

Submitted by:

Jay Downie
Downtown Fort Worth Initiatives, Inc.
MAIN ST. Fort Worth Arts Festival and
Chesapeake Energy Parade of Lights
777 Taylor Street, Suite 100
Fort Worth, TX 76102
Phone: 817-336-2787, Fax: 817-335-3113
E-mail: jay@dfwi.org

Nomination Information

Robbie McMeans
3212 Walton Ave.
Fort Worth, TX 76133
Cell: 817-602-9003
E-mail: robmcmeans@yahoo.com

Nomination Questions

1. *Explain your volunteer's significant depth of involvement.*

Robbie is a member of our Event Steering Committee (EMT). This committee is made up of a core group of year round volunteers who attend monthly planning meetings for Downtown Fort Worth Initiatives, Inc., DFWII, the organization producing the Parade of Lights and the MAIN ST. Fort Worth Arts Festival. Each member of this committee is responsible for various areas of responsibility and providing updates both at these meetings and at other times throughout the year. During the meetings Robbie is asked to update the committee on the production management of the VIP Skybox at the MAIN ST. Arts Festival and the Float Rider check-in at the Parade of Lights.

Robbie meets year-round with staff, board members and advisory committee members to make sure she is fulfilling all needs and creating the right experience for our sponsors, knowing that she and her team make a significant contribution to the fact that 97% of our sponsors *return each and every year!* Without her continuing contribution to the success of this particular element of our program, we would not be able to achieve the remarkable financial goals we set in these troubled economic times for sponsorship revenues. Robbie goes beyond her volunteer duties to secure in-kind training for all of our EMT in the areas of CPR, fork-lift handling, team-building and more through her relationship with Tarrant Community College. As a result, our EMT all have CPR and fork-lift certification, and will be challenged with team building experiences and training this upcoming year. This in-kind donation is worth over \$3,000 annually.

2. *Show specific examples of your volunteer's roles and responsibilities.*

Robbie has been part of our EMT for five years as a director having complete management and creative control of the MAIN ST. VIP Hospitality Skybox. She has also served as the Check-In coordinator for the major floats of the Parade of Lights.

Her responsibilities with the Skybox include creating the atmosphere, developing the layout, working and meeting with our board members to insure the promised sponsor elements and benefits are provided, working day and night to make sure the Skybox is completely ready for business, handles all set-up and teardown issues, works with others to develop the décor, handles admission elements including ticketing and control, arranges the food and beverage service for 600 people per night for four nights, and then reaches out to others on the EMT to see where she can help in their areas. She has handled the check-in and staging requirements for our 100 unit parade, including professional floats, volunteers, staging personnel, placement and arrangement for the Parade of Lights.

3. *Describe how your volunteer has provided significant enthusiasm, organizational assistance and specific expertise.*

Robbie was one of the first employees of Downtown Fort Worth, Inc., and since the staff consisted of only three people she very much involved with the creation of the organization's

two signature events, the MAIN ST. Fort Worth Arts Festival and the Parade of Lights. Each of these events has been created to draw attention and focus back to Downtown, and they succeeded in changing perceptions. 27 years later, they are still major attractions for Fort Worth. After leaving the organization, her passion for Downtown continued and she joined our volunteer management team (EMT) and has become an invaluable asset to the event structure, and has been key to the success of our major events.

Robbie's tenure as a former employee of DFVII gave her insight as to the value of our sponsors and supporters. She was therefore tapped to lead the exclusive VIP Hospitality Skybox area for MAIN ST., and has created and grown the right environment for sponsors, leading directly to the continuing investment of close to \$1.5M in cash and in-kind sponsorships for MAIN ST. by sponsors who utilize and covet the Skybox experience as a part of their benefit package. The Parade of Lights has always been a part of her heart as well, and two years ago she assumed the role of managing our check-in area, and has done a tremendous job. Her enthusiasm is contagious and really helps motivate a spirit of fun and excitement at the events. Her attitude and devotion to the events makes others want to volunteer.

4. *Explain how your volunteer has shown initiative and leadership in her efforts.*

MAIN ST. Arts Festival celebrated 25 years in April, and Robbie created an intense and focused theme to commemorate this milestone event. She spent hundreds of hours discussing concepts with our board and committee members, and planning for just the right look in terms of decorations, flowers and overall ambiance in our Skybox area. Through her efforts, she upgraded the experience in a way that brought comments from all who attended, and really made a difference to the atmosphere of the experience.

She helped with securing in-kind donations to keep our costs down, met with decorators and florists to create and refine ideas for the centerpieces, communicated constantly with other EMT members to make sure we were moving in the right direction and then coordinated the entire set-up and management. She did this all on her own time and clearly demonstrated the passion, initiative and drive to develop a unique experience for our sponsors and Friends of the Festival. The way she orchestrates events makes it look effortless to the patrons enjoying them because everything comes together so smoothly. Additionally, her leadership has brought many others onto the volunteer team, both as a part of her committee and as standalone managers. She is not afraid to recruit more leaders to help improve our events.

5. *Tell how your volunteer has exemplified her dependability.*

Robbie attends all scheduled meetings and she stays until the job is done...she enjoys it completely. Robbie continues to show her commitment to a quality experience at the festival by going the extra mile for those with special needs.

If there's something that needs extra attention, or even something outside of her area of responsibility, she'll help with a smile and a passion to get it done right. We know we can call Robbie for anything needing her special touch, and she won't turn us down.

6. *Describe your volunteer's positive attitude.*

Robbie has a smile no matter what. She can take the good with the bad and still have the "Pollyanna" attitude. Her words are encouraging and uplifting. You always know she will find a way to make things work.

Robbie is approachable and fun to be around, and she pulls people along with her to get things done. She is respectful of budgetary constraints and does everything within her power to bring benefits to the table at a bargain price. Her positive outlook is infectious, and we have never, ever seen her down or showing any signs of negativity. She is, in essence, a perfect manager and volunteer leader.

7. *Describe how your volunteer has made a difference to the festival? What impact has Robbie had on your festival or event? What void would there be without her as a volunteer?*

Since Robbie has been managing our Skybox area, the traffic flow and quality of the attendees experience has increased dramatically. Sponsorship retention has skyrocketed to 97%! Skybox attendees and sponsors ask for her by name because they know they are in good hands. She has brought new recruits to our EMT staff through her persuasive qualities and leadership abilities.

Robbie is indispensable. Without Robbie, there would be less sincerity and confidence on our entire EMT management staff. She is the heart and soul of our Event Management Team, and always has a positive outlook on everything. It is impossible to have a down moment when you are around Robbie and working with her on her team. Our Skybox environment would not be the success it is now, and a resulting decrease in sponsorship funds would be inevitable. Robbie brings life, vitality, enthusiasm and passion to a team of doers.

Media Contact

Diane Wolfe
817-577-1779
dianewolfep@sbglobal.net