



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **KNIGHTS BRIDGE WINERY PROMOTES DEREK BALJEU TO WINEMAKER**

**CALISTOGA, California – January 24, 2021** – Knights Bridge, a family-owned winery in the pristine Knights Valley appellation of Sonoma County announced the promotion of Derek Baljeu to Winemaker. In his new role, Baljeu will take on further responsibilities for the day-to-day vineyard and production operations in the newly built winery, under the direction of Director of Winemaking, Douglas Danielak.

Baljeu joined Knights Bridge in early 2019 as Enologist and Wine Production Manager following three years at Trinchero Family Estates, within the Luxury Portfolio. During his time at the University of California, Davis, Baljeu worked in a research capacity focused on phenolic development in the Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard. He holds both Master of Science and Bachelor of Science degrees in Viticulture and Enology from UC Davis. While there, he was awarded Scholar-Athlete of the Year for his standout performance in the classroom and on the field playing fullback and tight end for the Aggies.

“Derek is a skilled winemaker and has made important contributions throughout the process of building the new winery,” said Debi Leal, President and General Manager of Knights Bridge Winery, “Douglas and Derek’s synergy as a winemaking team is evident in the highly-regarded wines they have created together, and their collaboration has been at the vanguard of the new winery construction.”

Proprietor Jim Bailey noted “Derek’s dedication to his craft is invaluable as we continue to build a team of professionals who truly believe in the uniqueness of our Knights Valley terroir. Since our founding in 2006, this guiding principle has been our bedrock for handcrafting our highly rated and sought-after wines. Looking to the future of the winery, Derek’s knowledge and skill as a winemaker will play a vital role in our strategic growth, and continued focus on quality. We believe in the potential of our estate and Derek shares in our vision.”

“It’s a privilege to work with our team and I am honored to be a part of this next chapter at Knights Bridge. Harvest 2021 was our first vintage in the new winery, and I feel incredibly fortunate to have every tool I could want as a winemaker, but most especially our estate fruit” said Baljeu. He continued, “Our job will be to bring out the true expression of the Knights Bridge vineyard and carry the torch for this stunning estate and new state-of-the-art facility. I’m honored to share this beautiful and inspiring space with our guests and look forward to welcoming visitors to the winery and caves.”

### **About Knights Bridge Winery**

Today, Knights Bridge Winery is on the cusp of a truly exciting time, with a new winery completed in mid-2021. The winery was designed by renowned architect Howard Backen and is the second ever built in Knights Valley. The distinctive design and thoughtful construction are perfectly in sync with the pristine vineyard landscape. Founded in 2006 by brothers Jim and Essel Bailey and friend Tom Costin, Knights Bridge is nestled in the undeveloped west side of Knights Valley. The organically farmed estate rises to 900 feet in elevation on the rocky slopes of the Mayacamas mountain range, at the perfect intersection of climate and location. Guided by a deep respect for nature, a commitment to excellence, and a desire to share the remarkable beauty of the vineyard, Knights Bridge seeks to make wines that are transparent to their estate terroir. The Estate Winery is now welcoming guests for exclusive tasting experiences by appointment only. To learn more, please visit [knightsbridgewinery.com](http://knightsbridgewinery.com).

### **Media Contact:**

Laura Kirk Lee, Vice President of Sales and Marketing | 415.425.8030 | [lkirklee@knightsbridgewinery.com](mailto:lkirklee@knightsbridgewinery.com)

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1373 LINCOLN AVENUE, CALISTOGA, CA 94515 | 707.341.3391 | [KNIGHTSBRIDGEWINERY.COM](http://KNIGHTSBRIDGEWINERY.COM)