

## 2026 Crafted for Action Conference Session Descriptions - Saturday, June 6, 2026

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**10:00 AM – 10:45 AM**

### **Pour & Prosper: A Wine + Wealth Experience**

***Presenter(s): Zan Cooley, Licensed Wealth & Protection Strategist;  
Certified WSET Level 1 Wine Enthusiast***

Pour & Prosper combines guided wine tasting with practical financial strategy in a session that invites participants to think about wealth planning through the lenses of balance, value, and finish. Using three wines as teaching anchors, the workshop creates a welcoming entry point into financial literacy, long-term planning, and legacy-building while still delivering a meaningful tasting experience. Rather than treating wine and finance as separate conversations, the session uses parallels between structure in the glass and structure in financial decision-making to make both topics feel more approachable and memorable. The session is designed to leave people with greater confidence and curiosity in talking about wine, but also with clear next steps and practical tools for building a thoughtful financial plan that aligns with their values, priorities, and desired legacy.

**10:00 AM – 10:45 AM**

### **Trust Your Taste: Building Confidence Through Sensory Exploration**

***Presenter(s): Michelle Turner, Certified Cicerone, Certified BJCP Beer Judge***

This sensory workshop is designed to help participants trust their own palate by stripping away visual cues and focusing instead on aroma, memory, and lived experience. Through a blind tasting of beer, wine, and a non-alcoholic beverage paired with familiar food aromas and tastes, attendees will explore how perception works and how personal associations shape what they notice. The session

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challenges the idea that tasting requires the “right” vocabulary and instead builds confidence by showing that strong sensory observation begins with attention, curiosity, and honest reflection.

**11:00 AM – 11:45 AM**

#### **The Pairing Lab: Build Your Own Bite + Wine Match**

***Presenter(s): Toni Williams***

This hands-on workshop turns wine pairing into an active experiment rather than a rigid set of rules. Participants will taste three contrasting wines and then build their own mini composed bites from curated ingredients, testing how elements like fat, acid, sweetness, bitterness, and umami can shift a wine’s perceived structure. Instead of memorizing classic pairings, attendees will learn a flexible, repeatable framework they can use to understand why certain combinations work and how flavor, texture, and contrast can transform both the food and the wine. The session begins with a concise foundation on how pairing works, followed by a rapid calibration tasting to help participants identify each wine’s structure and needs. After a live demonstration of the pairing process, attendees move into the lab portion, where they create bites for each wine, compare notes with others, and look for patterns in what bridges, complements, or elevates the tasting experience. The result is a highly interactive workshop that builds confidence, encourages curiosity, and gives participants a practical method they can use immediately for entertaining, menu development, or personal exploration.

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**11:00 AM – 11:45 AM**

### **Beat the Brewer Head-to-Head Competition**

***Presenter(s): Nia Andrews Eagle + Panel of Participants***

Beat the Brewer is an interactive beer identification game built around sensory skill, speed, and friendly competition. In this session, beer aficionados and brewers go head-to-head as contestants taste mystery beers and try to correctly identify core characteristics including color, aroma, tasting notes, and style. The format turns sensory evaluation into a lively audience-facing challenge while also reinforcing the fundamentals of how people learn to observe and describe beer using their senses. Across multiple rounds, participants will see how visual cues, smell, and flavor work together in beer identification and how quickly sensory recall can sharpen under pressure. A word bank, timed gameplay, and a point-based scoring system keep the session engaging and accessible, while tie-breaker rounds raise the stakes by asking contestants to identify the brewery as well. The session is a fun way to spotlight beer education in action, making tasting skills visible, entertaining, and approachable for both newcomers and experienced drinkers.

**12:00 PM – 12:45 PM**

### **What We Carried With Us: Black Migration and the Culture of the Pour**

***Presenter(s): Jaleesa Taylor***

This session uses alcohol as a cultural lens to examine Black migration, memory, ritual, and community across regions and generations. Tracing a journey from Africa through the Caribbean and the American South and into later migration patterns, the

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presentation considers how drinking traditions, recipes, ingredients, and communal practices traveled with Black people whether movement was chosen or forced. In doing so, it highlights the “culture of the pour” as a living expression of resilience, adaptation, belonging, and power. Participants will explore how beverages and drinking spaces helped preserve cultural continuity while also creating new opportunities for connection, storytelling, labor networks, celebration, and organizing. The session also addresses the regulation and policing that often followed Black movement and gathering, placing those dynamics in conversation with contemporary Black beverage culture, including sommeliers, spirits founders, and culinary creatives reclaiming space today. Tastings are woven throughout the session to anchor the historical material in a sensory experience, and a tasting map handout helps connect geography, migration, and beverage traditions in a way that is both immersive and memorable.

**12:00 PM – 12:45 PM**

### **Beyond a Cola - The Adult Alternative Beverage Movement**

***Presenter(s): Brittany Hyde***

This session explores the fast-growing adult alternative beverage movement and what true inclusion looks like in social spaces, beverage programs, and community events. Rather than treating non-alcoholic options as an afterthought, the workshop centers the needs of guests who want meaningful choices, thoughtful hospitality, and a sense that they fully belong in the experience. Attendees will examine how sober curiosity is reshaping expectations and why beverage businesses, event organizers, and hospitality leaders should give the same care and creativity to non-alcoholic guests

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that they give to traditional bar patrons. Through presentation, discussion, and a mocktail demonstration and tasting, participants will learn how to build more inclusive menus, when partnerships with non-alcoholic bottle shops or bars make sense, and how to think more strategically about audience needs. The session is practical and customer-focused, offering attendees concrete ideas they can apply to menus, events, and programming right away. It is especially relevant for operators, curators, and anyone looking to create welcoming beverage experiences that reflect how people actually gather today.