

NGWB Grant Final Report (FY19-20)

Contract #18-13-281 - NWGGA – Executive Director

Grant Amount \$118,000

Contact Information

Group: Nebraska Winery and Grape Growers Association
Contact: Kathi Schildt
Phone: (402) 761-2216
Address: P.O. Box 10
Milford, NE 68405
Email: kathi@nebraskawines.org

Issue of Interest

This grant funded an executive director position for the NWGGA, designed to help promote and grow Nebraska's grape and wine industry and serve as staff to serve the needs of NWGGA members. The funding was specifically to be used to pay for the Executive Director's salary, benefits, Intern salary, travel expenses, surety bond, legal counsel, banking costs, office supplies, software, postage, business insurance, CPA services, and meeting expenses.

Approach to Problem

The grant was used to continue the ongoing salary and benefits of the NWGGA's executive director and costs associated with running the organization and supporting the travel and outreach of the Executive Director. The NWGGA transitioned to hiring the management firm, Advanced Association Management (AAM), in October 2019 with Kathi Schildt serving as the Executive Director.

Goals/Achievement of Goals

This grant was used by the NWGGA to pay for the NWGGA Executive Director and staff expenses throughout the program year. The Executive Director handled passport program reimbursements, served as spokesperson for the industry; handled all direct contacts with the media, tourism, university and governmental entities, spearheaded all marketing efforts, planned and executed workshops and events, and provided administrative support for the Board of Directors and Committees. In addition, the Executive Director worked with the Toast Nebraska Committee to plan a two-day wine Festival and educational workshops. (Toast cancelled due to COVID.)

The association was missing out on multiple opportunities and detail-oriented management. AAM has experience working with 25+ associations and was able to jump in and revive neglected areas of the association as well as implement new ideas and structures to ensure NWGGA was maximizing all efforts to promote the Nebraska wine industry. Partnering with AAM is a great opportunity to maintain the continued growth of the NWGGA.

Results, Conclusions, Lessons Learned

The NWGGA continues to advance the industry with the assistance of an executive director. The significance of having individuals responsible for association operations and knowledgeable about the grape and wine industry as well as association management as a whole, has been instrumental in enabling the association to undertake the goals as stated in NWGGA's Strategic Plan, thereby increasing competition and sustainability of Nebraska's grape and wine industry.

Progress Achieved According to Outcome Measures

The use of this grant helps in the long-term sustainability of the wine and grape industry in Nebraska because it recognized that the industry is of a sufficient nature and size to require paid staff and an experienced Executive Director. Given the overall size and number of wineries, growers and tasting rooms across the state, centralized communication between the leadership and the NWGGA members is crucial in coordinating events and working together to expand the industry within the state.

Financial Report