



## **L'Ecole N° 41 Named 2018 Family Business of the Year**

Walla Walla's Third-Generation Winery  
Honored with Top Award for Setting the Standard for Excellence

**WALLA WALLA, Wash.** (December 5, 2018) – L'Ecole N° 41, one of Walla Walla's early founding family wineries, is the small firm recipient of *Seattle Business* magazine's 2018 Family Business of the Year award. The winery was one of 11 Washington State companies honored for excellence at an awards ceremony held in Seattle Tuesday evening. The recognition coincides with the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the winery's founding.

Award organizers noted honored businesses share a proven ability to successfully grow their companies while serving their communities and delivering exceptional customer service. A panel of nine business leaders served as judges reviewing applications from numerous family-owned and operated businesses from the across the state. The judges selected the winery as the year's best "small firm" family business, defined as a company with fewer than 50 employees in Washington.

L'Ecole managing winemaker Marty Clubb, who owns L'Ecole with his wife Megan and their children, Riley Clubb and Rebecca Olson, says the recognition is particularly meaningful because the award reflects the values of the winery's founders Jean and Baker Ferguson. "Jean and Baker started L'Ecole in their retirement years and brought their life-long commitment to family, community service and relationships built on reliability, integrity, and authenticity," said Clubb who is the Fergusons' son-in-law. "These guiding principles, along with a commitment to excellence in grape growing and winemaking, have been L'Ecole's pathway to success since the beginning."

The Fergusons established L'Ecole in 1983 in the early days of Washington winemaking staking L'Ecole's' claim as the third bonded winery in Walla Walla and the 20<sup>th</sup> winery in Washington State. Today there are more than 120 wineries in Walla Walla and more than 950 across the state. "Jean and Baker were early visionaries who believed in the potential of Washington wines," said Clubb who has managed the winery since 1989. Under his leadership, L'Ecole has grown from a small, local "mom & pop" winery into a nationally and internationally respected brand known for the quality and consistency of its wine, and recognized for its investment in Walla Walla Valley estate vineyards. In addition to leading the winery, Clubb has helped shaped the reputation of Walla Walla wine and the direction of policies and regulations governing wine through his service on local, regional, and national wine industry boards.

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The Clubbs' adult children, Riley and Rebecca, represent L'Ecole's third generation. Both have worked in various capacities at the winery, including grape growing, winemaking, marketing and sales and currently serve on L'Ecole's board of directors with their parents.

Housed in the historic Frenchtown Schoolhouse depicted on its label, L'Ecole has earned international acclaim for producing expressive, distinctive wines that reflect the unmistakable typicity of Washington State and the unique terroir of their Walla Walla Valley estate vineyards. In 2014, London's Decanter World Wine Awards (DWWA) named L'Ecole's Ferguson *Best Bordeaux Blend in the World* over £15. Most recently the winery was awarded *USA Today's* 2018 Reader's Choice award as one of the country's Top 10 tasting rooms.

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***Editor's Note: High-resolution photo available on request***