

BREAKTHRU  
BEVERAGE GROUP



CRAFTING THE FUTURE,  
**TOGETHER**

2023

Corporate Social  
Responsibility  
Report

## A Message from Our President and CEO Tom Bené

# About Our Company

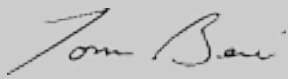
Breakthru Beverage Group continues to make tremendous progress in pursuit of our vision—to be the leading beverage company in North America. Full year results from 2023 show us leading in growth industrywide and successfully gaining market share across the U.S. and Canada. Importantly, we continued to make substantial investments in our people, technology, operations, and portfolio to support our growth ambitions and create long-term value and competitive advantage.

As a family-owned business, we are immensely proud of our multi-generational legacy of growth, innovation, talent, and productivity. It is with this in mind that I am pleased to share our 2023 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report, which highlights some of the ways we strive to be a force for good while delivering on our mission to build value for our customers, suppliers, associates, and communities. Our CSR efforts are rooted in a proud heritage of philanthropy that is based on our founding families' strong belief in giving back to the community and one in which we hold true to this day and plan on upholding in the future. In 2023, we supported 361 charitable causes, participated in 40 volunteer events, and invested over \$2.1 million in non-profit organizations.

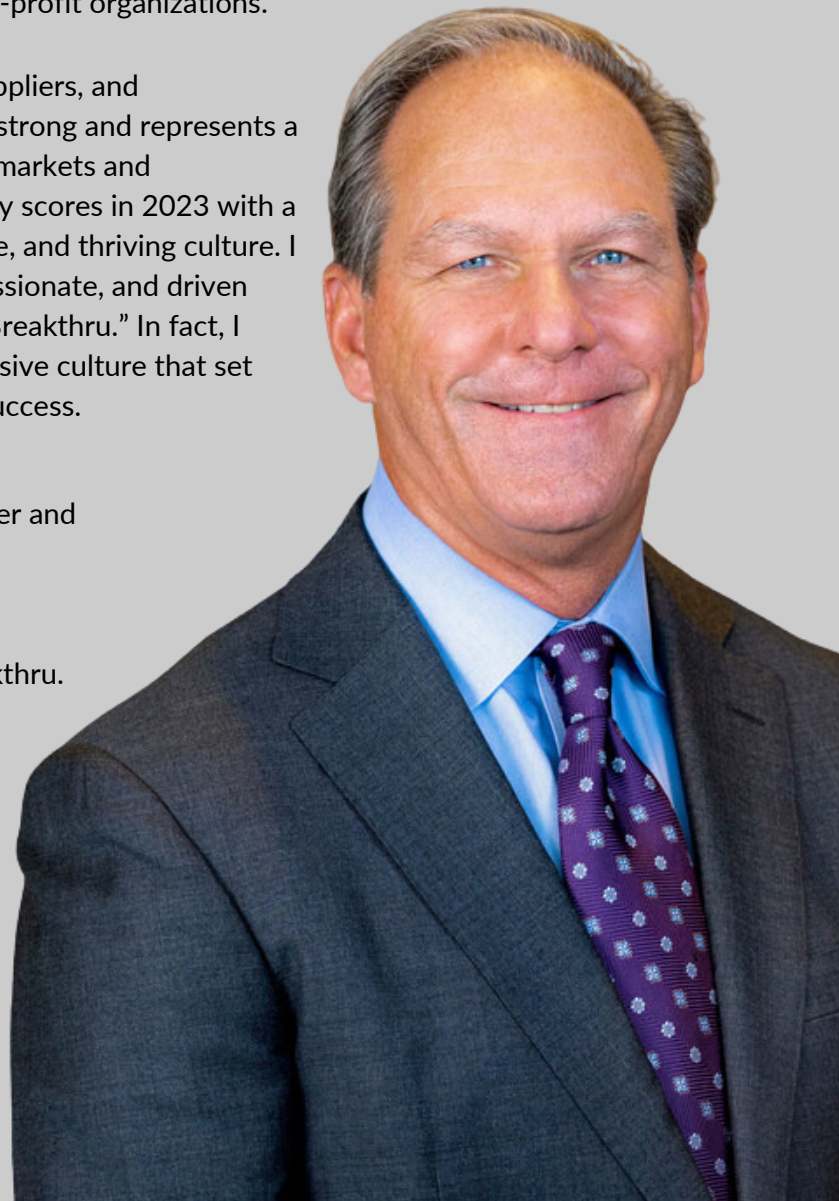
Central to our ability to grow and serve our customers, suppliers, and communities is our people. The Breakthru team is 10,000 strong and represents a diverse, engaged, and talented group of people across 16 markets and throughout Canada. Our high associate engagement survey scores in 2023 with a 94% participation rate are evidence of our strong, inclusive, and thriving culture. I am incredibly proud to work alongside such a talented, passionate, and driven team who works collectively and collaboratively as “One Breakthru.” In fact, I firmly believe it is our highly engaged people and our inclusive culture that set Breakthru apart and is the key to our current and future success.

In the year ahead, we are doubling down on leading with a people-first approach, enhancing our focus on the customer and associate engagement, maximizing growth for our supplier partners, and caring for our communities. We remain wholeheartedly committed to exploring and implementing innovative changes to build an even better, stronger Breakthru. While doing so, we will continue to be a force for good.

Together, we are crafting a more sustainable, inspiring, and equitable future.



Tom Bené  
President and CEO







## Our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Vision

Our intent is to be a force for good. We support causes and organizations that better our world and help meet the diverse needs of the communities we serve.

## CSR Strategic Focus Areas



Our People



Our Community



Environmental Stewardship



Alcohol Responsibility

*"What makes me the proudest is not the money we provide, but when our associates get involved in giving their time to help and mentor students, take care of those in need, and preserve and clean our environment for the next generation."*

► **Charlie Merinoff**  
Co-Chairman



## Our Guiding Principle

We are rooted in a proud heritage of philanthropy, giving back to the communities where we live and work.

# Who We Are

*We are a family-owned and-operated beverage alcohol wholesaler. At Breakthru, we are proud of our multigenerational legacy of service, innovation, and expertise. We strive to be the most effective and easiest distributor to work with in the industry.*

Breakthru Beverage Group is one of the industry's top-performing distributors by market and is the choice for best-in-class partnership from customers and suppliers. We are a leading beverage distributor in the U.S., representing world-class spirits, wine, beer, and non-alcoholic brands and the third-largest wine and spirits distributor overall in the U.S. We are the #1 beverage alcohol broker in Canada.

Breakthru's vision is to be the leading beverage company in North America, which is guided by our strategic pillars of Growth, Innovation, Productivity, and Talent. Our focus areas include: Portfolio Strategy; Digital Evolution; Revenue Management; Optimizing Fulfillment; Efficient Organization; Route-to-Consumer; People Strategy; Mergers & Acquisitions; and exploring New Frontiers, such as CBD beverages and strategic technology partnerships.

We take the responsibility of representing all our brands "in the last mile to the consumer" seriously and pride ourselves on building long-lasting relationships founded on strong performance and trusted expertise.



## OUR VALUES

Be Inclusive.  
Be Courageous.  
Be Passionate.  
Be True.



**Recognized as a U.S. Best Managed Company for the second consecutive year**



Recognizing private company success

Awarded the  
**2023 Wholesaler of  
the Year Award**  
by



Honored as the  
**Distributor of  
the Year**  
by



Honored as the  
**Distributor of  
the Year**  
by



Earned  
**Cybersecurity  
Awards**  
by





# Executive Leadership

Breakthru Beverage Group's leadership team supports the company's core operations and strategic vision.



**Charles Merinoff**  
Co-Chairman



**Danny Wirtz**  
Co-Chairman



**Tom Bené**  
President & CEO



**Joseph Bruhin**  
EVP, Chief Information Officer



**Melissa Calderwood**  
EVP, Chief Financial Officer



**Art Wirtz**  
EVP, Operations



**Stephanie Soto**  
EVP, Chief Human Resources Officer



**Arlyn Miller**  
EVP, Chief Legal Officer  
and Corporate Secretary



**Kevin Roberts**  
EVP, Chief Commercial  
Officer



**Julian Burzynski**  
Chief Operating Officer

## Leadership Principles

Our leadership principles and behaviors represent our shared vision of the culture we want to create—now and for the future. They represent how we behave towards one another, and the role each of us plays in how we show up as Breakthru leaders. Everyday, our leaders aim to act, behave, and exemplify these principles. Leadership matters and, at Breakthru, the authenticity and integrity in how we lead means everything.



**People First**



**Boldly Seek a Better Way**



**Customer & Supplier Focused**



**Listen to Understand**



**One Team**

*Ensuring our success and continued progress toward reaching our full potential as an organization.*

# Evolving our Operating Model



Since updating our multi-year strategic plan in 2022, we have executed initiatives that align with the evolving demands of today's consumer and address the needs of our customers, suppliers, and associates. One of these key actions was bolstering the strength of our executive and commercial leadership to enable our growth strategy and more aggressively expand our capabilities across the footprint. It also means optimizing how we support our local markets and leveraging our capabilities with the end-goal of being the top-performing distributor in every market we serve.

With that goal in mind, we now operate as four North American regions. P&L responsibility continues to reside at the market-level, allowing teams to capitalize on our market-focused expertise and maintain a nimble approach to decision-making. The following leaders oversee our regions, reporting to Julian Burzynski, Chief Operating Officer (COO).

*Our regional leadership team supports the company's core operations and strategic vision.*



**Julian Burzynski**  
Chief Operating Officer



**Will Fulghom**  
East U.S. Region  
President



**Cristina Desmond**  
Central U.S. Region  
President



**Jeremy Tostrup**  
West U.S. Region  
President



**Sam David**  
Canada  
Executive Vice President

*Breakthru leaders are the best in the business with expansive expertise across both commercial and corporate business functions. Our commercial and corporate leaders are uniquely balanced with multi-faceted industry tenure, strong business acumen, and innovative thinking. Breakthru values diversity of thought leadership and experience, with active recruiting and development efforts in place to continue strengthening and diversifying our leadership team.*

## OUR STAKEHOLDERS

### SUPPLIERS

Build the value of brands

### CUSTOMERS

Drive superior trade performance

### ASSOCIATES

Be the employer of choice in beverage

### COMMUNITY

Ensure to be a force for good in our communities

### SHAREHOLDERS

Deliver strong performance and fiscal stewardship

## STRATEGIC PILLARS



### GROWTH

We actively pursue opportunities to grow the business



### INNOVATION

We move with pace to enable new digital capabilities and business models



### PRODUCTIVITY

We are focused on performance and profitability



### TALENT

We invest in the diversity and expertise of our people



# Our Growth



Like any top-performing, growth-oriented organization, we remain committed to exploring and implementing innovative changes to build an even better, stronger Breakthru.

We are successfully executing against our strategic priorities and have made excellent progress on multiple fronts. Here are some key highlights.

**10k** Associates

**52** Facilities across North America

**16** U.S. markets and across Canada  
\*including CDI affiliate

**3rd** Largest wine & spirits distributor in the U.S.

**4th** Generation, family-owned and-operated

**3** Recent strategic transactions: expanded footprint in CA and MO; enhanced coverage in MN



✓ Evolved our operating and business model with the move to four regions

✓ Bolstered our executive and commercial leadership structure

✓ Optimized how we support our local markets and leverage our capabilities

✓ Increased market presence in California, Missouri, and Minnesota

✓ Enhanced the customer experience through upgraded technology—Breakthru Now



Breakthru Now is Breakthru Beverage Group's proprietary eCommerce solution to help customers manage their business anytime, anywhere. With Breakthru Now, customers can look forward to being able to explore our full product portfolio with detailed product information, compare prices and deals, place and view orders, monitor delivery status, make online payments (where available), and get instant support through live chat and other online resources.

In 2023, we further enhanced our eComm platform Breakthru Now with AI-powered search and merchandising functionality to improve and personalize the customer experience.

**DELIVERING A BETTER BEVERAGE EXPERIENCE FOR OUR CUSTOMERS**

**20%**

of all accounts are now active on the platform

**\$310M+**

in sales generated in 2023

*"Breakthru Beverage Group experienced the largest share gain within our industry coming out of 2023, which reflects our success in executing a clear vision led by our high-performance team. This momentum allows us to continue reinvesting in our people, systems, and capabilities."*

**Kevin Roberts**  
Chief Commercial Officer





## Investing in our Future

We are rooted in a proud heritage of philanthropy, giving back to the communities where we live and work.



Developing our  
People



Diversity, Equity &  
Inclusion



Breakthru Cares  
Initiatives



Community  
Engagement

*At Breakthru Beverage Group, we are committed to our stakeholders—our customers, suppliers, associates, shareholders, and communities. We aspire to be a force for good and make a positive difference in the communities we serve. One of the meaningful ways we achieve that goal is by partnering with many of North America's leading charitable organizations.*

## People: The Heart of Our Business

Our associates live our values daily—and that is how we measure success. We treat each other and our partners with respect, celebrating collaboration, relationships, and diversity. Our associates thrive because they are supported and empowered to do so.



# Our People

Building the people who build the business.



## Developing Our People

- We listen to our people to understand the associate experience.
- We innovate new and engaging people strategies and practices.
- We attract and retain a sustainable and talented workforce.
- We differentiate Breakthru from our competitors through our people & culture.

**86k** Training Modules completed in 2023

**78** WSET Level 1 Sake Certifications

**2,073** WSET Level 2 Wine & Spirits Certifications

**91** WSET Level 3 Wine & Spirits Certifications

**775** Certified Beer Server Certifications

\*unless noted, certification statistics are cumulative through 2023

*"There is always more to learn, especially regarding the products we sell. The ways in which our business and industry works are always evolving. In my role, I get to teach and coach our people about new approaches and tools to adapt to the constant changes, which is a lot of fun."*

**Andy Westley**

Senior Director,  
Field Coaching & Development  
Central/West Region



**WSET**  
WINE & SPIRIT  
EDUCATION TRUST





## DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION



**Our DE&I vision** is to be an industry leader in cultivating diverse talent, high-performing teams, and an inclusive workplace. We are committed to providing a greater sense of belonging and community that empowers our associates. We believe that when everyone is encouraged to share their voice and bring their authentic selves to work that it creates a better, stronger Breakthru.

Our culture reflects our dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion through tangible actions. This includes our Associate Resource Groups (ARGs), Culture Ambassadors, equitable recruiting & hiring practices, our growth & development initiatives, DE&I education, and our associate engagement efforts.

Today, we have five active and committed Associate Resource Groups (ARGs), a coast-to-coast network of Culture Ambassadors (local champions dedicated to fostering engagement at the market level), and a multitude of communication and feedback channels for our associates to engage in our vibrant and thriving culture.

**13k** Online DE&I microlessons completed

**1,100** Associates participating in one or more ARG

**56%** Of ARG members are Female

**5** Active Associate Resource Groups (ARGs)

"We are committed to being an industry leader in creating a culture where every individual is valued, respected, and can fully contribute their best selves. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are not just words to us, but intrinsic beliefs guiding our actions. We believe in celebrating differences and fostering an environment where all our associates feel a sense of belonging and have the opportunity to thrive. Through our focus on our people and culture, we seek to drive innovation and growth, while being a force for good in the communities we serve."

Hillary Wirtz  
Senior Director, Culture & Inclusion





# Our People

Fostering community through our  
Associate Resource Groups.

We believe having a diverse mix of voices results in having deeper discussions, making better decisions, and creating a brighter future for our company and the communities we serve. It is in the spirit of building an inclusive culture through authentic people sharing varied perspectives that we established our five Associate Resource Groups (ARGs). To date, there are more than 1,100 Breakthru associates participating in one or more ARG as someone who identifies with the community and its allies.



To create a space of representation, inclusion, and support for women to engage and grow with Breakthru Beverage Group.



Create a visible, inclusive space for Black associates in the workplace and in communities, fostering empowerment and career advancement.



 Hispanic Origin & Latin American Network

Promote cultural awareness and give the Hispanic Familia a community by which to attract, develop, retain, and promote their advancement while enriching the communities where we live and work.



To enhance the recruitment, retention, and engagement of LGBTQ+ associates by fostering a culture of inclusion and belonging for the LGBTQ+ community.



To build, embrace, and support a strong, proud community of Veteran associates.

*From Lunch and Learn Series, diversity-focused celebrations, panels, and fireside chats to supporting charitable organizations, our ARGs are creating impactful experiences that are laying a foundation of inclusiveness within the Breakthru culture.*

## Greg Baird Scholarship

This educational scholarship honors Greg Baird, Breakthru's first President and CEO who retired from his role in 2021 after a distinguished, 41-year career in the beverage alcohol industry, and who was a strong education advocate with a passion for learning and development. The namesake scholarship is a befitting recognition for Greg's many contributions to our company and industry and represents a wonderful benefit to Breakthru associates, while aligning well with our demonstrated commitment to increasing access to education.

*Now in its third year, the program saw an 18% increase in scholarship applications last year with submissions from a broad cross-section of teams and functional areas represented from across our footprint, including Canada.*



### 2023 Recipients

#### Brookelyn Green

Jeffrey Green, Key Account Manager, Breakthru Virginia  
Clemson University



#### Samantha O'Prandy

Bill O'Prandy, Field Sales Manager, Breakthru Virginia  
James Madison University

#### Lauren Hahn

Jonathan Hahn, Director of Trade Development, Breakthru Arizona  
University of Arizona



#### Alessandro Sanchez Cirelli

Guillermo Arturo Sanchez Gomez, Account Development Specialist, Breakthru Colorado  
Colorado School of Mines

**"I am so grateful to receive the Greg Baird Scholarship to further my passion for healthcare by improving the lives of others."**

-Gracen Carter



#### Gracen Carter

Joshua Carter, Director of Sales, United Division, Breakthru Maryland  
University of Delaware

As valued members of the Breakthru family, we are proud to continue our investment in the next generation of leaders through supporting education. In recent years, the company has awarded more than \$90,000 in scholarship money for our associates' dependents.

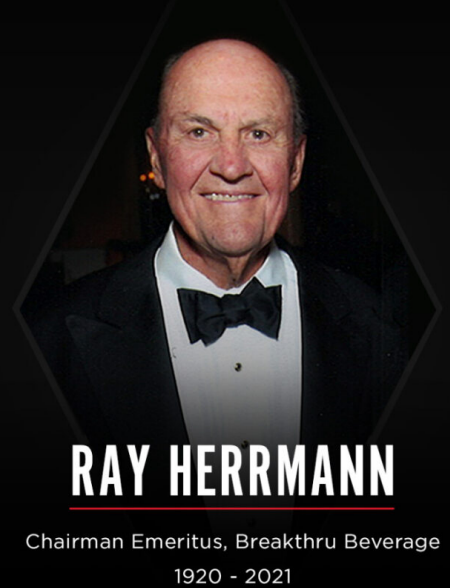


# Our People

Honoring our legacy and recognizing great character.

Ray Herrmann was instrumental in the formation of Breakthru Beverage Group. He founded Sunbelt Beverage Corporation in 1988 and, as Chairman and CEO, would later partner with Herman I. Merinoff to form The Charmer Sunbelt Group, which merged with Wirtz Beverage to form Breakthru Beverage Group. Ray proudly served as Chairman Emeritus of Breakthru until his death in 2021, completing a truly illustrious and distinguished career, devoted to the wine and spirits industry that spanned 50+ years.

Ray was not only a titan of the beverage alcohol industry, but also as importantly, he was a man of great character, ethics, and philanthropy. He left an immeasurable impact on others, both inside and outside our organization, leaving a legacy of enduring noble qualities admired by all who had the opportunity to know and work with him. Every year, we proudly present this award to acknowledge associates who embody the values that Ray himself embraced. Through this recognition, Ray's legacy lives on.



## 2023 Winners of the Ray Herrmann Award



**Diane Fligel**

Senior Enterprise Innovation  
Specialist, BBG



**Tressa Patton  
(Posthumous)**

Aspect Director, BBAZ



**Tracey Traille**

Director IT, BBG



**Joe Giardina**

Division Sales Director, BBMD

The nomination-based award recognizes associates who embody our company values of:

- **Be Inclusive**
- **Be Courageous**
- **Be Passionate**
- **Be True**

We recognize individuals with this award who actively demonstrate and bring the values to life in their daily work and interactions. We believe that when our people live our values, there is a 'ripple effect' that positively impacts our business and all our stakeholders.

To further honor Ray's legacy, all award winners are given the opportunity to select a charitable organization, aligned with our CSR focus areas, to provide a donation on their behalf. This further extends the impact of their values within the community.

# Our Community

#BreakthruCares



Giving back to the communities where we live and work has, and will continue to be, a core tenet of our Breakthru culture. We are proud to support and partner with dozens of organizations with missions aligned to our CSR strategic focus areas. In 2023, we gave back through financial support, time, or resources to 361 charitable/non-profit organizations.

Our community engagement and charitable partnerships are guided by our company values as follows:

- **Be inclusive** and select a diversity of charitable partnerships that span across a variety of meaningful causes aligned with our CSR strategy;
- **Be courageous** and seek out opportunities to make a strong social impact;
- **Be passionate** and share the excitement we feel in giving back through social media and other communications; and
- **Be true** and invest in charitable organizations that offer opportunities to actively engage through service, leadership, and volunteerism.

Since our founding, Breakthru Beverage Group has donated more than \$16M to charitable organizations and has many long-standing relationships with charitable partners fulfilling the diverse needs in the communities we serve.

*We thank all the organizations that we partner with and give back to for your ongoing commitment to your mission and making a positive impact in the lives and communities you touch.*



**BREAKTHRU**  
cares

"Giving back and being socially responsible is what we do at Breakthru. These are values deeply woven into our culture that is derived from a long legacy of philanthropy. Within every market and associate, you'll find a collective passion for making a positive difference in the communities we serve."

Felicia Ganther  
Director of Corporate  
Social Responsibility



**40** Associate Volunteer Events

**361** Organizations supported

**\$2.1M** Enterprise-wide contributions 2023

**\$16M** Overall contributions since 2016

Alcohol  
Responsibility



Environmental  
Stewardship



Our  
People



Our  
Community





# Our Partners

Supporting charitable organizations aligned with our CSR focus areas.

## Alcohol Responsibility

Inspiring a lifetime of

# RESPONSIBLE

alcohol choices



RESPONSIBILITY.ORG



## Environmental Stewardship



## Our People



Business



OUT & EQUAL



ASSOCIATION of  
AFRICAN AMERICAN  
VINTNERS



CHILDREN OF RESTAURANT EMPLOYEES



PROSPANICA  
THE ASSOCIATION OF HISPANIC MBAs  
& BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS



Northwestern  
University



Diabetes  
Research  
Institute  
FOUNDATION



New York City  
Police Foundation  
Building a Safer City Together

# AHRC FOUNDATION



National  
Multiple Sclerosis  
Society



American  
Heart  
Association.



UJA Federation  
NEW YORK



Canadian  
Cancer  
Society



nourishing  
**HOPE**  
Food for today. Hope for tomorrow.



Kennedy Krieger Institute  
UNLOCKING POTENTIAL



## Our Community



# Our Partners

Spotlighting the organizations we support.

We are proud to spotlight some of our key charitable partners who we support to help spread the word as to their mission and how they make a positive difference. It is through these organizations that we are able to provide the reach, impact, and scale to our giving efforts.



## No Kid Hungry

Breakthru Beverage Group is deeply committed to making a positive impact in the communities it serves. One of those organizations that we are proud to support is No Kid Hungry. This nation-wide program, initiated by Share Our Strength in 2010, aims to combat hunger and poverty in the U.S. and globally, focusing on ensuring every child receives three meals a day through school and community meal programs, grants for necessary equipment, and advocacy for improved policies. With 1 in 5 children in the U.S. facing hunger, Breakthru's contributions, including sponsorship of fundraising events like the Citi Dinner Series and Taste of the Nation, have played a significant role in raising over \$4.7 million for the cause, underlining a commitment to ending childhood hunger.

*"We are proud to continue our work with Breakthru Beverage Group, as a sponsor of No Kid Hungry culinary events across the country. Their continued commitment to our mission means more kids in this country will have access to three meals per day, 365 days a year. Thank you, Breakthru Beverage Group, for helping make No Kid Hungry a reality." - Kim Morin, Director of Culinary Partnerships & Events*

## Thurgood Marshall College Fund

Aligned with our DE&I advocacy, we are proud to support the Thurgood Marshall College Fund. Established in 1987, the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf) stands as the largest organization solely dedicated to representing the Black College Community, encompassing publicly-supported Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs). TMCf supports these institutions through scholarships, capacity building, research, innovative programs, and strategic partnerships, making it a crucial resource in both K-12 and higher education, as well as a prime source for employers seeking talented candidates for internships and employment.

Similarly committed to education and community service, Breakthru Beverage Group actively supports the TMCf, particularly its Leadership Institute, which is now in its 23rd year. The institute is designed to prepare HBCU students for the global workforce, offering them access to career opportunities. Breakthru participates in recruitment events, providing financial support, and education on leadership skills, demonstrating its commitment to fostering the next generation of diverse leaders. Charles Merinoff, Co-Chairman of Breakthru Beverage Group, further solidifies this connection by serving on the Board of Directors of Thurgood Marshall College.

*"Finding partners with shared values is a high priority for the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf) and the students we serve. Breakthru Beverage Group, like TMCf, is committed to education and serving its community. With those things in common, we look forward to the great things that will continue to come from our partnership." - Dr. Harry L. Williams, President and CEO, Thurgood Marshall College Fund*





# Our Partners

Supporting environmental and sustainability stewardship.

With our partners and customers, we strive to promote sustainable industry practices.

Our Operations leadership is focused on accurately measuring our environmental impact to establish a baseline to set targets for improvement and future progress, while also identifying ways to limit our environmental impact, such as waste reduction, fleet emissions reduction, and energy efficient warehouses.

In addition to reducing our environmental impact, our leadership is passionate about nature preservation and sustainable farming. We are proud to support organizations like The Bee Conservancy, Urban Growers Collective, and The White Oak Initiative.



## White Oak Initiative

The White Oak Initiative (WOI) was formed in 2017 by a group of organizations that all rely on or care about white or upland oak for various reasons. It was developed to address the needs for awareness, research, technical and financial assistance, education, communication, policy, and locally customized on-the-ground implementation of upland oak management practices.

American white oak is a tree species currently occupying more than 104 million acres of public and private forestland across much of the eastern and central United States. Not only do white oak forests support extensive plant and animal biodiversity, but white oak is also the most commercially important timber oak, generating billions of dollars annually and supplying necessary material to industries such as furniture, flooring, cabinetry, and wine and spirits.

The mission of the White Oak Initiative is to be an advocate and catalyst for sustainable oak forest management, with a focus on white oak regeneration. The WOI envisions a future in which upland oak forests are managed to ensure a sustainable white oak resource.

Breakthru Beverage Group is proud to join several of our supplier partners in launching the White Oak Initiative Strategic Partnership Advisory Committee.

***"By supporting the White Oak Initiative, Breakthru Beverage Group is demonstrating a commitment to ensuring that forests that include white oak are managed sustainably, supporting wildlife, clean air and water, and rural economies all at the same time. White oak is a key ingredient in many of our favorite adult beverages and their support will help us continue to work to ensure that white oak remains a resource to the beverage industry for generations to come." - Jason Meyer, Executive Director White Oak Initiative***

# Alcohol Responsibility

Advocating for responsible consumption.

Inspiring a lifetime of

# RESPONSIBLE

alcohol choices

As proud members of the beverage alcohol industry, we are committed to the responsible delivery, sale, and consumption of alcohol.

## Responsibility.org

Founded over 30 years ago and funded by America's leading distillers, The Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility (Responsibility.org) is a national, independent not-for-profit organization working to promote a lifetime of alcohol responsibility by:

- Leading the fight to eliminate underage drinking.
- Leading efforts to eliminate drunk driving and working with others to end all impaired driving.
- Empowering adults of legal drinking age who choose to drink to make responsible choices regarding beverage alcohol.

Through educational programs, awareness efforts, and legislative work, Responsibility.org continues to make progress of these three key missions on both a national and community level.

## Hydration Stations

In addition to our Responsibility.org partnership, Breakthru launched a "Take a Break" Hydration Station in Arizona to be used at sponsored special events throughout the year. The area is designed with lounge furniture, high top tables, a water station, and a hydration bar with non-alcoholic product options from Breakthru. Signage inside the tent focuses on responsible drinking messages and how to get home safely with QR codes for discounts on ride sharing apps.

This Breakthru-led initiative helps people enjoy their time at our sponsored events, while keeping them cool and hydrated. We look forward to deploying more Hydration Stations at key events across our footprint.



***"Breakthru Beverage Group was the first wholesaler partner of Responsibility.org. We applaud Breakthru's leadership on issues related to alcohol responsibility, especially as it relates to preventing impaired driving and underage drinking. The impact of their commitment to not only their employees, but also their local communities and their business partners sets a new standard for our industry."***

*Chris Swonger, President & CEO, Distilled Spirits Council of the United States and Responsibility.org.*



# Our Vibrant Culture

Creating an exceptional  
associate experience.



Growth. Belonging. Wellness.

Breakthru aims to be the place everyone wants to work. To achieve this, we are committed to providing opportunity for our people to reach their full potential, thrive in a collaborative & inclusive environment, and be supported in living well. Giving back to our communities is a key part of who we are, fostering a joy, belonging, and vibrancy that runs through our culture."

Melanie Lundberg  
Vice President, Talent Management





I N M E M O R I A M

# ROCKY WIRTZ

1 9 5 2  2 0 2 3



## The Passing of Rocky Wirtz

Rocky Wirtz, a towering figure in the beverage industry and renowned owner of the Chicago Blackhawks, passed away at the age of 70. As co-chairman of Breakthru Beverage Group, the third-largest wholesaler of spirits and wine in the U.S., and head of Wirtz Corporation, he significantly influenced both his family's business and the broader drinks and sports sectors. Wirtz's businesses thrived under his leadership, encompassing a diverse range of interests, including real estate, insurance, and sports. His death was confirmed following a brief illness, leaving a legacy of professional success and personal warmth.

Rocky Wirtz was celebrated for his commitment to Chicago, his passion for business, and his deep love for his family. Described as a devoted husband, loving father, and doting grandfather, his impact extended far beyond his professional achievements. His son, Danny Wirtz, and others in the business and sports communities praised him for his inspiring leadership, mentorship, and kindness. Rocky's ability to connect with people, combined with his visionary approach to business, made him a beloved figure among colleagues, friends, and family alike.

In addition to his business acumen, Rocky was a philanthropist, contributing to various causes through the Chicago Blackhawks Foundation and establishing the Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Endowment for Visiting Artists at Northwestern University. His efforts in philanthropy showcased his commitment to giving back to the community and supporting youth programs, health and wellness, education, and housing.

Rocky Wirtz's legacy is marked by his significant contributions to his industries, his dedication to his community, and the profound impact he had on those around him.



***"Rocky was much more than a colleague, he was a valued and cherished friend. He had the remarkable ability to light up a room with his smile, his laugh, and his wit. Whether as competitors or partners, I always had the utmost respect for Rocky and admired the grace and integrity in which he conducted himself. His loss will be felt throughout our business, and I will miss my friend dearly." Charlie Merinoff, Co-Chairman***



## BREAKTHRU BEVERAGE

A leading North American distributor of the world's top luxury and premium wine, spirits and beer brands.



*We are a family-owned and-operated beverage alcohol wholesaler. At Breakthru, we are proud of our multigenerational legacy of service, innovation, and expertise.*

JOIN THE  
**BREAKTHRU BEVERAGE**  
DIGITAL UNIVERSE

