

TVOS - Tennessee Viticultural & Oenological Society

Spring Newsletter 2026



Celebrating the Season of Winemaking

Let's take a look at what's happening this season!

Spring is finally here, and with it comes fresh inspiration for winemakers everywhere. As vines awaken and the weather warms, it's the perfect time to plan new batches, refine techniques, and connect with fellow enthusiasts. Whether you're experimenting with a new grape varietal or perfecting a trusted recipe, the TVOS community is here to share the journey.



2026 TVOS WINEMAKERS CONFERENCE

The Annual TVOS Conference was held February 27-28 and proved to be another informative and enjoyable gathering for our winemaking community. The event featured a number of knowledgeable speakers who generously shared their expertise, experience, and insights with attendees.

One of the highlights of the conference was the annual auction, where members enthusiastically participated in bidding on a variety of items. Proceeds from the auction support the Harry & Lora Westcott Scholarship Program, helping to further education and opportunities for students in the winemaking community.

The banquet dinner was exceptional and provided a wonderful opportunity for attendees to gather and celebrate together.

The evening's highlight was the awards presentation, recognizing the outstanding efforts and achievements of many talented winemakers. While there were numerous award winners throughout the evening, the top honor of Overall Best Winemaker was awarded to Emmett Hunt.

We extend our congratulations to all of the award recipients and our sincere thanks to everyone who helped make the conference such a success.

We look forward to seeing you at the 2027 TVOS Conference. Additional details will be shared in the coming months.



The Harry & Lora Westcott Scholarship Program And the award goes to.....

Dana Landry

Congratulations to Dana Landry, the recipient of this year's Harry & Lora Westcott Scholarship. Dana grew up in an agricultural community in Mississippi, where her father worked for John Deere. She often accompanied him as he traveled to farms throughout the region, giving her early exposure to a wide range of agricultural operations and helping foster a strong connection to the farming community

Dana is currently enrolled in the Master of Science program at the University of Tennessee, where she is also working with Dr. Pierre Davadant on viticulture research projects across the state

Balancing graduate studies, research responsibilities, and family life, Dana maintains an exceptionally busy schedule while raising two children with her husband.

We are proud to have Dana and her husband as members of TVOS and are pleased to support her continued work and education through the Harry & Lora Westcott Scholarship.



SIP & SAVOR

SOME IDEAS FOR SPRING APPETIZERS & WINE

Mozzarella and Blackberry bites

- 15 wooden skewers
- 15 fresh mozzarella balls
- 15 large fresh blackberries
- 1 cucumber, slices & quartered
- 2 teaspoons oregano
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
- 3 tablespoons olive oil

Add 1 mozzarella ball, 1 blackberry, and 1 cucumber piece to each skewer

Cover and chill until ready to serve

Make a vinaigrette:

In a small bowl, whisk together vinegar, Olive Oil, oregano and salt.

Ready to serve drizzle skewers with vinaigrette.

ENJOY with a nice Chardonnay

Tomato and Mozzarella bites

- 1 cup of Grape tomatoes
- 8 oz. small mozzarella balls
- Fresh basil
- 2 tablespoons of Balsamic vinaigrette
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Small toothpicks

Wash tomatoes

Drain Mozzarella balls, pat dry and slice a small piece off the bottom of the mozzarella balls (so they will stand up on plate)

Assemble the toothpick with tomato, basil then mozzarella

Drizzle balsamic vinaigrette over top, sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Refrigerate 15 minutes then serve.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: CHRIS CARD

Greetings to all TVOS Members - and prospective Members!

It is my honor to serve once again as the organization's President, for the fourth (and last) time. My aspirations for the coming year are simple in concept, although likely more difficult to achieve.

First and foremost, I will work with the Board of Directors to determine what the future will hold for our organization in the near and longer term in both operations and finance. While we have made much progress in the last two years recruiting extremely capable Officers and Directors to the Board, there remain several positions to be filled including Membership Director, Historian, Scholarship Committee member and Vice President. The Scholarship Committee Chairman position is also available due to the term of the current Chair having expired. These roles are not particularly difficult or time-consuming and can actually be quite fun. Please reach out to any current Board member if you are interested in learning more!

Second, I would like to complete the digitization of our historical documents for posterity. To date, only one of our three archival volumes has been scanned, and I would like to realize an acceptable mechanism for making this information available to members and researchers alike.

Also, I would like to hear from more of you! Understanding what you like about the organization (and what could be improved) is the most important input to our 2026 planning process.

Finally, a sincere thank you to all of our members and supporters. It was great fun visiting with new and old friends at the February conference, and I am looking forward to seeing you all again soon!

Thank you
Chris Card

A Request from:

Stephan Sommer, Ph.D.
Associate Professor Food Science and
Extension Specialist for Enology and Fermentation
University of Tennessee
Department of Food Science

The University of Tennessee - Department of Food Science - would love to hear your thoughts on the current state of the grape and wine industries in Tennessee and where you would like to see the University of Tennessee Knoxville Extension help the growth and prosperity of wineries and wine-related businesses.

Tennessee Grape and Wine Industry Survey

[Click here to participate in survey](#)

An introduction to Pierre Davadant, Ph.D.

Pierre Davadant, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor - Viticulture
University of Tennessee
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Dr. Pierre Davadant is an Assistant Professor of Viticulture at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. His research focuses on identifying grape varieties best adapted to Tennessee's climate and developing vineyard practices that reduce frost risk, control vine vigor, and improve fruit and wine quality. A central pillar of his program is the exploration of Tennessee's hidden terroir, with the goal of understanding how soils, climate, and growing conditions shape the identity and quality of wines produced across the state.

Dr. Davadant earned his PhD in Horticulture at Washington State University under Dr. Markus Keller, where his research on grapevine nitrogen nutrition demonstrated that foliar nitrogen applications at veraison can increase yeast-assimilable nitrogen in fruit at harvest while also supporting long-term vine nutrition.

His professional experience spans several renowned wine regions. In Pauillac, he conducted a large-scale vineyard survey to guide rootstock and cultivar selection on sandy-gravelly soils. At Domaine du Closel in Savennières, he gained experience in organic and biodynamic vineyard management for high-quality Chenin Blanc production. He also acquired winemaking experience in Pauillac, Saint-Estèphe, Savennières, Châteauneuf-du-Pape, and in California at Hafner Vineyard and Vérité Winery in Sonoma, strengthening his understanding of terroir-driven viticulture and winemaking.

His global perspective is further supported by completion of the Wine and Spirit Education Trust Level 4 Diploma and study visits to vineyards in France, Hungary, the Netherlands, England, Italy, and the United States. These experiences reinforced his scientific and practical conviction that a wine's sensory profile is primarily shaped by the environment in which grapes are grown, while viticultural practices can fine-tune fruit quality.

Before joining UT, Dr. Davadant spent six years as a teaching faculty member at École Supérieure d'Agriculture (Angers, France), where he developed courses in viticulture and enology, directed multiple agricultural bachelor's programs, and established international academic partnerships. At the University of Tennessee, he dedicates 75% of his time to research and 25% to teaching. His approach integrates field trials with growers and controlled greenhouse studies. As part of his research program, Dr. Davadant plans to conduct multiple surveys of grape growers across Tennessee and the southeastern United States to better understand vineyard practices, challenges, and regional characteristics. Growers who have a vineyard and are interested in contributing to this research are encouraged to reach out (pierre.davadant@utk.edu).

TVOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2026

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