

IFEA HALL OF FAME NOMINATION

A. INDIVIDUAL SUBMITTING NOMINEE

1. Bruce Skinner, Bruce Skinner & Associates,
Port Angeles, WA, 360-808-3204, bruce@omhf.org
2. Yes, I will ensure that he attends the luncheon.
3. Yes, I will help gather video materials for the induction.

B. NOMINEE INFORMATION

Kirk Hendrix, President & CEO, 500 Festival, 21 Virginia Avenue, Suite 500, Indianapolis, IN 46204, 317-614-6120, khendrix@500festival.com, f: 317-614-6163

C. NOMINATION QUESTIONS

Attached

NOMINATION QUESTION 1 –

Explain how your nominee has made a difference to the festivals & events industry (25 points).

Kirk Hendrix has spent his entire career, spanning 33 years, serving the events industry. He has led some of the largest events in some of America's largest cities...all with great success. And in so doing, he has made major impact, not only in the jobs he has held, but for the communities that he has served. Long recognized as an industry leader, he has willingly shared his expertise in the development of others...both as a colleague and mentor. He has led by example. Highly-creative, he was willing to reach out, take risks, grow and launch new events which have dramatically affected the institutions and cities he has served...contributing largely to civic pride, tourism and economic impact.

I have seen his work first-hand on several occasions. We first met 26 years ago when Kirk and I volunteered for the 1984 Summer Olympics, serving as co-Press Venue Chiefs for the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee. I saw him contribute heavily to the events industry while growing the Freedom Bowl Football Game and related events in southern California then being part of the team that developed yet another national event – The Disneyland Pigskin Classic. I hired Kirk in 1989 to serve as my Associate Executive Director of the Fiesta Bowl, helping produce, sell, and promote our 50+ community events.

One of his most impressive works, in my opinion, is when he took over the near-bankrupt Parade Company and Michigan Thanksgiving Parade (now America's Thanksgiving Parade) in 1991. That community had lost hope of the future of its 65-year tradition. They were closing the doors with great regret, because the parade was a civic unifier in an otherwise troubled city. Losing the parade would signify another death blow in community spirit. It was the one thing that brought people together – from all ages, races, and religions – in celebration. He rescued it, turning huge losses into major financial gains; restoring the production quality of the parade and returning it to national television. City fathers later came to him to assume management of another Detroit institution – the International Freedom Festival. These major events in Detroit were significant in the city's effort to shape its battered image.

As President of Las Vegas Events, he dramatically increased the number of events, magnitude of events, and their contribution to tourism and economic impact in a city built on events. He was highly-successful while performing in a high pressure arena, that of the entertainment capitol of the world.

His current work at the 500 Festival has shown again shown his ability to lead, to develop and to create. Their events draw 500,000 people annually and includes one of the nation's best parades and the largest half marathon in the world.. The 500 Festival plays a huge role in that city...including generating community spirit.

NOMINATION QUESTION 2 – Submit a general overview of your nominee’s career, including organizations they have worked for, positions held, titles, awards, etc. (25 points.)

Kirk Hendrix has spent 33 years in various special events leadership capacities, including serving as **CEO of three of the IFEA’s largest member organizations, collectively 18 years as CEO of the 500 Festival, Las Vegas Events, and the Parade Company.**

President & CEO of the 500 Festival. Leads one of the nation’s largest festivals with 50 annual national-caliber events and programs promoting the Indianapolis 500. Last year alone, the 500 Festival won 17 IFEA Pinnacle Awards (6 Gold). Restored parade to national prominence and national television; produces nation’s largest half marathon having grown it from 23,000 to 40,000 runners. Has developed several new programs and increased budget by 250%.

President of Las Vegas Events. Responsible for luring national and international events to Las Vegas, driving tourism and stimulating economic impact exceeding \$250 million annually. Produced and promoted 45 annual events -- NASCAR, NHRA drag racing, PGA golf events, college football and basketball championships, bowl games, film and music festivals, as well and World Championships of rodeo, bull riding, and equestrian show jumping. Produced city-wide New Year’s eve celebration, largest fireworks show in North America. Won Tourism Award from the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce. Was a member of Leadership Las Vegas.

President of The Parade Company and International Freedom Festival in Detroit. Produced the city’s largest public events –America’s Thanksgiving Parade on CBS and the International Freedom Festival, which stretched across the Canadian border; 45 annual events in all. Rescued The Parade Company from financial brink (swung a \$750,000 deficit to a \$1 million profit). Restored Detroit’s heralded Thanksgiving Parade back to health, back on national tv. Under Hendrix, The Parade Company assumed management of the International Freedom Festival, another iconic civic institution. Won numerous IFEA Pinnacle Awards; was selected to Detroit’s 40-under-40; member of Leadership Detroit.

Corporate Vice President for Travel, Events and Tradeshows for Affinity Group, Inc., a private firm based in Ventura, California. Ran the Travel, Events and Tradeshows division of the \$350 million company; managing more than 100 annual events across the U.S., Canada and Mexico, producing RV events, motorcycle rallies, golf tournaments and female business conventions.

Spent 15 years in collegiate sports:

Assistant Commissioner of the Pac-10 Conference
Associate Executive Director of the Fiesta Bowl
Associate Executive Director of the Freedom Bowl & Disneyland Pigskin Classic
Assistant Commissioner of the Midwestern Collegiate Conference
Sports Information Director at Iowa State, New Mexico State and Creighton.

Other assignments:

Produced the 2006 Indianapolis Colts Super Bowl Parade
NCAA Final Four Special Events Committee
Co-Venue Press Chief of the 1984 Summer Olympics
Media Coordinator, NCAA College World Series

NOMINATION QUESTION 3

Describe the level of involvement your nominee has had with the IFEA during their career.

Kirk has been a 20-year contributor to IFEA. While expanding his own career, he has continually remained active as a member, leader, promoter, donor and mentor. He first joined the organization in 1989 and has been an ardent and generous supporter of the association since.

He has attended and spoken at countless IFEA Conventions and regional seminars over that 20 year period, sharing his expertise in sponsorship, media, parades, and sports. He has moderated many sessions, including affinity groups for sports and parades. He has written for several IFEA publications and is published in industry books on sponsorship and other areas.

He has developed staff who have supported, and even led IFEA. In fact, three of Kirk's former employees have served as IFEA Chairman – Karen Churchard, Derrick Fox and K Alferio.

He served on the IFEA Board of Directors for eight years, rising to become Treasurer. He served for many years on the IFEA Foundation Board of Directors and the IFEA President's Council. He has chaired numerous committees, notably the Sponsorship Committee for three years and Hall of Fame Committee.

Kirk has been generous in his financial support by attending the convention, funding and recruiting delegates, acquiring expo space, sponsoring convention events and coffee breaks, donating major auction items, and buying them, too.

He has contributed in making IFEA better and stronger. While in Las Vegas, Kirk hosted the IFEA Profits Seminar where he recruited most of the speakers, provided \$5,000 cash in direct support and another \$5,000 sponsorship support from third-party organizations, all creating a highly-effective event. During the 1993 Convention in San Antonio he produced and sponsored a parade (large inflatable, costumes and papier mache heads), which led convention delegates from the hotel to the Opening Night reception. It was an extensive and expensive contribution to convention programming. He also hosted the entire IFEA Board of Directors at the National Finals Rodeo during their meetings in Las Vegas.

Most recently, he hosted an IFEA Webinar and the 500 Festival hosted the IFEA Convention, whereby he was instrumental in speaker and program development, venue acquisition, volunteers and very generous cash support to the event.

Notably, IFEA has also made a personal impact on his life, as he met his wife, Amy, during the 1993 IFEA Convention in San Antonio.

NOMINATION QUESTION 4

What void would there be if he/she were not an event professional (25 points).

For one, certainly the institutions he has served would not be as strong as they are today.

Nor would the communities he served be as vibrant. His efforts have contributed largely to community spirit and public image.

I think perhaps most admirably, Kirks' work has had staying power. So much of what he worked toward not only grew during his tenure, but has lived on. The Thanksgiving Parade in Detroit is a glowing example, as 20 years after he rescued it, it lives on and remains important to Detroit.

So many of the events he developed and recruited to Las Vegas remain there, contributing significantly to that tourism economy.

He re-energized the 500 Festival in Indianapolis...re-shaping its programming, expanding its inclusiveness and becoming even a more critical marketing partner for the Indianapolis 500, the world's largest single day sporting event.

Kirk's work has mattered. He has left lasting legacies on the places and communities he has served.

And he has contributing significantly to our industry in sharing his knowledge, his resources, and in contributing in so many ways to the growth and development of the industry.