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Brock University – Communications & Public Affairs

*\*NOTE - Attached to this release is a photo that is free for media use. Caption: Brock Oenology and Viticulture student Bingyao Guo pours one of the local wines being featured at the first round of CCOVI's Educate Your Senses seminars in St. Catharines on Saturday.*

## **Brock's CCOVI helps Grape and Wine crowd educate its senses**

Brock's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) raised a glass to celebrate its 20th year partnering with the Niagara Grape and Wine Festival on Saturday, Sept. 16.

Continuing the long-standing tradition, CCOVI hosted three of its popular Educate your Senses wine and cheese seminars in Montebello Park in downtown St. Catharines, with some of the sold-out sessions attracting wine lovers from across Ontario, the U.S. and even Australia.

CCOVI will offer three more seminars at the festival on Saturday, Sept. 23.

Barb Tatarnic, CCOVI's Manager of Continuing Education and Outreach, said the institute is proud to celebrate the important milestone.

"With two decades of bringing quality educational opportunities to the local community through outreach offerings like the Educate Your Senses seminar series, we have solidified our commitment both to the community and the grape and wine industry," she said. "Over the span of 20 years we've poured more than 10,000 glasses of VQA wine to festivalgoers and brought education and VQA wine excellence together, one glass at a time."

Brock alumni and Peller Estates winemaker Jason Roller (BSc '04) got the seminars started Saturday, followed by Ed Madronich, President of Flat Rock Cellars, and winemaker Gavin Robertson, Niagara College Winery.

Each seminar features discussions with local winemakers, who pour two wines for the audience to sample alongside cheese pairings provided by Real Canadian Superstore.

The seminars are hosted by Christopher Waters, *VINES Magazine* editor and CCOVI continuing education instructor. Waters introduces attendees to some of Niagara's top winemakers, including alumni of Brock's Oenology and Viticulture program, as they share the experiences and stories behind their wines.

“It’s a chance to meet talented winemakers and winery principals who will share insights into what they do in a casual, intimate and entertaining tasting seminar,” said Waters. “The guests can find out what truly goes into making the wine in their glass, directly from the winemakers themselves.”

CCOVI hosted its first sanctioned festival event (Cool Climate Reds – a guided tasting) back in 1997, and Waters launched the Educate Your Senses seminars, alongside now-St. Catharines Mayor Walter Sendzik, two years later.

The institute has been a part of the festival ever since, hosting many unique events and providing thousands of festival attendees with the opportunity to sample VQA wines from the nearly 160 winemakers who have participated in the Educate Your Senses seminars. Waters said the enduring partnership between CCOVI and the Niagara Grape and Wine Festival promotes the best of the local wine industry.

“A milestone like 20 years is a sign of increased maturity for CCOVI and the wine festival,” he added. “The series provides an added level of sophistication and enjoyment to the festival’s line-up, which makes for a better experience for those looking to get the most out of the Montebello Park experience.”

### **Educate your Senses Schedule**

#### **Saturday, Sept. 23:**

2 p.m. Chris Protonentis, Coyote’s Run

3 p.m. Brock alumni Richie Roberts, Fielding Estate

4 p.m. Marc Bradshaw, Strewn

**Location:** Roy T. Adams Bandshell, Montebello Park, St. Catharines

**Cost:** \$3.50 per token, two tokens per seminar. Brock alumni will receive a free wine glass with registration and receive half off the seminar cost. Tokens are available for purchase at Montebello Park throughout each weekend. Registration for seminars will be at the Roy T. Adams Bandshell only. Seminars run rain or shine.

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For more information or for assistance arranging interviews:

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