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**Bio for Destiny R. Burns, Owner & Founder of CLE Urban Winery**

I was born and raised in the eastern suburbs of Cleveland, Ohio. I joined the US Navy after graduating from high school to get an education and to see the world. I served for 20 years in both the enlisted and officer ranks of the US Navy, first as a Cryptologic Russian Linguist and then as a Cryptologic/Information Warfare Officer. During my Navy career, I served all over the world, including Japan, Hawaii, Florida, California, Texas, Maryland and Virginia. I also deployed to the Middle East in 1993 during Operation Southern Watch with US Naval Forces Central Command. I retired from active duty in 2003 and began a second career in the defense industry as a business development executive. In this role and in positions of increasing responsibility for the next 13 years, I worked for large corporations in the Washington DC area to include IBM, Northrop Grumman and General Dynamics. During this time (and in my late 40s), I also served my community as a volunteer firefighter and EMT with the Sterling Volunteer Fire Company in Sterling, Virginia – including two years as an operational firefighter, three years as an administrative support member and five years as Founder and Commander of their Honor Guard.

During my military and civilian career, I had the opportunity to travel and enjoy food and wine from around the world – it became a treasured hobby of mine and I always dreamed of opening my own food and wine-related business “someday.” When I turned 50, newly divorced after a 26-year marriage and with my only daughter Aimee (who is now 34 years old and married!) through college and successfully launched, I found myself at a crossroads. It was then that I decided to leave Virginia and the corporate world behind and return to my beloved hometown of Cleveland, Ohio and pursue my dream of owning my own business and to be near my mom, sisters, brother, niece, and nephews. I developed the concept of CLE Urban Winery based on Cleveland’s craft brewery culture which I loved – it is a craft brewery-style winery where we offer Good Wine Made Fun that Celebrates Cleveland and Creates Community. In July 2021, I celebrated five years since we opened the doors of this small but mighty business.