



BILL BATCHELOR, CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER:

After graduating from Sonoma State University with a BA in Anthropology and a minor in Film & Photography, Batchelor focused on making films and screenwriting in his native Southern California. Reaching a point a few years later where he wanted to relocate back to Sonoma County and find a more stable career, Bill called upon his friends in the wine business. That was 20 years ago and a long way from his start as a harvest cellar worker.



Batchelor's experience spans from boutique winemaking on the edge of Dry Creek Valley to managing a fast-paced, large wine production facility. He brings a collaborative approach to team building and making wine at Martin Ray: "Bring in the best fruit and talent ... and have fun while you do it," he says. He's assembled a trusted core based on the skills and raw intuition each brings to the table. Bill and his team source grapes from some of California's most notable wine regions, including Santa Cruz, where Martin Ray was founded, to its current home in Russian River Valley, Sonoma County and neighboring Napa Valley.

Bill's experience making a feature film, as he says, "taught me you can't do it alone, and everyone brings something to the table. By leading and shaping a collaborative team you create a better product." Batchelor fosters team work and often lauds the contributions of his assistant winemaker, Lindsey Houghton. With aim at producing the very best possible, he also works closely with a team of advisers, tapping the specific expertise of each. Keith Emerson, a Bordeaux varietals expert from Napa Valley, brings experience from working with Vineyard 29, Robert Craig and Gundlach-Bundschu in addition to his own labels. Dan Goldfield, winemaker at Dutton-Goldfield Winery, brings a keen intuition of Burgundian varietals and deep knowledge of Russian River Valley.

Since 2003, when Martin Ray moved to its current Laguna Road home in Russian River Valley, Bill's been with the winery. His goal is to learn every angle of the business, including winemaking, packaging, vineyards, marketing and most importantly, business. When he's not absorbed by all that, he's either with his family, on a soccer field playing for one of his five teams or visiting historic football grounds and vintage pubs in the UK. He also enjoys playing bass guitar and seeing live music.