

Heather Porter Wolfe - Chief Operations Officer and Assistant Winemaker

“Scientific principles and laws do not lie on the surface of nature.

They are hidden, and must be wrested from nature by an active and elaborate technique of inquiry.”

~John Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy, 1920



Heather Porter was born and raised in Rochester, MN. While the first eighteen years of her life were what she considers “typical – school, Girl Scouts, 4-H, high school band, etc.” her favorite memories are trips to the beach, where she and her mother would spend the day “heads in the sand, butts in the air” searching for shells and creatures. Her early passions were creative writing, science, and animals, and her career in biology was firmly decided after a trip to the Cayman Islands in high school where she experienced her first scuba dive and encounter with marine life in its own habitat.

After high school Heather attended the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, determined to get a good background in general biology. With that firm base of knowledge, she then attended the University of South Florida in Tampa to obtain a Master’s degree in zoology. Specifically, she studied the functional morphology of feeding in fishes: how fish are shaped and how the different shapes are used to capture and consume food.

Immediately after graduate school, she was hired by the Fish and Wildlife Health group at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s Fish and Wildlife Research Institute in St. Petersburg, FL. Initially working as a field technician, she gradually took over the project and was eventually promoted to manager of the research group. After a rather discouraging stint working as middle management for a state agency, she was delighted to be invited to join her parents in Napa and apply her scientific research skills in another way: learning the biology of the vineyard and the chemistry of wine.

Heather brings a joy and avid curiosity to the winery project, and she especially enjoys being part of something her family does together, and that reaches so many different people through their passion for wine.