



- Advertisement -

Stemilt hits WAEF donation milestone

September 4, 2024

[Stemilt Growers](#) reached a milestone donation of over \$1.3 million through its partnership with the Washington Apple Education Foundation. Since 2007, Stemilt has been raising funds to offer the Mathison Family scholarship, Stemilt Growers scholarship and the Thomas K. Mathison scholarship to students with direct ties to Washington's tree fruit industry who are pursuing a college degree.



West Mathison

“When we first partnered with WAEF, our goal was to give students an opportunity they might not have had before,” said West Mathison. “To say we’ve reached over \$1.3 million dollars in scholarship funding is overwhelming. I can’t describe how grateful the Mathison family and Stemilt is to be able to support the youth and future of our industry and award them for their hard work in and outside the classroom.”

Every year, WAEF awards hundreds of scholarships to deserving students on behalf of tree fruit industry families, employees and supporters. Stemilt has supported WAEF and various scholarships for 17 years. The Thomas K. Mathison Scholarship has been active since 2009 and is primarily funded by Stemilt’s annual Thomas K. Mathison Memorial Golf Tournament, which has donated nearly \$600,000 in scholarships in 15 years.

“In May 2024, the annual golf tournament raised our highest donation yet of \$165,000, which pushed

us past the million dollar mark with WAEF,” said Mathison. “My grandfather, Tom, always valued education and supporting the aspiring youth in the Washington tree fruit industry. The golf tournament is our way of carrying out his legacy and passion for learning and offering student scholarships. His hope was always to help students achieve their dreams of pursuing a college degree because they are the future of the industry.”

In 2024, 20 Stemilt Scholarships were awarded to students totaling \$83,500. One recipient of a Stemilt scholarship, Norma Castro, was WAEF’s featured student at last year’s luncheon. She graduated from Washington State University in 2023 in nutrition and exercise physiology and is currently working on her master's degree in diabetics in Spokane at WSU. Castro has plans to return to Wenatchee Valley to serve her community and create her own scholarship with her siblings to help give back to the industry.

“It’s stories like these that make us proud and inspired to give to WAEF and these students every year,” said Mathison. “Though we’ve reached this milestone in our donation history, I like to say the best is still yet to come. We look forward to continuing our efforts in helping the young, future leaders of our industry succeed and follow their passions wherever it may take them.”

[Print](#)