



## International Festivals & Events Association

### **Dr. Joe Goldblatt, CSEP 2008 IFEA Hall of Fame Inductee Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, Scotland**



Dr. Joe Goldblatt, CSEP has often been asked by students and journalists to describe the most difficult part of producing a professional event or festival. The answer is, of course, complex. However, he believes the answer results from first asking why are events important to human society.

Since the age of six, Joe has been bringing people together for mutual benefit. As a small boy he organized back yard festivals to engage his friends in a positive activity. While other children were selling lemonade, Joe was selling tickets! He soon learned however, that lemonade had only one revenue stream and a festival had many different sources of income generation. Soon, everyone in the neighbourhood wanted to be part of Joe's festival and share in the wealth. Later, at the age of eight, Joe's father had a baby elephant delivered to their home on Christmas morning. Although the elephant soon returned to the circus, Joe will never forget seeing that pachyderm in his front yard and thinking, one day, he may deliver elephants too!

Dr. Joe Goldblatt, CSEP, has since been a part of the events industry for the past 30 years. After attending the University of Texas and later graduating from St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, Joe found himself in Washington, D.C. where he met his wife, Nancy, a professional clown! Wearing clown makeup when they first met, Joe fell madly in love! Today, Joe and Nancy have 2 sons and in 2008, celebrate their thirtieth wedding anniversary!

Together, with his wife Nancy, Joe owned and served as the executive producer of his own special events firm, The Wonder Company, producing 2 U.S. presidential inaugurations, the opening of Donald Trump's Taj Mahal Resort, and galas for multiple foreign governments. But Joe's primary legacy may be his leadership role in the development of the formalized education side of our industry and the education of younger generations entering the events and event management field.

Today, Joe is a Lecturer at Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh, Scotland where in January of 2008, he received a lifetime appointment. His assignment includes the development of the first Global Centre for Eventology.

Prior to this, Joe founded the Event Management Certificate Program at George Washington University (the first in our industry), served as Dean of the Johnson & Wales event management program in Rhode Island, as well as creating the Event Leadership Executive Certificate Program at Temple University, where Joe served as Senior Lecturer and Executive Director of Professional Programs at Temple University's School of Tourism and Hospitality Management in Philadelphia, PA.

In 1987, Joe founded the International Special Events Society, where ten years later, he received the first Lifetime Achievement Award from ISES for service to the industry. And in 2000, Joe received the Industry Visionary Award, based on the votes of 25,000 readers of Event Solutions Magazine. In January of 2008, Joe received the Professional Convention Management Association award as International Event Educator of the Year and will also receive a Distinguished Alumnus Award from his undergraduate Alma Mater, St. Edwards University in Austin, TX.

When it comes to the Festivals and Special Events industry, Joe has quite literally, written the book. Writing many of the leading books and articles on event management, including *Special Events: The Art and Science of Celebration*; *Special Events: Event Leadership for a New World*; and *Best Practices in Modern Event Management*, among others, Joe also served as the executive editor for the entire John Willey & Sons event management series of books. His tireless pursuit of educational certification for professionals in this business has raised our level of professionalism around the world. Through the creation of the Event Management Program at George Washington University and the Event Leadership Program at Temple, he is helping to guide hundred of students each year in the skills and knowledge they will need to succeed in their careers.

Joe has also supported and been an active member of the IFEA, presenting numerous seminars and keynote presentations at many international, national and regional conventions. In addition, Joe serves on the IFEA President's Council and the newly developed IFEA Global Roundtable Advisory Council. He has been instrumental in developing the unique educational partnership between the IFEA and many of the leading global educators and educational institutions serving our industry. Joe continues to provide leadership, mentoring and access to an immense global network as the IFEA develops and expands their global vision for excellence and inclusion.

Joe's 30 years of experience in the events industry have shown that his talents are recognized by individuals not only nationally, but internationally as he travels to many places, globally, each year including Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, Latin America and throughout North America to share his knowledge with others. Joe makes a difference by continuing to share what he knows and has experienced to help others grow and improve their own events. In a post 9/11 world, Joe launched the original concept for eSAFE, an on-line industry safety and security knowledge resource continuing to be developed by Temple University.

Joe Goldblatt has had the ability to affect the lives of numerous individuals both in the events industries as well as other fields. Without him, there would be less confident event planners, less educated individuals in all industries, and less people motivated to find their own path and create events that marvel and amaze their respective communities. Joe works hard every day to make the people around him know they are special, that they can achieve anything they are willing to work hard for, and that he is proud of them. He is not only a role model; he is a cheerleader for our industry and for every single person he meets.

Throughout Joe's three decades in this industry, he has often asked "why" he chose this path. It is certainly, as the poet Robert Frost so eloquently stated, "The one less travelled." The answer, however, comes from his long time friend and great role model, Steven Wood Schmader, CFEE. Steve has constantly reminded Joe that we are first and foremost in the people business. It is with and through people that the world is improved. Therefore, from Joe's earliest memories of bringing people together for mutual benefit through his back yard festivals, to the present opportunity he has to conduct ground breaking research to leave a

lasting legacy for our profession, the answer to “why events” has remained constant in his life. It is simply because events and events alone, have the greatest power to unite, improve and transform people and society. It is a great privilege to continue to make his small contribution to this noble effort with all of the members of IFEA throughout the world.

After interviewing hundreds of professionals in festivals and events over thirty years, Joe has produced 19 books that chronicle the growth of this profession. And these books are the living testament to validate Steve’s philosophy. Indeed, people are why we celebrate and how we celebrate is the lasting legacy we leave for future generations. It is also the evidence of our own humanity and commitment to creating a living legacy for future generations.