WOODWARD CANYON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
February 4th, 2026

# WOODWARD CANYON ANNOUNCES WINEMAKING LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

Lowden, WA, February 4th – As part of a thoroughly planned generational transition, Woodward Canyon Winery announces the appointment of Marcus Rafanelli as Winemaker.

Rafanelli most recently spent the last five years as the Winemaker at L'Ecole N°41 and has additional experience as an instructor at the Walla Walla Community College Enology and Viticulture program and as Winemaker at William Church Winery in Woodinville.

"We are excited to have Marcus on board as we plan for the future," said General Manager and Family Co-Owner, Jordan Small. "He brings 20 years of experience working with diverse vineyards and wineries both regionally and internationally. With his track record of producing consistent award-winning wines vintage after vintage, we look forward to him being an integral part of our team."

Rafanelli will be taking over for long time Winemaker, Kevin Mott. Mott's first vintage with Woodward Canyon was 2003, and he has been instrumental in the winery's success and reputation for consistent quality. He was made a minority shareholder in 2011 and has sat on the winery's Board of Directors since that time, providing additional leadership and mentoring to staff and the second generation of the Small family.

"We greatly appreciate Kevin's years of hard work and dedication to Woodward Canyon. He has made countless wines scoring over 90 points and has helped solidify an ever-growing fan base in both our DTC and National Sales channels," said Small.

There will be a collaborative handoff between Mott and Rafanelli focused on stylistic consistency. Rafanelli will officially take the reins in mid-February and will be present to meet customers and trade at upcoming events throughout the spring.

Woodard Canyon was the second winery in the Walla Walla Valley, founded in 1981 by Rick Small and Darcey Fugman-Small. The Smalls were instrumental in applying for and receiving federal approval of the Walla Walla Valley AVA in 1984. Woodward Canyon was also a founding member of the Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance. Woodward Canyon wines are sold both nationally and internationally.

Company: Woodward Canyon
Contact: Jordan Small
Phone: (509) 525-4129
Email: info@woodwardcanyon.com
Website: www.woodwardcanyon.com

###