



## Messina Hof Biographies



### **Paul Mitchell Bonarrigo, *Chief Executive Officer***

Born into the Texas Wine Industry, Paul Mitchell Bonarrigo grew up working alongside parents and founders of Messina Hof Wine Cellars, Inc, Paul Vincent and Merrill Bonarrigo gaining knowledge in all aspects of the vineyard, winery, sales and marketing. Paul graduated with a Bachelor's of Science in Systems Engineering from The United States Naval Academy and was commissioned as a United States Marine Corps Officer where he served on Active Duty. After two deployments to combat zones in Iraq as well as an overseas assignment in Nigeria, Paul returned to Messina Hof and worked as Operations Manager until becoming the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in 2012. Paul serves on the Texas Wine and Grape Growers Association (TWGGA) Legislative Committee and is a Board Member of the Bryan-College Station Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB).



### **Karen Bonarrigo, *Director of Administration***

Karen Bonarrigo started her journey into the Texas Wine Industry over a decade ago after meeting her (now) husband, Paul M. Bonarrigo, CEO of Messina Hof Wine Cellars, Inc. Karen grew up in Pennsylvania, and graduated with a Bachelors of Arts in Political Science and a minor in History from The George Washington University. During her time at The George Washington University she participated in the selective Elizabeth J. Somers Women's Leadership Program, and worked at The George Washington University Law School as well as Marzulla and Marzulla Law Firm. Karen transitioned into Messina Hof Wine Cellars, Inc. as the Human Resources Manager in 2010 until 2012, and then became the Director of Administration in 2012. Karen serves on the Texas Wine and Grape Grower Foundation (TWGGF) Board as a Foundation Director for Region 3. She continues to hold the Director of Administration position and is heavily involved in the culinary and wine programs at Messina Hof Wine Cellars, Inc.



### **Paul Vincent Bonarrigo, *Founder***

Paul V Bonarrigo, born in the shadow of Yankee Stadium, graduated from Columbia, served in the Navy during Vietnam, and studied winemaking at UC Davis while stationed in California. He and wife Merrill founded Messina Hof Winery & Resort in 1977 in Bryan, Texas, time during which they helped pioneer the wine industry of Texas. A sixth-generation winemaker, Paul's passion for wine stems from a family rich in winemaking traditions. After 39 years Messina Hof continues to be one of the most awarded wineries in Texas in regional, national and international competitions. Under his leadership as Winemaker, Messina Hof won Top All Around Winery at Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. In 2013, Messina Hof earned a "Lifetime Achievement Award". Paul has served as chairman of the Texas Wine Industry Development Advisory Committee under three Agriculture Commissioners and fulfilled three terms as president of the TWGGA organization. He has been honored with the Qualia and John Crosby awards, as Businessman of the year, as Vin du Professionale, and as a Supreme Master Knight.



### **Merrill Bonarrigo, *Founder***

Merrill Bonarrigo, a native of Bryan-College Station, Texas, graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in Business Management. She and her husband Paul V Bonarrigo founded Messina Hof Winery & Resort in 1977 in Bryan, Texas, and helped pioneer the wine industry of Texas. Under Merrill's management, Messina Hof took the lead in wine tourism, offered the first full service event company, developed with the Parks and Recreation Department of TAMU the first wine hospitality internship program; founded the Brazos Valley Cattle Baron's Ball; developed and produced a TWGGA annual wine marketing conference, and wrote the first wine and food pairing cookbook. In 2013, Messina Hof earned a "Lifetime Achievement Award". Merrill has been honored with the Louis F. Qualia award, the Blazing Star Award, TAMU Women's Former Student Legacy Award, and is a Supreme Master Lady of the Vine in the Knights of the Vine.