



American
CRAFT SPIRITS
ASSOCIATION

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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ACSA is grateful to its many volunteers who offer their time, talent and resources to advance the craft spirits industry. We are also thankful to the many committee members not listed on these pages who regularly provide thought leadership to address the concerns of small producers of craft spirits throughout the U.S.

The Year in Review

Who We Are

The American Craft Spirits Association is the only registered national nonprofit trade group representing the U.S. craft spirits industry. Members vote for the 15 democratically elected representatives who make up the Board of Directors, and this Board collectively works to govern the ACSA in a transparent, responsive manner and in accordance with our bylaws. As we mark our 10th anniversary, we invite you to read this 2022 Annual Report and let us know what you think. Your insight is critical as we move forward as an organization and as an industry.

Member Owned

Membership in ACSA is open to anyone, although Voting Members must be independent licensed distillers with a valid DSP, subscribe to ACSA's Code of Ethics, have no more than 50% of the DSP owned (directly or indirectly) by a producer of distilled spirits whose combined annual production of distilled spirits from all sources exceeds 750,000 proof gallons removed from bond, and annually produce fewer than 750,000 proof gallons removed from bond (the amount on which excise taxes are paid).

In case terms, 750,000 proof gallons is 315,451 9-liter cases (12 750 ml bottles) of 100-proof spirit. A DSP may not be a Voting Member if another producer of distilled spirits whose combined annual production of distilled spirits from all sources exceeds 750,000 proof gallons removed from bond and directly or indirectly holds an ownership interest of greater than 50% of the DSP.

History-Making Board Elections

In April of 2022, ACSA's Board of Directors election marked a first in drinks industry history, as a 100% women-identifying-led board began to steer a national trade association. Additionally, women currently comprise 40% of the elected Board of Directors, which welcomed three new and two returning members.

Becky Harris of Catocin Creek Distilling Co. in Purcellville, Virginia, was re-elected as president; Gina Holman of J. Carver Distillery in Waconia, Minnesota, was elected as vice president; and Jessica J. Lemmon of Cart/Horse Distilling in Edinboro, Pennsylvania, was elected as secretary/treasurer.

The newly elected Board Members include Lucy Farber of St. George Spirits in Alameda, California; Mark A. Vierthaler of Whiskey Del Bac in Tucson, Arizona; and Kelly Woodcock of Westward Whiskey in Portland, Oregon. Jeff Kanof of Copperworks Distilling Co. in Seattle and Amber Pollock of Backwards Distilling Co. in Casper, Wyoming, were also re-elected to the board.

Departing the board after the completion of their terms were Ryan Christiansen of Caledonia Spirits in Montpelier, Vermont, and Molly Troupe of Freeland Spirits in Portland, Oregon. We'd like to extend our thanks to Ryan and Molly for their years of service to the board and their ongoing contributions to ACSA.

Moreover, we extend our gratitude to P.T. Wood of Wood's High Mountain Distillery in Salida, Colorado, and Kanof, whose terms as vice president and secretary/treasurer, respectively, expired. Each helped guide the association, as a part of its executive leadership team, during particularly trying times due to covid-19. Their business acumen and responsiveness to unprecedented demands, kept not only this trade association afloat, but aided in securing covid-related relief for our industry.

(Left to right) Margie A.S. Lehrman, Jessica J. Lemmon, Becky Harris and Gina Holman cut the ribbon to open the trade show floor at ACSA's 9th Annual Distillers' Convention and Vendor Trade Show.

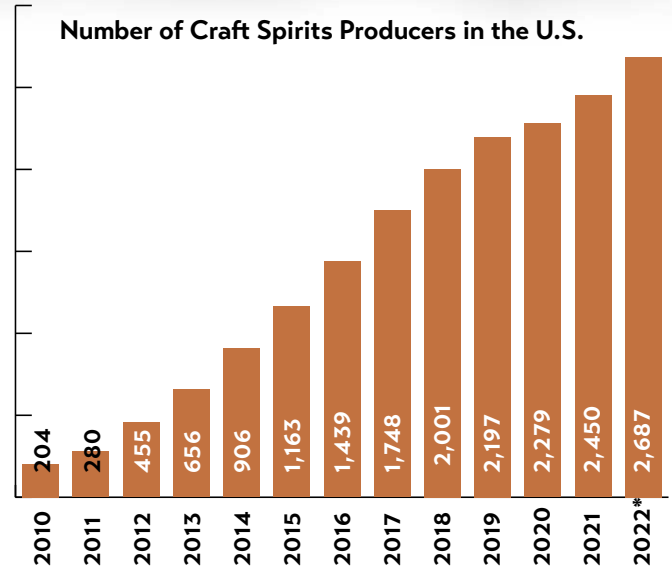


2022 Craft Spirits Data Project

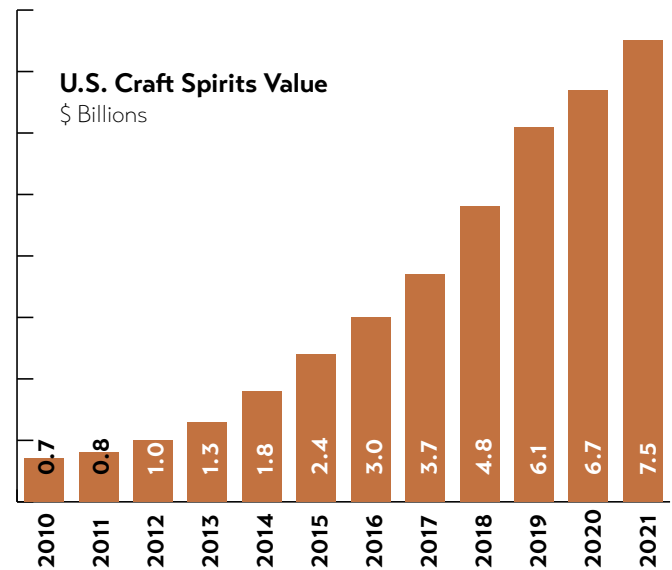
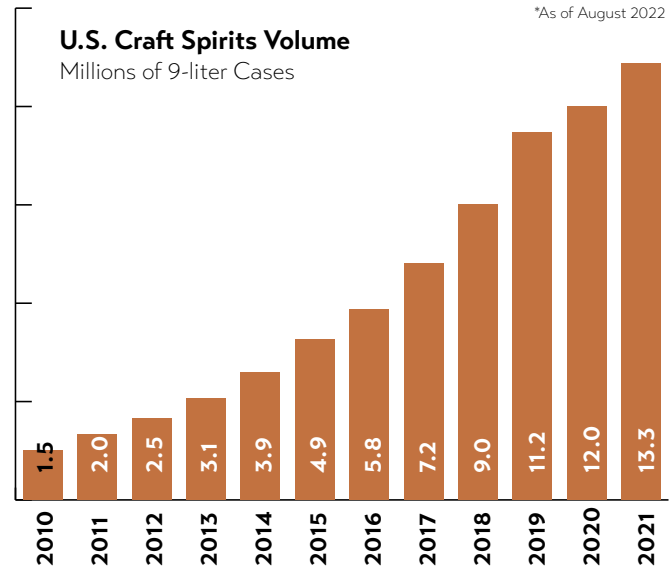
At a media event in early December at New York Distilling Co. in Brooklyn, New York, ACSA and Park Street revealed that the number of operating craft distilleries in the U.S. had increased 17.4% to 2,687 (as of August 2022). That was among the many data points in the latest edition of the Craft Spirits Data Project (CSDP), an ongoing, joint effort between ACSA and its hand-picked partner, Park Street. Additionally, CSDP reported that overall craft spirits volume increased 10.4% to nearly 13.3 million 9-liter cases, while revenue surged 12.2% to \$7.5 billion. U.S. craft spirits share of the total U.S. spirits volume reached 4.9%, up from 4.7% the previous year, while revenue share reached 7.5%, up from 7.1%.

The Project also found that craft distilleries' sales were almost evenly split between home state/tasting rooms (46.7%) and other states (53.3%) in 2021, the last full calendar year measured, underlining the fact that direct shipping remains an important and critical opportunity for continued craft distillery growth.

Further, craft spirits exports increased 58% to 164,000 9-liter cases.



*As of August 2022





DtC Efforts

ACSA continues to actively fight for modernizing the spirits marketplace by advocating for direct-to-consumer (DtC) shipping of distilled spirits. In December, the inaugural Sovos ShipCompliant Direct-to-Consumer Spirits Shipping Report—in which ACSA is a partner—revealed 8 in 10 regular craft spirits drinkers want the ability to purchase craft spirits via DtC shipping to their home. As part of the report, The Harris Poll conducted online consumer surveys of 618 and 588 regular craft spirits drinkers, defined as adults 21+ who drink craft spirits at least once per month. The survey found that regular craft spirits drinkers report that they would be more likely to try and to purchase craft spirits from out-of-state distilleries if they could have them shipped directly to their home. Seventy-three percent of regular craft spirits drinkers want to purchase craft spirits via DtC in the future, with 74% desiring to try new products that are not available locally. Additionally, 71% of regular craft spirits drinkers say they have tried a craft spirit while traveling that they wish they could purchase, but it is not available near their home.

“Direct-to-consumer shipping is poised to be a major imperative step in the evolution of the spirits marketplace, especially for craft distilleries,” said ACSA CEO Margie A.S. Lehrman.

Also in 2022, ACSA joined forces with a group of national trade associations representing distillers large and small to launch Ship My Spirits, a grassroots coalition with the goal of allowing DtC shipping rights.

9th Annual Distillers’ Convention and Vendor Trade Show in New Orleans

In July, hundreds of members of the distilling community gathered in New Orleans to learn, network and celebrate the craft spirits industry at ACSA’s 9th Annual Distillers’ Convention and Vendor Trade Show. Over the course of dozens of hours of educational sessions, we learned new tips and strategies to help our small businesses thrive. On the trade show floor, attendees explored the latest offerings and products designed for producers of craft spirits. At several on- and off-site events, attendees and exhibitors mingled and made or strengthened lasting relationships.

After official words of welcome from Ernest P. Legier Jr.—Louisiana’s Commissioner of Alcohol and Tobacco Control—ACSA CEO Margie A.S. Lehrman presided over a membership town hall on the first evening of the convention featuring ACSA board and committee members.

In his keynote address titled “Distilling Mental Health & Crafting Support in Volatile Times,” Matt Vogl (CEO, VXVY Mental Health, Inc.) shared his own personal story of attempted suicide and navigating the challenges of accessing support for mental health. Vogl offered practical advice to those experiencing depression and to those who suspect someone close to them may need support.

After the town hall, attendees paraded from the Ernest M. Norial Convention Center to nearby Mardi Gras World for a welcome party with live music and cocktails.



On our trade show floor, exhibitors from around the world displayed their products and discussed their services with craft distillers, distillery

employees and distilleries in planning.

The convention featured nearly 40 hours of educational sessions in three tracks (technical, sales/marketing and business/finance) with three difficulty levels (advanced, intermediate and suitable for all). We also hosted a New Distillery Start-Up 101 Pre-Convention Class, as well as panels for the American Single Malt Whiskey Commission and Women of the Vine & Spirits.

At our ACSA PAC welcome reception at Happy Raptor Distilling, we raised our glasses to toast our ongoing legislative efforts to strengthen the business climate for the craft spirits industry. Our guest speaker was Walt Leger, president-elect and current executive vice president and general counsel at New Orleans & Co. Leger, who also served for 12 years in the Louisiana House of Representatives. He discussed the importance of building relationships with local and state elected officials, and he urged distilleries to be a force for good in their communities.

Also at the convention, ACSA unveiled a refreshed logo.



9th Annual Judging of Craft Spirits

In July, ACSA announced the medalists and Best in Show honoree of our 9th Annual Judging of Craft Spirits during an in-person awards dinner and banquet during our Annual Distillers' Convention and Vendor Trade Show in New Orleans. Medalists were hand-selected among a pool just shy of 450 entrants.

During the event, ACSA proudly bestowed the evening's ultimate honor, the Best in Show award, to Starlight Winery & Distillery of Borden, Indiana, for its Carl T. Single Barrel Bourbon Whiskey.

This year, entries were submitted from 37 states and Washington, D.C., in seven main categories: brandy, distilled specialty spirits, gin, ready to drink (RTD), rum, vodka and grain spirits, and whiskey. In addition to Best in Show, Best of Class and Innovation distinctions, the judging panel awarded 15 gold, 104 silver and 159 bronze medals.

The 2022 Best of Class distinctions, the highest honor in each of the seven judging categories, were awarded to a mix of both established, award-winning distilleries and younger newcomers. Winning distilleries also receive hand-carved barrel heads courtesy of Thousand Oaks Barrel Co.

Best of Class winners in each category included:

Brandy: Wigle Peach Brandy, Wigle Whiskey (PA)

Distilled Specialty Spirits: Wigle Amaro Vermut, Wigle Whiskey (PA)

Gin: Jaggerbush, Lawrenceville Distilling Co. (PA)

RTD: Astoria Mary, Pilot House Distilling (OR)

Rum: White Rum, Oxbow Rum Distillery (LA)

Vodka and Grain Spirits: Sweet Blend Vodka, Delta Dirt Distillery (AR)

Whiskey: Carl T. Single Barrel Bourbon Whiskey, Starlight Distillery (IN)

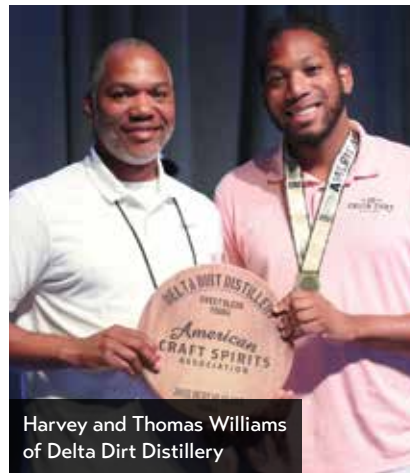
Innovation: Sorel, JackfromBrooklyn (NY)

The complete list of winners is available on the ACSA website.

ACSA would like to thank our judging competition sponsor Glencairn; host site High Wire Distilling Co. of Charleston, South Carolina; and our panel of 30 judges along with judging co-chairs Colton Weinstein and Jeff Wuslich.



Jackie Summers of Sorel



Harvey and Thomas Williams of Delta Dirt Distillery



Christian and Blake Huber of Starlight Distillery

ACSA Members Support Proposed Addition of American Single Malt Whisky to TTB's Standards of Identity

In response to a call for comments from TTB on its proposal to add American Single Malt Whisky to the standards of identity for distilled spirits, ACSA CEO Margie A.S. Lehrman in September wrote that the association overwhelmingly supports the proposal. "We view this effort to add American Single Malt to the Standards of Identity as helpful to the community of craft spirits producers," Lehrman wrote. "We recognize and fully support the efforts of the American Single Malt Whiskey Commission to listen and learn from its members, many of whom are also members of ACSA, to aid in shaping this added Standard of Identity. When surveyed, our members also overwhelmingly supported the addition of American Single Malt, as proposed by TTB, to the Standards of Identity."

ACSA Hosts Fire Prevention and Protection Course

On Aug. 31, ACSA hosted a fire prevention and protection class at Watershed Distillery in Columbus, Ohio. The class was funded by the United States Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Susan Harwood Training Grant program, which provides training and education programs for employers and workers on the recognition, avoidance and prevention of safety and health hazards in their workplaces.

The seven-hour class was developed and presented by Industrial Safety & Training Services. Topics covered in the class included combustible dust; housekeeping; hot work operations; flammable liquids and gasses; flammable liquid and chemical storage; equipment and machinery; hazard recognition and identification; electrical hazards; OSHA, NEC and NFPA guidelines; and emergency action plans, among other safety topics. An ad-hoc committee including Colton Weinstein, Ann Kanof, Matt Stinchfield and Kirstin Brooks helped develop the course.

Attendees came from Ohio, Michigan, Tennessee, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, New York and Washington, D.C. All materials developed through the grant will be available for free on the OSHA website as well as ACSA's website. This was ACSA's pilot year in the grant, and ACSA hopes to expand the grant program over additional grant cycles to further develop the course and reach more distilleries across the United States.



STEPUP Foundation Announces Second Class



In November, ACSA and The Spirits Training Entrepreneurship Program for Underrepresented Professionals (STEPUP Foundation) announced the second class of interns, mentors and participating distilleries, along with several new funding partners for 2023.

STEPUP is a diversity initiative that aims to provide underserved and underrepresented individuals with training, encouragement, and opportunities to enter the craft spirits community through a comprehensive

year-long, immersive internship program. The inaugural class, including Erin Lee and Yakntoro “Yaki” Udoumoh, completed their internship in 2022. Now in its second year, STEPUP will continue to engage diverse applicants and help those of different races, color, national origins, abilities, genders and sexual orientations to acquire the skills and experience they need to succeed in the industry.

The STEPUP internship program is primarily funded through Cornerstone partners and other major donors. As the program gears up for its second year, the organization welcomes a host of generous new donations from partners across all tiers of the industry and distillers small and large. Infinium Spirits has signed on as a Keystone donor and committed to \$300,000 over three years, marking STEPUP’s second Keystone donor behind Beam Suntory, which joined earlier in 2022 and donated \$100,000. St. George Spirits has joined as a Foundation level sponsor with a \$40,000 pledge, and Fast Penny Spirits and Sagamore Spirit Distillery have joined at the Bricklayers level. These new contributors join STEPUP’s existing donors like Diageo North America, which serves as a Cornerstone Partner and has made a \$1.2 million commitment over three years. To learn more about our tiers of support, visit stepupinternship.org/donors.

2023 STEPUP Interns

Amy Salter has been in the restaurant industry since graduating from Le Cordon Bleu in 2007. Her experience includes everything from managing a pizzeria owned and operated by people with hearing loss to consulting with several restaurants and breweries.

A Cicerone Certified Beer Server and Certified Tourism Ambassador, **Ashley Grayson** has been in the hospitality business for 15 years. The Ohio-based bartender’s affinity for designing and developing menus and signature cocktails led her to STEPUP.

2023 STEPUP Mentors

Darci Stuhman is passionate about diversity, empowerment and inclusion, which is her focus in her current role at TKT & Associates—a leading provider of diversity management, innovative workforce and outsourcing solutions.

Nicole Shriner brings a unique combination of education and hands-on industry experience with a Doctor of Philosophy in Chemical Engineering and track record of working with brewery and distillery producers. As a current owner of consulting company Effervescent Solutions in Lansing, Michigan, she continues to focus on fostering quality and growth in the fermented beverage industry.

2023 Participating Distilleries

Sagamore Spirit Distillery (Baltimore)

Serving as the program’s host distillery for 2023, Sagamore Spirit is driven to craft the world’s best rye whiskey. As a champion of American rye whiskey and inspired by Maryland rye, its mission is to establish Sagamore Spirit as the premier distiller of modern American spirits.

New Riff Distilling (Newport, Kentucky)

Located a stone’s throw from downtown Cincinnati in Newport, Kentucky, New Riff Distilling was founded in 2014. The independent and family-owned distillery is “A New Riff On An Old Tradition.” Focused on bourbon and rye whiskey, New Riff balances traditions like sour-mash Kentucky whiskey-making with inventive riffs on process, design and recipes, including one of the most robust single barrel programs in the industry.

Glacier Distilling Co. (Coram, Montana)

Glacier Distilling Co. was conceived during a snowstorm. In the Montana ethos of preparedness and self-reliance in the winter of 2009-2010, a group of friends wondered where they would get their whiskey come Armageddon. As a result, one of them started a distillery. Glacier Distilling Co. first released an un-aged rye whiskey that could be produced and sold in a matter of months, instead of years.

2023 Participating Distributor

Republic National Distributing Co.

As a top wine and spirits distributor in the nation, Republic National Distributing Co.’s (RNDC) national reach helps suppliers by building strategic relationships with on- and off-premise customers to elevate its brands and reach its target consumers. RNDC currently operates in 38 states and the District of Columbia.


To learn more about STEPUP and its leadership, visit stepupinternship.org.




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ACSA Returns to D.C. with DISCUS in Joint Virtual Public Policy Conference

More than 200 distillers from nearly every U.S. state connected virtually with federal lawmakers and regulators in September during the spirits industry's annual Public Policy Conference, jointly hosted by ACSA and the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS). Throughout the course of more than 120 virtual meetings with lawmakers, craft spirits producers addressed issues important to the distilled spirits sector, including two major priorities:

The Distilled Spirits Industry's Positive Economic Impact

The more than 2,600 distilleries nationwide contribute to the vibrancy of the manufacturing, hospitality, tourism and agriculture industries. The economic activities of exporting, importing, and sale and distribution within the U.S. support about 1.7 million jobs. U.S. distilled spirits exports alone totaled \$1.6 billion last year and distillers paid nearly \$6.9 billion in FET.

The United States Postal Service (USPS) Shipping Equity Act (H.R. 3287/S. 1663)

If passed, the bill would enable the USPS to ship beverage alcohol products where direct-to-consumer (DtC) shipping is permissible by law. DtC shipping serves as an important complement to the traditional three-tier system of beverage alcohol distribution and providing the DtC option through the Postal Service, where allowed, supports consumer choice and small distilleries. The bill also provides for regulations that will allow USPS to safely deliver beverage alcohol to adult consumers with the appropriate ID checks and verifications in place to prevent

underage access. Additionally, enacting the USPS Shipping Equity Act could generate an estimated \$190 million annually for the USPS.

Before the meetings with U.S. Senators and Representatives commenced, two of the spirits industry's allies on Capitol Hill, Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) and Sen. Gary Peters (D-MI), reaffirmed their support in separate pre-recorded messages. The group also had the opportunity to get some clarity on the regulatory side of the federal government, thanks to a panel of officials from the U.S. Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB). In a session moderated by Alex Castle, master distiller and senior vice president of Old Dominick Distillery (Memphis, Tennessee), members of TTB's leadership team reiterated their commitment to enhancing the "TTB customer experience," noting that TTB is targeting a 70% reduction in filing burdens and redundancies. TTB officials also touted improvements in processing turnaround times.

Shannon Mustipher, author of "Tiki: Modern Tropical Cocktails," winner of the Tales of the Cocktail Pioneer Award and inductee into the Dame Hall of Fame, led the evening's toast.

Additionally, ACSA and DISCUS presented World Central Kitchen (WCK), founded in 2010 by chef José Andrés, with the inaugural Humanitarian Spirit Award for its work on the frontlines providing meals in response to humanitarian, climate and community crises. Karen Peraza, WCK's manager of corporate and foundation relations, accepted on behalf of the organization.

The Public Policy Conference would not have been successful without the support of sponsors Arryved, Five x 5 Solutions, Wine & Spirits Shippers Association Inc. and Thoroughbred Spirits Group.

New Faces at ACSA

Throughout 2022, ACSA made several strategic hires, helping to lead the association through its next decade of growth and service to the country's craft spirits community.

Michael Walker was named state policy advisor. In his role, Walker identifies state legislative issues and liaises with state distillery guilds to develop legislative strategies. Walker joined ACSA's legislative team with nearly 25 years of experience at the intersection of the public and private sectors, including more than 11 years serving in the legislative and executive branches of government. Most recently, he served for well over a decade with Constellation Brands as VP of its external affairs/public affairs department.

Additionally, Kenneth Brady was named director of membership and marketing and is responsible for nurturing and growing ACSA's community of members and sponsors while also developing and executing a marketing vision for the association. Brady joined ACSA at the same time as Albal Melaku, who wears many hats as ACSA's administrative assistant. Melaku comes to ACSA from the real estate industry.

Stephanie Sadri also joined the ACSA team full-time as director of meetings and events. She is a familiar face within the craft spirits community, as Sadri has managed the logistics of ACSA's events—including the annual Distillers' Convention and Vendor Trade Show and Public Policy Conference—for several years as an employee of global meeting planning company Helms Briscoe.

We also welcomed Annette Schnur as ACSA's media sales consultant. Schnur brings decades of experience in media sales and is responsible for selling advertising for *CRAFT SPIRITS* magazine and its associated platforms.

In bittersweet staffing news, two long-time ACSA team members departed in the past year. Operations administrator Teresa McDaniel retired in 2022 after seven years with the association, and Carason Lehmann, who served for more than six years with the organization, departed in October to enter a new chapter in her career.



Board of Directors Refreshes Strategic Plan

In September, the ACSA Board of Directors refreshed and voted on its strategic plan. The 2022 strategic plan, revised from its former version in 2020, is the association's latest guiding document and directive to ACSA Board of Directors, committees and staff. The purpose of the strategic plan is to set a course for the association as a whole, but also to make the staff and committees more nimble.

Our thoughtful, visionary board arrived at a consensus as to ACSA's priorities, namely:

- 1: Build and Support Membership
- 2: Increase Diversity
- 3: Improve Market Landscape
- 4: Develop Organizational Sustainability

Our resources will be devoted to measuring our success across those major areas.

ACSA Supports TTB's Proposed Rule to Eliminate Existing Standards of Fill

In a July letter to the U.S. Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB), ACSA expressed support for TTB to eliminate the existing standards of fill for wine and distilled spirits, except to maintain in the regulations a minimum standard of 50 milliliters for both wine and distilled spirits and a maximum standard of fill of 3.785 liters for distilled spirits. In a poll of our members, nearly 80% of respondents were in favor eliminating the existing standards of fill. TTB issued a notice of proposed rulemaking concerning the standards of fill in late May, with comments due in July.

Continued Support on Hand Sanitizer

At the end of 2021 and in early 2022, ACSA was offering distillers instruction on how to close the books on hand sanitizer ahead of a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) deadline to cease production and distribution of hand sanitizer.

Despite delisting products, deregistering companies and deactivating labeler codes, in the summer some distilleries received what appeared to be audits from the FDA regarding formulation. Through letters and meetings with the FDA, ACSA urged the federal government to cease and desist any audits of craft distillers that produced hand sanitizer solely during the early stages of the pandemic due to a nationwide shortage. In September, the FDA confirmed that these letters are not audits but simply "informational requests," which they continued to send throughout the year.

If you receive a letter from the FDA about hand sanitizer you produced in the early stages of the pandemic, please let us know. We're here to help and walk you through the steps we would advise you to take. You've got our support and you're not alone so please contact sanitizer@american-craftspirits.org. Our team will quickly respond to your email.

U.S. & U.K. Reach Deal to End Tariffs on Whiskey

In March, the Toasts Not Tariffs Coalition, which includes ACSA, raised a glass to the Biden Administration for negotiating a successful end to the harmful tariffs impacting the entire U.S. alcohol sector. U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo and United Kingdom Secretary of State for International Trade Anne-Marie Trevelyan announced the agreement to remove the retaliatory tariffs on American whiskeys during a meeting at the U.S./U.K. Dialogue on the Future of Atlantic Trade, held in Baltimore. Since the imposition of the 25% retaliatory tariff on American whiskeys in June 2018, exports to the U.K., the U.S. spirits industry's fourth-largest market, had declined by 42%, from \$150 million to \$88 million (2018-2021). With the removal of these tariffs on American whiskey, no more retaliatory tariffs remain on U.S., U.K. and EU distilled spirits and wines.



Craft Spirits Classroom: Quenching Your Thirst for Knowledge

In collaboration with the Education and Safety Committees, ACSA continued to build upon our foundation of educational programming by hosting 10 webinars in 2022. Some of this year's most popular webinars included:

- ABCs of RTD QA: Creating Shelf-Stable Canned and Bottled Cocktails with Lee Egbert (Dashfire), Larry Cary (Pilot House Distilling) and Kris Bohm (Distillery Now Consulting)
- U.S. Rum: Getting Candid About Cane with Jordan Cotton (Cotton and Reed), Tim Russell (Maggi's Farm Rum) and Matt Street (Oxbow Rum Distillery)
- Starting Distillery Quality Programs with KassaDee Herring (Bently Heritage Estate Distillery)

CRAFT SPIRITS Magazine Enters Fourth Year

The November/December 2022 issue of *CRAFT SPIRITS* magazine marked a milestone for ACSA's official publication. It was the 20th edition of the digital magazine, which has been published bi-monthly since August 2019. The issue's cover story, "Navigating the 'Non-Premise,'" explored the growth of e-commerce and what it means for the future of spirits retail. Other top features from the year included the following:

- September/October: "Gin's Next Chapter," detailing the category's biggest opportunities and obstacles
- July/August: "A Gathering Opportunity," exploring the state of the on-premise
- May/June: "Ready to Disrupt," on the skyrocketing RTD category
- March/April: "Seeding a Revival," a deep dive into the experimental spirit of heirloom rye whiskey producers
- January/February: "They've Got the Look," spotlighting all of the medalists in the 2nd Annual Craft Spirits Packaging Awards

Speaking of the Craft Spirits Packaging Awards, we presented the medals in-person for the first time at ACSA's 8th Annual Distillers' Convention and Vendor Trade Show in Louisville, Kentucky in December 2021—ACSA's first in-person convention in nearly three years. Judging for the 3rd Annual Craft Spirits Packaging Awards took place in November 2022, with our independent panel of judges evaluating all entries submitted between August and October. Medalists in the 3rd annual competition, announced at ACSA's 10th Annual Distillers' Convention and Vendor Trade Show in Portland, Oregon, will be showcased in the March/April 2023 issue of *CRAFT SPIRITS*

magazine.

On the audio front, the Craft Spirits Podcast finished its second successful year with its 29th episode in December.

As the industry has fully returned to in-person events, the *CRAFT SPIRITS* magazine team has been getting out in the world, leading a conference presentation on craft spirits packaging at Luxe Pack New York in June and speaking on a

global craft spirits-themed panel at Bar Convent Berlin in October.

All current and back issues of *CRAFT SPIRITS* magazine are available digitally at CraftSpiritsMag.com/archives.



ACSA Joins Amicus Curiae Briefs

In 2022, ACSA joined other trade groups in expressing industry views through amicus curiae briefs. In September, ACSA joined as amicus curiae in support of the petitioner in "Jack Daniel's Properties, Inc. v. VIP Products LLC." The central issue on petition to the United States Supreme Court is a trademark one, specifically asking the Court to determine whether a "humorous" use of someone else's trademark on a commercial product is subject to a "likelihood-of-confusion" evaluation or rather, should it receive First Amendment protection from a trademark-infringement claim?

VIP Products, LLC manufactures and sells a Bad Spaniel's dog toy which looks surprisingly like a bottle of Jack Daniel's. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals tossed out a lower court ruling, holding that "humor to an infringing consumer good entitles that good to broad protections from infringement liability and renders the good 'noncommercial' for trademark dilution purposes." The ruling both conflicts with other circuits' trademark jurisprudence and the Court's own intellectual property rulings. The case has broad implications of how our community of trademarks can be misused by others. And, if the appeals court decision stands, it substantially erodes our spirits industry's ability to self-regulate. Specifically, it diminishes our ability to make sure that all advertising that uses trademarks associated with our brands is done responsibly, without promoting harm to public health or safety.

The petition for a writ of certiorari was granted in late November with the additional briefs due on the merits in January and February 2023.

And in December, ACSA joined another amicus curiae brief in the United States Court of Appeals for the Eight Circuit in the matter of "Major Brands, Inc. v. Mast-Jagermeister US, LLC and Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits of Missouri, LLC." In that appeal, the industry groups joined to support an appeal from a district court jury decision which ultimately extended Missouri's franchise law, finding a franchise agreement in a case where there was no written contract between the producer and the distributor, the manufacturer had no control over the distributor, and the distributor was non-exclusive. This monopoly/franchise protection case is important because if this holding remains, it will set a dangerous precedent in other states to extend monopoly protection laws.



American
CRAFT SPIRITS
ASSOCIATION

2013

10 YEARS

2023

BETTER WITH AGE



THERE IS
STRENGTH
IN MEMBERS



The American Craft Spirits Association (ACSA) is the only national association of craft distillers created and governed by craft distillers. We Are Craft!

Our mission is to elevate and advocate for the community of craft spirits producers.

WHY JOIN?

- Build long-term relationships and enhance industry connections
- Help cultivate a competitive landscape for craft distillers
- Learn from industry thought leaders
- Increase market access

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MEMBERSHIP ONLY OPPORTUNITIES BY
JOINING TODAY!

A: P.O. Box 470, Oakton, VA, 22124

E: membership@americancraftspirits.org

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A Toast to 2023


As we celebrate our 10th anniversary in 2023, we are eager to continue our mission of elevating and advocating for the community of craft spirits producers. Here's to a safe, successful and spirited 2023!


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