**Samantha “Sam” Montgomery**

**National Brand Ambassador, Bardstown Bourbon Company**

**Certified Specialist of Spirits and Executive Bourbon Steward**

As Beverage Specialist and National Brand Ambassador of both Bardstown Bourbon Company and its in-house Kitchen & Bar, Sam Montgomery connects the consumer to the distillery experience in Bardstown, Kentucky. The 29-year-old Peoria, Illinois native spent nearly half her life in the service industry. Her experiences and training have afforded her the creativity and qualities of a social chameleon; a skillset pertinent to the company’s brand, outreach and development.

At just 15, Montgomery started working for a locally owned restaurant in her Illinois hometown. It was here where she learned how much she loved interacting with the public. Montgomery continued to develop her service industry skills over the next six years before launching her bartending career at Peoria’s upscale seafood restaurant, The Fish House. Craving more challenges in making craft cocktails, she moved to Louisville, Kentucky in 2017, a city she says has a vibrant cocktail and restaurant culture.

Montgomery honed her craft bartending skills at acclaimed Louisville restaurant, Decca, before accepting a Beverage Specialist position at Bottle & Bond, the first iteration of Bardstown Bourbon Company’s restaurant and bar, in 2018. In this role, she managed the beverage program, launched the restaurant’s first barrel-aged cocktail program and organized a vintage collection of more than 300 American whiskies curated by renowned whiskey author, Fred Minnick. When it came time for the distillery to release a new collaborative bourbon, Montgomery received the opportunity to put her expertise to work by helping to blend the product that went directly into the bottle. Montgomery had her original blend chosen blindly by a panel of tasters and released as Discovery Series #3, making her one of the youngest female blenders in history.

In 2019, Montgomery became Bardstown Bourbon Company’s first National Brand Ambassador. With a focus on organizing events in-house and across the country, Montgomery assists state managers with brand education and national outreach. Last year, she became a Certified Specialist of Spirits and plans to take an Advanced Distillation course. Inspired by women and persons of color in the whiskey industry making a difference, Montgomery aims to be extremely inclusive in the audience that she reaches, inviting everyone to be a part of her “bourbon family.” Although a bourbon lover at heart, her margaritas are not to be missed.