



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nation's top sommeliers to pour at 2012 Naples Winter Wine Festival

NAPLES, Fla. (Jan. 20, 2012) – Joan and Bob Clifford, co-chairs of the 2012 Naples Winter Wine Festival, the nation's most successful charity wine auction, are thrilled to announce the support of 12 nationally renowned sommeliers at the 2012 festival. For the first time since the festival's inception in 2001, an all-star cast of the country's leading sommeliers will join the 34 Florida-based sommeliers to lend their expertise, passion and world-class service at this year's event, which takes place Jan. 27-29 at The Ritz Carlton Golf Resort, Naples.

"Bringing in the top sommeliers in the country adds a dynamic new dimension to the festival," said Festival Wine Consultant, Bruce Nichols. "Like the celebrity chefs we invite every year, these men and women are at the very top of their game. They have spent 1000's of hours of academic research and developing their palates. They've built their reputations on advising and recommending wines to clients and customers in the finest restaurants across the US and the world, and for the first time, they will bring that passion and expertise to this year's Naples Winter Wine Festival."

2012 Naples Winter Wine Festival top sommeliers include:

Matthew Carroll – Grape + Bean, Old Town Alexandria, Virginia

Third place in the 2010 TOP|SOMM Competition – Northeast region

Ian Cauble – The Ritz-Carlton, Half Moon Bay, California

Winner of 2011 Chaîne des Rôtisseurs Best Young Sommelier competition

Gold Medal at 2011 International Jeunes Sommelier Competition – Named Best Young Sommelier in the World

Wine & Spirits Best New Sommelier of the USA 2008

Dennis Kelly – The French Laundry, Napa Valley, California

Wine & Spirits Best New Sommelier 2010

Wine Spectator Grand Award since 2007

Alexander LaPratt – db Bistro Moderne, New York City, New York

2011 Best Sommelier in America according to American Sommelier Association

One of Wine & Spirits Best New Sommeliers of 2011

Michael Meagher – Heirloom Wine Group, Boston, Massachusetts

Winner of 2010 Chaîne des Rôtisseurs Best Young Sommelier competition

Chris Miller - Spago, Beverly Hills, California

Wine & Spirits Best New Sommelier 2008

Wine Spectator Grand Award since 2010

Heath Porter – The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia

Winner of 2004 Chaîne des Rôtisseurs Best Young Sommelier competition – Pacific region

Eric Railsback – RN74, San Francisco, California

Wine & Spirits Best New Sommelier 2010

Wine Spectator Grand Award since 2010

David Singer – L’Espalier, Boston, Massachusetts

Only independent restaurant in Boston to receive 12 consecutive AAA Five Diamond Awards 2000-2012

Brett Taylor – Sourtirage, New York City, New York

Assists clients in building and maintaining their cellars as one of Philadelphia’s top wine advisors

Former sommelier at both Vetri and Osteria, two of Philadelphia’s best restaurants according to

Philadelphia Magazine

Dustin Wilson – Eleven Madison Park, New York City, New York

Master Sommelier since 2011

Wine Spectator Grand Award 2011

Wine & Spirits Best New Sommelier 2009

Jill Zimorski – VOLT, Frederick, Maryland

Wine Spectator Award of Excellence 2011

Festival ticket packages are \$8,500 per couple; \$20,000 for reserved seating at the same vintner dinner for two couples. For a schedule of 2012 festivities and more information about the Naples Winter Wine Festival, visit www.napleswinefestival.com or call 888-837-4919.

About Naples Children & Education Foundation

Naples Children & Education Foundation has raised more than \$94.5 million at Naples Winter Wine Festival since 2001 to create and expand charitable programs serving underprivileged and at-risk children in Collier County. As a direct result of the investments of NCEF, more than 125,000 children have had their lives improved. The foundation is governed by a nine-person board, representing 69 trustees, and currently supports 23 grantees and long-term strategic initiatives focused on children’s early learning, medical/oral health, out-of-school programs, behavioral health and childhood hunger.

Naples Winter Wine Festival, the most successful charity wine auction in the world, is the primary source of funds for NCEF. Wine Spectator magazine has ranked NWWF as the nation’s top charity wine auction since 2004. The festival is planned and executed by the trustees, foundation staff and hundreds of volunteers.

Festival events span three days, beginning with Meet the Kids Day, during which guests interact with children who have benefited from festival proceeds and witness charitable dollars at work. Guests enjoy wine tastings throughout the weekend. They also attend intimate dinners prepared by famous chefs at private homes of NCEF trustees with wines selected and poured by renowned vintners. A festival highlight takes place at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, Naples – a founding sponsor of the festival – with a culinary showcase and live auction of 67 lots. A wine-down party that evening and brunch the next day bring festivities to a close.

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Photo captions:

Ian Cauble.jpg

Participating sommelier Ian Cauble, wine director at The Ritz-Carlton, Half Moon Bay, California, was recently named best young sommelier.

wine bottles - photo by Tom Harper.jpg

12 of the nation’s top sommeliers will be featured at the 2012 Naples Winter Wine Festival.

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