



T H E U M S T E A D  
HOTEL AND SPA

**Media Contacts:**

Patricia Nugent / Beatriz Jimenez  
Eric Mower + Associates  
(212) 284-9935 / (212) 284-9940  
[pnugent@mower.com](mailto:pnugent@mower.com) / [bjimenez@mower.com](mailto:bjimenez@mower.com)

**Hai Tran  
Sommelier**



The wine industry was not the immediately obvious career path for [The Umstead Hotel and Spa's](#) sommelier, Hai Tran. A first generation Vietnamese-American who studied science at Duke University, Tran had virtually no experience with wine during his upbringing in Orlando, Fla. However, a stint in the restaurant industry while he pursued a career in biotechnology proved transformative. Tran's exposure to fine dining and the world of wine sparked a great passion and a new calling.

Tran has served as sommelier of the *Forbes* Five Star, AAA Five Diamond Herons restaurant at The Umstead in Cary, N.C. since 2011. Under his direction, Herons' wine program has consistently received *Wine Spectator's* "Best of Award of Excellence." Tran was instrumental in securing the history-making 2012 Fête du Bordeaux dinner at The Umstead, a first for North Carolina, and he regularly connects with guests and locals during his monthly "Umstead Uncorked" tasting program.

Before joining The Umstead, Tran served as wine director at a restaurant in Cary, shaping a new wine program that complemented the rich and bold flavors of Southeast Asian cuisine. Prior to that, Tran was a sales representative for North Carolina's Fine Wine Trading Co., a post he sought following work at the Fairview Dining Room at the Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club in Durham, NC. It was at the Fairview that he first discovered his passion for wine and its complex nuances.

Tran is a Certified Advanced Sommelier by the Court of Master Sommeliers, and one of only 13 individuals nationwide to pass the notoriously difficult exam.

# # #