

Contact: Seth DeBolt, 859-257-8654

Independent Stave Company and the Boswell family give \$1 million for spirits maturation warehouse at UK

By Aimee Nielson

LEXINGTON, Ky., (Feb. 27, 2020) — Independent Stave Company and the Boswell Family are giving \$1 million to the University of Kentucky to further spirits research at the James B. Beam Institute for Kentucky Spirits. The gift will fund a maturation facility that will allow the Beam Institute to experiment with barrel aging spirits produced in its research distillery.

“The creation of the James B. Beam Institute at the University of Kentucky speaks volumes about the bright future of the spirits industry,” said Brad Boswell, CEO at Independent Stave Company. “My family is honored to be a part of this groundbreaking commitment to distilling education in the great commonwealth of Kentucky. Independent Stave Company – Boswell Family Barrel Warehouse will be an unparalleled, hands-on experience for students to increase their understanding of the relationship between oak barrels and spirits. We’re excited to see how this knowledge drives innovation in our industry as graduates of this program eventually become the next generation of distillers.”

Since 1912, Independent Stave Company has crafted quality cooperage products for the wine and spirits industry. The company now exists on six continents and continues to evolve with a commitment to safety, quality and innovation as it meets the growing demand for oak worldwide.

“Independent Stave Company is the industry leader in American white oak barrel manufacturing, sustainability and innovation,” said Seth DeBolt, director of the Beam Institute. “This generous investment by the Boswell family will greatly enhance the reach of the James B. Beam Institute for Kentucky Spirits at the University of Kentucky and is an investment in Kentucky’s future.”

The Independent Stave Company – Boswell Family Barrel Warehouse will provide a modern facility to research bourbon whiskey production and maturation science.

“Kentucky’s bourbon industry is critically important to the state’s economy, and we are certainly excited and appreciative of the Boswell family’s confidence in this new spirits initiative at UK. The bourbon industry is an important component of our land-grant mission to enhance Kentucky,” said Nancy Cox, dean of the UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, where the institute resides.

The only one of its kind in the United States, the warehouse will have a 600-barrel capacity and become an interactive classroom and laboratory where students and scientists can tackle real-life industry issues.

“As the University of, for and with Kentucky, we are grateful for the Boswell family’s generosity,” said UK President Eli Capilouto. “This gift further strengthens our commitment to research and workforce development in an industry inextricably linked to Kentucky’s economy.”

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Writer: Aimee Nielson, 859-257-7707

UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, through its land-grant mission, reaches across the commonwealth with teaching, research and extension to enhance the lives of Kentuckians.