

Victoria Eady Butler

You can't talk about inclusivity in the whiskey world without mentioning the positive efforts of the key women behind Black-owned Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey. Nearly lost to time, the legacy of pioneering distiller Nathan "Nearest" Green has been brought to the fore by Fawn Weaver, the CEO and founder of Uncle Nearest Whiskey (and an Imbibe 75 alumnus), and master blender Victoria Eady Butler, Green's great-great-granddaughter. Butler worked as an analytical manager for the Regional Organized Crime Information Center in Nashville, before briefly retiring and immediately being invited by Weaver to work at Uncle Nearest. Though she started in an administrative role with the Nearest Green Foundation, Butler quickly transitioned to master blender after successfully curating a batch of whiskey for the brand. "I've grown in knowledge and experience since becoming master blender," says Butler, who continues to oversee the Nearest Green Foundation. "We've managed to maintain our status of being No. 1. We're the most-awarded whiskey or bourbon for 2020." When the coronavirus hit last year, the Uncle Nearest team provided hand sanitizer and 300,000 masks to those in need. "One of the things I'm most proud of—given we made a shift during COVID—is being conscientious and concerned about those on the front lines," she says. "We're not just a mouthpiece, we actually walk the talk." —GNP



Uncle Nearest master blender
Victoria Eady Butler.