

# IFEA WORLD BOARD

## New Year. New Beginning.



I'm not much into new year's resolutions. But, 2016 was a rough year for most. So many influential people left this earth, the election was traumatic and divisive, and traditional weather patterns were skewed. A new year brings hope for new beginnings. A fresh start. An opportunity to push the reset button. And like a new year, I wish for each of you to embrace the horizon. To tackle what is difficult.

I'm especially looking forward to 2017 because there will be a lot of celebrating the things in life that bring meaning. Des Moines Arts Festival celebrates its 20th year. My parents celebrate 60 years together. My wife and I celebrate 25 years together. And in 2017, Canada celebrates 150 years as a nation. People from around the world will be joining our friend, and Ottawa 2017's Executive Director, Guy Laflamme for months of immersive experiences. I am so grateful for Guy's leadership this past year as IFEA's Chairman of the Board. His enthusiasm, thirst for life and festivals, humor, and style made for a dynamic year with the IFEA. I am thrilled for this opportunity to serve as Chairman for 2017 with a group of individuals who are building community around the world – and they LOVE their job! The board meets three times a year and at each meeting, we take the time to go around the table and share trends and

news. Never has there been a time I was not humbled by the contributions each is making in their community. They are living breathing examples of what is good in our country and I'm proud to call them friends.

IFEA is an important part of my life and my hope is you will find the same. I've been involved with IFEA for over 20 years and I'm constantly amazed and enlightened by the gifts it provides. I look forward to the annual Convention like young children look forward to Christmas morning. The people I've met have made me a better professional and person. Each is committed to building community and sharing what they've learned. I'm especially pleased that I can bring those gifts back to my city of Des Moines. Des Moines, Iowa is my home. It's a beautiful city with kind and friendly people. It's true what they say about being Iowa Nice – you could spend all day at an intersection because each of the drivers

wants the other to go first. Ours is a place where ingenuity and riskful thinking are celebrated. I'm not the only one talking about Des Moines. Kiplinger named Des Moines America's Best City for Families. The Today Show ranked us the Wealthiest City in America. Gallup named us the Metro with the Most Community Pride. Forbes tagged us as the Best City for Young Professionals. And the list goes on and on. I invite you to come see it for yourself during the award-winning Des Moines Arts Festival on June 23-25, 2017.

In the meantime, whatever you do, go where it takes you...

**STEPHEN KING, CFEI**

2017 IFEA World Board Chair  
Executive Director, DES MOINES  
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