



GABE GRASS

ALCOHOL SERVICE & HOSPITALITY LIABILITY EXPERT WITNESS | BAR & BREWERY OPERATIONS CONSULTANT

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

I co-founded, built and operated GrassLands Brewing Company, a Florida brewery and taproom, for five years. My hands-on responsibilities included front- and back-of-house operations, beverage production, staff supervision and training, responsible alcohol service, age verification and regulatory compliance. I also developed and implemented company policies and standard operating procedures addressing patron and employee safety, service & hospitality best practices and day-to-day operations.

My expert witness practice focuses on alcohol-service liability and dram shop matters, including responsible-service standards, ID and age verification, staff training, management oversight, policies and procedures and premises-liability issues related to bar, restaurant, brewery, taproom and beverage-production operations. As CEO and Co-Founder of Verdant Synergies Consulting, I advise operating breweries and brewery startups on operational readiness, safety practices, policies and procedures. I also advise nonprofit organizations on strategy, fundraising and development planning.

I am a doctoral candidate in Higher Education Leadership at the University of North Florida and expect to complete my Ed.D. in Spring 2027. I also bring 20 years of experience in business development and major-gifts fundraising, including organizational strategy, policy implementation, staff and stakeholder training, program evaluation and executive-level decision-making.

CERTIFICATIONS

- TIPS® (Training for Intervention ProcedureS) On-Premises Alcohol Service
- TIPS® Certified Trainer
- ServSafe® Responsible Alcohol Service Program
- Beer Judge Certificate Program (BJCP)

MEMBERSHIPS

- Brewer's Association
- US Bartender's Guild
- SEAK Expert Witness Training

EXPERT WITNESS & BAR OPERATIONS EXPERIENCE

2025 – Present CEO & Co-Founder

Verdant Synergies Consulting — Jacksonville, FL

- Lead Verdant Synergies' expert-witness practice in alcohol-service liability and dram shop matters, with a focus on responsible-service standards, ID and age verification, staff training, management oversight, policies and procedures and bar, restaurant, and brewery operations.
- Evaluate service practices, training systems, operational policies, documentation and management controls against relevant industry standards and accepted practices for plaintiff and defense matters.
- Advise operating breweries and breweries in development on operational readiness, staff training, standard operating procedures, patron-safety practices, production workflows, business planning and financing.
- Co-lead the firm's broader consulting practice in nonprofit strategy, fundraising, business development and organizational growth.



2014 – 2019

Founder & President

GrassLands Brewing Company — Tallahassee, FL



- Founded, built and operated a Florida craft brewery and taproom for five years, with direct responsibility for front-of-house alcohol service, brewery production, distribution, sales and day-to-day operations.
- Developed and implemented company policies, standard operating procedures and staff training protocols addressing responsible alcohol service, ID and age verification, patron and employee safety and front- and back-of-house operations.
- Managed a 15-person team across taproom, production and distribution functions, including staff supervision, training and adherence to company policies and service practices.
- Organized and hosted annual ID and age-verification training for bar, restaurant and brewery personnel throughout the Tallahassee market, conducted by representatives of the Florida Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco.

PRIOR CAREER: HIGHER EDUCATION BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

2021 – 2025 Director, Corporate Relations & Major Gifts, University of North Florida

2019 – 2021 Director, Corporate & Foundation Relations, Flagler College

2006 – 2014 Director, Corporate & Foundation Development (2009–2014) and Communications Coordinator (2006–2009), FSU Foundation

Before co-founding Verdant Synergies, I held progressively responsible business-development and institutional-advancement positions across higher education and healthcare industries. This 20-year career included organizational strategy, executive-level relationship management, staff and stakeholder training, policy and program implementation, program evaluation and oversight of complex institutional partnerships.

EDUCATION



2027* Ed.D., Higher Education Leadership & Administration

University of North Florida

**Expected Spring 2027 — Dissertation: First-Generation Student Success*



2010 Ed.S., Education Policy & Program Evaluation

Florida State University

Concentration: Program Evaluation & Policy



2005 M.S., Human Development

Virginia Tech

Concentration: Special Needs across Child and Adolescent Development & Community Agencies



2004 B.S., Psychology

University of North Florida