



PRESS RELEASE

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Kirk Hendrix to be Inducted into the International Festivals & Events Association Hall of Fame



Boise, ID – The IFEA is pleased to announce that one of the festival and events industry's finest professionals, Kirk Hendrix, President of the 500 Festival in Indianapolis, Indiana will be inducted into the prestigious IFEA Hall of Fame on Thursday, September 16th, 2010 during the 55th Annual IFEA Convention & Expo, in Saint Louis, Missouri.

Known as the association's most prestigious honor, the IFEA Hall of Fame recognizes those outstanding individuals who, through their exceptional work and achievements, have made a significant contribution to the Festivals and Events

Industry and a profound difference in the communities they serve. Induction into the Hall of Fame is considered the highest of industry honors. Selected from a group of his industry-peers, Kirk joins the prestigious ranks of 50 others inducted into the hall over the past 19 years.

If you were to ask Kirk Hendrix about his introduction to the festival and events business, he might answer..."you had me at hello."

Seems once he tasted it, he never let go. Now, 33 years later, he has amassed a body of work worthy of high praise from his peers and resulting in his induction into the IFEA Hall of Fame.

Hendrix is quick to credit others with his enthusiasm for the industry. "I was lucky to be introduced to events early-on and I just loved it. I didn't want to do anything else. I always had a strong work ethic, so I just kept showing up. Sooner or later, people put me to work. I had great mentors. People cared enough to give me a chance...sometimes even before I thought I was ready."

His tenure includes running some of the largest events in some of America's largest cities. He has served as CEO of three of the IFEA's largest member organizations -- collectively 18 years at the helm of the 500 Festival, Las Vegas Events, and The Parade Company. He has had major impact in the jobs he has held and in the communities he has served. And he has willingly shared his expertise in the development of others.

Hendrix' contributions to the events industry came through intercollegiate athletics early-on. While a 19-year old student at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, Hendrix served as the school's Sports Information Director. He became Sports Information Director at New Mexico State at 21; and at Iowa State at 23. And...never slowed down. He was Assistant Commissioner of the Midwestern Collegiate Conference; spent time as Associate Executive Director of the Freedom Bowl Football Game in Anaheim where he contributed to the development of The Disneyland Pigskin Classic. He served as Associate Executive Director of the Fiesta Bowl, helping produce, sell, and promote 50+ community events in Phoenix including its national-renown bowl

game. And he was Assistant Commissioner of the Pac-10 Conference, responsible for television contracts and programming.

One of his legacies is leading a dramatic turnaround of the near-bankrupt Parade Company, which produces America's Thanksgiving Parade in Detroit. The community had lost hope of the future of its 65-year holiday tradition. It had decided to close its doors, yet with great regret as the parade was a civic unifier in an otherwise troubled city. Losing the parade signified yet another death blow to community spirit. But city fathers gave it one last shot. They hired Hendrix who turned massive financial losses into major financial gains; restoring the production quality of the parade and returning it to national television, ultimately on CBS. City leaders approached him once again to assume management of another Detroit institution – the International Freedom Festival, making Hendrix responsible for Detroit's two largest public events.

Hendrix' work at the 500 Festival is to produce and promote events that celebrate the Indianapolis 500 – the world's largest single day sporting event. Their 50 annual events and programs draw 500,000 people annually and include one of the nation's premier parades and the nation's largest half marathon. The Mini Marathon has grown from 23,000 runners to nearly 40,000 during his tenure. He has developed new events and programs and grown the budget dramatically since his arrival in 2003. And when he isn't running that Indianapolis organization, he is supporting others. He served on the NCAA Final Four Special Events Committee; is on the Civic Advisory Council for the 2012 Super Bowl; and he and his team produced the Indianapolis Colts Super Bowl Champion ticker tape parade.

Hendrix blushes at the thought of being inducted in the IFEA Hall of Fame. "Getting into this business was a blessing for me. It's all I've ever known, all I ever wanted to do. To be honored for doing work you love is an interesting twist. It's humbling to be grouped with people who are real trailblazers. It's been a pleasure and honor to work alongside many of them."

For an in depth look at Kirk Hendrix, [Click Here](#).

Past inductees include Dan Mangeot, CFEE (D), Kentucky Derby Festival (1992), George Zambelli (D), Zambelli Fireworks (1993), John H.B. "Jack" French, Pasadena Tournament of Roses (1996), Jean McFaddin, Macy's Parade and Events (1999), Robert (Bob) Jackson(D), Consultant (2003), and most recently Therese St. Onge, National Capital Commission (2006), Mike Berry, CFEE, Kentucky Derby Festival, just to name a few.

Headquartered in Boise, Idaho, the International Festivals & Events Association (IFEA) is *The Premiere Association Supporting and Enabling Festival & Event Professionals Worldwide*. In partnership with global affiliates under the umbrellas of IFEA Africa, IFEA Asia, IFEA Australia, IFEA Europe, IFEA Latin America, IFEA Middle East, and IFEA North America the organization's common vision is for "A Globally United Industry that Touches Lives in a Positive Way through Celebration," The Association offers the most complete source of ideas, resources, information, education and networking for festival and event professionals worldwide. Visit the IFEA website at www.ifea.com for additional details.

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