

The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce has implemented three goals in our new strategic plan. Two of our goals are to attract and serve a diverse group of members from all industries representing businesses in Greater Bethesda and to grow awareness of the Chamber among both members and the public.

Living up to these principles, we invite you to celebrate Black History Month with us through our third annual member spotlight series. This special feature helps our communities learn more about some of its leaders and their impacts they make every day.

Today, we would like you to get to know **Leslie Frelow, Founder of The Wine Concierge.**

The Wine Concierge is a minority owned and woman-owned business founded by Leslie Frelow, who previously worked several years in the public policy industry for public and non-for-profit organizations. Following her passion, Ms. Frelow's beginnings with her wine focused business VINO 301 Wine Concierge started in January 2013 with regional wine tours and special events programs.

She holds a Level 2 Award in Wines and Spirits (WSET). Encouraged and inspired by her industry peers, she has had the honor of participating as a judge in regional wine competitions, which included the 2019 Maryland's Governor's Cup and Maryland's Comptroller's Cup.

Ms. Frelow has also discovered ways to celebrate minority owned winemakers, and connect with like-minded wine enthusiasts through the podcast, The Swirl Suite, hosted by Sarita Cheaves, Tanisha Townsend, Glynis Hill, and MS. Frelow. The podcast (<https://www.swirlsuite.com/>), which features engaging interviews with wine professionals such as Melissa Schulte of Black Ankle Vineyards, Eric Turner of Hip Hop Juice Box, Burnie Williams of Chats Wine & Liquor, and wine makers at the Essence Wine Festival, serves as an inspiring resource for established and aspiring wine entrepreneurs.

The excitement revolving around Ms. Frelow's wine tourism and education programs, as well as her dedication to support winemakers of color and women-owned wineries have inspired her to launch The Wine Concierge's unique internet retailer business in the District of Columbia.

We asked Leslie three questions surrounding leadership and goals. Read her responses below.

1. As you look back over your life, at what point did you begin to think of yourself as a leader?
I don't. I view myself as a nurturer. My role in life is to help to nurture others so they can be their best selves.
2. Do you have a vision that guides your body of work? If so, has it changed over time or remain the same?
Of course, your vision changes over time. In your 20's you try so hard to be an adult and to be taken seriously Your vision is evolving. In your 30's you are starting to figure it out, but you aren't quite there. In your 40's, you found your groove. In your 50's , you say, " To hell with it. I'm going to do what is best for me." With that said, my vision is to be the best human I can – lead with an open heart, speak with honesty, and be forgiving.
3. Does the work you do now play a part in the legacy you wish to leave behind? If not, describe what tools you need to help you achieve your goals.

Yes, I hope so. I want to raise the bar in the wine industry. I hope to promote more inclusion and diversity to the industry.

Visit www.vino301.com to learn more about the wine concierge experience.