

**Grant Project Title:** Piedmont Virginia Community College Cellar Worker Certificate Program  
**RFP:** VWB-FY17-WORKDEV

## **Final Report**

### **Summary**

Piedmont Virginia Community College was awarded \$20,075 from the Virginia Wine Board to develop a standardized curriculum for a Cellar Worker Certificate Program. The funds were awarded to create a “hands-on” curriculum, to train students for entry level positions in Virginia wineries as cellar workers, and to develop a competency based final exam to assess student competencies. The credential developed by Piedmont Virginia Community College has been endorsed by the Virginia Wineries Association and will benefit the Virginia wine industry by providing a standard of competence for industry workers. All proposed project outcomes have been achieved.

**Grant Objectives:** The objectives of this project were to:

1. Develop a curriculum for a Cellar Worker Certificate Program
2. Establish a standardized, comprehensive training resource for winery cellar workers
3. Develop an industry certification to assess student competency that will be offered through the Virginia Wineries Association.

### **Status of Project**

Piedmont Virginia Community College has collaborated with the Virginia Wineries Association and Monticello Wine Trail on the implementation of this grant. Outlined below are specific steps that were proposed to develop the Cellar Worker Certificate Program and expand it across the Commonwealth in future years. Each bullet is followed by an update on the current status of the project:

- Piedmont Virginia Community College will form an Advisory Council of business professionals from the Virginia wine industry to review the proposed courses, make recommendations and approve the final curriculum. Wine region representatives from across the Commonwealth will be engaged in future years as PVCC works with other community colleges to expand this program.
  - PVCC formed an Advisory Council of eight wine industry professionals. The Council guided the development of the competency-based curriculum through recommendations and approved the final curriculum. A meeting is planned for the spring semester to review and evaluate the newly created program.
- Industry professionals who work full-time in the Virginia wine industry will be engaged by PVCC as adjunct faculty for this project. This team will collaborate on new course development, instructional strategies and the development of a competency-based final certification exam under the guidance of the Virginia Wineries Association.
  - Six of the program instructors, all of whom work full-time in the Virginia wine or cidery industry, proposed final exam questions that were used to develop the final certification

exam. The exam consists of 25 short-answer questions and is available electronically. These six instructors, along with Virginia Wineries Association representative Mitzi Batterson, assisted in the development of the curriculum.

- Piedmont Virginia Community College's Dean of Workforce Services and Program Manager of Viticulture and Enology will work closely with all project participants to lead this initiative. Wineries hosting on-site instruction will be engaged, and meetings will be held with the Virginia Wineries Association and the Virginia Wine Board to ensure a successful end product.
  - Six wineries and one cidery hosted on-site instruction and seven instructors were engaged to develop this program. Valerie Palamountain, PVCC's Dean of Workforce Services and Greg Rosko, PVCC's Program Manager of Viticulture and Enology visited classes frequently to assess training quality.
- The classes will be piloted primarily in the Monticello Wine Trail region in 2016-17. Upon completion of the program, the Advisory Council will review the outcomes and make recommendations to further strengthen the curriculum. While the classes are in session, PVCC will work with other community colleges to contact wineries throughout the Commonwealth to host future classes and recruit industry professionals to teach the classes in areas outside the Monticello Wine Trail region.
  - The Advisory Council review of this program took place in February. They were very pleased with the pilot program. The Council recommended further strengthening the program through consistent alignment between the classroom and hands-on components of the program.
  - Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC) expressed an interest in hosting viticulture and enology classes. Carlene Hurdle from the Workforce Services Division at LFCC contacted PVCC Workforce Services about starting a Viticulture & Enology program and has begun reaching out to their local wine industry.
- Once a student completes the required classes and passes the final exam, the Virginia Wineries Association will issue a Cellar Worker Certificate in Enology. The Virginia Wineries Association will be the credentialing body for this industry credential that will be recognized throughout Virginia. Community colleges across the Commonwealth will be able to replicate this model in response to the demand for a highly skilled workforce.
  - To date, all classes have been completed. Kirsty Harmon, winemaker at Blenheim Vineyards, graded the final exams. A sample program certificate is attached at the end of this report.

#### **TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION**

Item	Status
Develop Curriculum and Course Syllabi	Completed
Develop Marketing Plan	Completed

Develop Course Materials and Handouts	Completed
Marketing & Student Recruitment	Completed
Conduct Courses (13 courses)	Completed
Assessment and Continuous Review	Completed
Advisory Committee Meetings	Completed
Print Brochure	Completed

**Source and amount of other supporting funds, facilities and personnel:**

In addition to the seven wineries already hosting Piedmont Virginia Community College enology classes, Matthieu Finot from King Family Vineyards, Michael Heny from Horton Vineyards, Emily Pelton from Veritas Vineyards, Ben Jordan from Early Mountain Vineyards and other winemakers from the Monticello Wine Trail Research Group and the Virginia Wineries Association assisted us in this project.

Industry Professionals	Organization	Support
1. Matthieu Finot	Winemaker, King Family Vineyards	Curriculum and Exam Development
2. Michael Heny	Winemaker, Horton Vineyards	Curriculum and Exam Development
3. Emily Pelton	Winemaker, Early Mountain Vineyards	Curriculum and Exam Development
4. Ben Jordan	Winemaker, Early Mountain Vineyards	Curriculum and Exam Development
5. Mitzi Batterson	Proprietor, James River Cellars	Advisory Council and Curriculum Development
6. Gregory Rosko	Program Manager, PVCC	Administrative Support
7. Valerie Palamountain	Dean of Workforce Services, PVCC	Administrative Support
8. Host Vineyards	Horton Vineyards, King Family Vineyards, Veritas Vineyards, Early Mountain Vineyards	Classes held at these wineries as well as Keswick Vineyards, Pollak Vineyards, and Castle Hill Cidery.

**Curriculum Update**

Below is a list of the courses offered through the Cellar Worker Certificate Program.

Class Title	Class Dates
Course Overview & Introduction to Winemaking	8/6/2016
Winery Safety and Winery Cleaning & Sanitation	8/13/2016
Winery Equipment & Maintenance	8/20/2016
Lab Basics & Pre-Harvest Analysis	8/27/2016
Crush: White Processing	9/3/2016

Fermentation Management (Yeast, Bacteria)	9/10/2016
Crush: Red Processing	9/24/2016
Cap Management	10/1/2016
Racking & Barrel Management	10/8/2016
Forklift Operator Training & Certification	10/26 & 11/2/2016
Overview of Cider Making	11/12/2016
Fining & Filtration	11/19/2016
Bottling	12/8/2016

Nine out of ten students took the final exam and all of them passed the exam. Exams were graded by Kirsty Harmon, winemaker at Blenheim Vineyards. Six students were awarded the Cellar Worker Certificate by the Virginia Wineries Association. A meeting for the final review and assessment of the program was held during the spring semester at PVCC. In that meeting all instructors were pleased with the outcome of the program all agreed to teach the classes again. PVCC is very pleased with the outcome of this program and is grateful to the Virginia Wine Board and the Virginia Wineries Association for supporting this valuable project.

# Virginia Wineries Association

This certificate is presented to

Student Name

For successfully completing all required coursework and training for

Cellar Worker Certificate Program

This 12th Day of June, 2017



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Valerie Palamountain, Dean of Workforce Services  
Piedmont Virginia Community College



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Laurie Aldrich, Executive Director of Virginia Wineries  
Association