

Company: Grgich Hills Estate, Rutherford, CA

Nomination Submitted by: Colangelo & Partners

Company Description: The winery's mission is to craft world-class wines while building a better future. Committed to regenerating the earth and fostering peace through friendship, all wines are grown in 100% certified regenerative organic vineyards and made with minimal-intervention winemaking to showcase the true flavors of the vineyard and vintage in every bottle.

Nomination Category: Individual Awards Categories

Nomination Sub Category: Women in Family Business Leadership

Nomination Title: Violet Grgich, President + CEO



1. Outline the nominee's achievements since July 1 2023 that you wish to bring to the judges' attention (up to 250 words):

Total 240 words used.

Violet's focus has consistently been on ensuring Grgich Hills remains a beacon of excellence, innovation, and environmental responsibility for generations to come. Alongside her cousin Ivo Jeramaz, she has prioritized advancing Grgich's regenerative farming practices, deepening their commitment to eco-conscious viticulture, the latest achievement being [Certified Regenerative Organic](#) in 2023. In the past year, Grgich has expanded research on soil health and biodiversity, including university partnerships to study the effects of regenerative agriculture in the face of climate change. Grgich [employs regenerative practices](#) such as cover cropping, composting, and no-till farming to enrich the ecosystem, sequestering more carbon in the soil than they produce.

Beyond the vineyard, the winery operates in a way that minimizes its carbon footprint by harnessing solar energy, conserving water, and implementing waste-reducing techniques—all while maintaining the highest standards of quality.

Violet is deeply committed to driving positive change beyond the vineyard through her active involvement in global humanitarian and sustainability efforts. She serves on the board of [WiRED International](#), continuing the legacy of her mother, Tatjana Grgich. As President of the Tatjana Grgich Family Foundation, she furthers its mission to support educational, medical, and spiritual resources for those in need. Violet is also involved with [Roots of Peace](#) and the [World Food Prize Foundation](#), where she contributes to advancing agricultural sustainability. She regularly speaks at conferences, including the [World Food Prize's DialogueNEXT](#), and the [Borlaug Dialogue](#) events, focusing on regenerative agriculture and empowering future generations.

2. Reference any attachments of supporting materials throughout this nomination and how they provide evidence of the claims you have made in this nomination (up to 250 words):

Total 193 words used.

- o Grgich Hills Estate's [Regenerative Organic Certification](#) emphasizes the importance of farming practices that not only sustain but actively restore ecosystems, increase biodiversity, and build long-term soil health. Find some examples of progress in their efforts [HERE](#).
- o [Napa Green RISE Leadership Award for Soil Health & Biodiversity Leadership](#) award highlights the estate's holistic approach to farming and its economic analysis proving that working in harmony with nature can reduce costs and improve resilience—core tenets of the regenerative model. These accolades underscore that Grgich Hills is not only meeting the standards but helping define best practices within the regenerative movement.
- o Further extending her impact, Grgich Hills Estate hosts [Festival of the Bells](#), a cornerstone of Grgich Hills Estate's commitment to fostering peace through agriculture. This international gathering brings together agricultural and environmental leaders from around the world to share best practices, discuss cutting-edge research, and collaborate on sustainable solutions. The event emphasizes the role of regenerative farming in creating economically viable and environmentally positive food systems. For Grgich Hills Estate, this event reflects a core belief: that environmentally conscious farming is not just about growing grapes—it's about nourishing communities, protecting the planet, and promoting peace.

3. Briefly describe the nominated individual: history and past performance (up to 200 words):

Total 200 words used.

Grgich Hills Estate has a rich history rooted in resilience, passion, and the pursuit of excellence. Miljenko "Mike" Grgich made history in 1976 when his 1973 Chateau Montelena Chardonnay won the Judgment of Paris, proving that Napa Valley wines could stand alongside the best in the world. That moment changed the course of California winemaking and empowered Mike, a Croatian immigrant, to fulfill his dream of winery ownership.

In 1977, he partnered with Austin Hills of the Hills Bros. Coffee family to establish the winery. It remains family owned and operated, dedicated to crafting quality wines and honoring the land. Violet Grgich became co-proprietor in 1993 and has served as president and CEO since 2017. She continues the legacy of her parents, using her expertise to craft world-class wines while advancing a more sustainable and equitable future.

The winery adopted organic farming in 2000 and is now 100% estate-grown and Certified Regenerative Organic. Staying true to Mike's classic, balanced style, the team embraces innovation to enhance purity and vibrancy.

Guided by Mike's philosophy, "Every day, do your best, learn something new, and make a friend," Grgich Hills Estate leads with purpose through regenerative agriculture research, education, and community-focused philanthropy.

4. Which will you submit for your nomination in this category, a video of up to five (5) minutes, explaining the achievements since July 1, 2023 of the nominated woman, OR written answers to the questions? (Choose one):

Written answers to the questions

5. If you are submitting a video of up to five (5) minutes in length, provide the URL of the video here, OR attach it to your entry via the "Add Attachments, Videos, or Links to This Entry" link above, through which you may also upload a copy of your video. If you are submitting written answers to the questions for this category, provide them in the spaces below:
6. Explain why the achievements you have highlighted are unique or significant. If possible compare the achievements to the performance of other players in your industry and/or to the nominee's past performance (up to 250 words):

Total 221 words used.

Grgich Hills Estate stands at the forefront of sustainability and innovation in the wine industry, with recent achievements reflecting a bold commitment to regenerative farming—an approach still rare among global producers. According to the [Regenerative Viticulture Foundation](#), only about 25 vineyards worldwide hold Regenerative Organic Certification. Grgich Hills began implementing regenerative organic practices in 2019, well before the approach gained broader industry attention, and proudly became Certified Regenerative Organic in 2023. This places the estate among a small, pioneering group leading the way in climate-smart viticulture.

This certification goes far beyond traditional organic standards. It emphasizes not only eliminating synthetic inputs but also actively restoring soil health, promoting biodiversity, and drawing down carbon. Grgich Hills' adoption of these practices is a proactive response to the growing environmental challenges facing agriculture today, including climate change, disease pressure, and declining ecosystem resilience.

Violet Grgich and Grgich Hills Estate have received multiple honors, including the [Napa Green RISE Leadership Award for Soil Health & Biodiversity Leadership](#) and the [Great Wine Capitals win for Sustainable Wine Tourism](#). These awards celebrate the estate's holistic approach to regenerative farming and highlights its groundbreaking economic analysis, which demonstrates the financial value of collaborating with nature. Grgich Hills continues to serve as a model for climate-smart viticulture, proving that environmental stewardship and economic viability can go hand in hand.

Attachments/Videos/Links:

[Violet Grgich, President + CEO](#)



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