



DEBORAH BRENNER FOUNDER & CEO

As a Social Entrepreneur, Deborah Brenner expounds beyond the entrepreneurial focus of growing a business and measures performance on the positive impact the business makes on society. She has manifested her vision with Women of the Vine & Spirits, and inspired people to support a movement in the alcohol beverage industry. She has presented a challenge that calls forth the best in people and brings them together around a shared sense of purpose, working with the power of intentionality and alignment with a higher purpose.

Deborah Brenner graduated from the University of Delaware with degrees in English and Journalism and was soon hired by a television and film technology company that required international travel to countries for whom wine is a part of everyday life. After over 20 years in the male-dominated field of high-end technology and owning a marketing and public relations firm, Deborah discovered during a fortuitous trip to Napa and Sonoma that many women in the wine industry – like her own – were under-recognized.

Compelled to tell their stories, she authored a bestselling collection of profiles on women in the wine industry, *Women of the Vine: Inside the World of Women Who Make, Taste and Enjoy Wine*, which *Wine Spectator* named a Critical Read of 2007.

Through the process of writing the book and championing its subjects, Deborah became inspired to enter the wine business herself, releasing wine from a first-of-its-kind collective of seven artisan women winemakers from Napa, Sonoma and Paso Robles. For the following seven years, Deborah learned the business inside and out. Ultimately, however, all the money, blood, sweat and (a lot) of tears could not foster women in the wine industry the way she had hoped, which led her to shut down the Women of the Vine wine brand and return to the drawing board.

A year later, in March 2015, Brenner organized the Inaugural Women of the Vine & Spirits Global Symposium which was a sold-out success. The women who attended sought out an opportunity to connect through a global network and seek ways to accelerate their business and professional development. They were looking for a forum to collaborate across all industry sectors and to do business with like-minded women and men. It was clear to Brenner that to make a positive impact on the alcohol beverage industry, women needed a voice year-round – not once, annually.

Membership to the organization opened September 2015. What started off as a one-off event and a grass roots movement quickly expanded into a global organization with corporate and individual members connected across 23 countries. Women of the Vine & Spirits has become a catalyst for creating a positive impact in the alcohol beverage industry by giving women globally a platform and a voice to thrive.

Deborah belongs to the Culinary Institute of America's Society of Fellows and has received a Rising Star Award from Women for WineSense (2008), a New York Small Business Administration Women in Business Champion Of The Year (2009), a New York City National Association of Women Business Owners Signature Award (2010), the Lillian Vernon Award for Outstanding Community Service by the Women's Enterprise Development Center (2011), a NY Women in Communications Rising Star Award (2013), the Rockland Business Women's Network Woman of the Year Award (2014), the Rockland Business Women's Network Woman of the Year Award (2014), American Cancer Society Dr. Louis Berger Award (2017), Wine Enthusiast

Wine Star Award Person of the Year Nominee (2017), Las Vegas Inc. "Woman to Watch" (2018), and Wine Enthusiast Wine Star Award "Social Visionary of the Year" Recipient (2018).