WDCV Membership Picnic on August 2, 2015, and raised more than \$6,000. The remainder of

the funds came from donations made by members of the WDCV.

Erin Fender, director of curriculum and education for Healdsburg Unified School District (HUSD) says, “There are an increasing amount of studies showing that early and pre-literacy skills — knowing the alphabet, knowing sounds, is hugely important to future literacy. Today’s kindergarten class looks a lot like what we who are 40 and older were learning in first and second grade.”

The majority of funds raised will be expended during the 2015-2016 school year to support the salary of a mentor for preschool teachers in the HUSD. Nationally, such mentoring has been shown to result in better social, language, and math performance levels at entry to kindergarten and again when students are re-tested in grade three. These students also have higher levels of graduation from high school and matriculation into college and trade schools. Remaining funds will be used to support the PASITOS preschool program which meets at the HUSD campus once weekly and provides preschool education for Spanish-speaking children.

Fender says, “We’re thrilled about the generous gift from the Winegrowers of Dry Creek Valley. The funding enables us to expand Accelerated English—a program we’re in our third year of implementing with

elementary schoolers—into our pre-kindergarten classes. The first two years of the program have resulted in more students being redesignated as Fluent English Proficient than ever before.”

Donald Goodkin, chair of the WDCV Education Committee notes, “Families who cannot afford private preschool programs have limited or no options for preschool education for their children. In our district, many of these students are children of Hispanic workers in the wine industry. Support provided by the WDCV helps meet this identified need in our community to benefit the children of workers in our industry, and is structured in such a way to optimize the program’s success.”

The Dry Creek Valley Scholarship Fund was jointly established in 2003 by the WDCV and the Dry Creek Valley Association (DCVA). It will continue to provide annual scholarships to graduating high school seniors and current college students.

#### About Winegrowers of Dry Creek Valley

The Winegrowers of Dry Creek Valley® (WDCV) is an association of more than 60 wineries and 150 growers, of which more than 95 percent are small, family-owned operations. WDCV is dedicated to advancing the recognition, enhancement and preservation of Dry Creek Valley as a premium winegrowing region. Anchored by the charming town of Healdsburg, the Dry Creek Valley appellation was officially designated in 1983. Known as a premier zinfandel growing region, Dry Creek Valley is one of California’s oldest wine producing regions and is home to many heritage vineyards ranging in age from 50 to 120 years. To preserve this history and the valley’s pristine beauty, the Winegrowers of Dry Creek Valley supports sustainable viticulture and low-impact farming practices. [www.drycreekvalley.org/](http://www.drycreekvalley.org/)

<http://www.wineindustryadvisor.com/2015/10/08/wingrowers-dry-creek-20000-child-education>