

People



Karen Scherberger, CFEE

Karen Scherberger, CFEE, is the Executive Director of Norfolk Festevents, Ltd., located in Norfolk, Virginia, USA. Norfolk Festevents is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to producing premiere concerts, festivals, tall ship visits and special events for residents and guests of Hampton Roads. Celebrating its 23rd season, Norfolk Festevents has garnered international acclaim for its outstanding quality programming. Norfolk Festevents is the official event marketing and production agency for the City of Norfolk.

Facts on file In Conversation

Years in the business:

30

Degree:

BA in English, Masters in Higher Education Administration

Other Experiences:

- Managing Director for OpSail2000 Virginia
- Adjunct Faculty Member in Event Management at Old Dominion University
- Founding Director of Hampton Roads Festivals & Events Association
- Board Member of Norfolk Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Board Member of Homeport City Stars
- Member of America Sail Training Association
- Past IFEA Board Member
- IFEA President's Council
- Past VFEA Board Member

Family:

Married, no children

Last book read:

The Imagineering Way

Last business book read:

The Experience Economy

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How did you get into events?

My parents were very active and involved in a wide range of community events. As far back as I can remember, as a child I was either blowing up balloons, picking up trash, hanging decorations, building costumes (or wearing them) and, selling tickets. I grew up thinking this was normal! I was always involved in event planning in school, later in college, and on into graduate school. I began my volunteer work for the City of Norfolk in 1976 and began my professional event planning career in 1982.

What has been your biggest professional challenge?

Maintaining a creative experience and environment for our staff while working in a constantly changing government and political environment. In my 23 years as Executive Director, we have worked with 4 different Mayors and 3 different City Managers. Challenging yet rewarding.

What do you do to relax?

I enjoy quiet and simple moments either cooking, gardening or reading, and uncomplicated traveling. Just about anything that does not include crowds, lines, phones, computers,...and if it rains, it doesn't matter!

What's the best advice you've ever received?

The distance between an "ok" job and a "good job" is often miles apart; however, the distance between a "good" job and an "excellent" job is often just small steps apart. The difference is in the details.

Personal Philosophy

At the end of it all, how do you want to be remembered? As a good person or a good event planner? It's important to put our hearts and soul into our work, but not to the exclusion of what matters most in life – family, friends and the respect of others.

What memory do you have of another festival or event that has stayed with you?

My fondest memory is the first time I attended the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and was a guest of Dennis Boese and Miller Brewing Company. It was absolutely pouring rain outside but there were thousands and thousands of people everywhere you looked, all of them having a great time and nobody seeming to notice the downpour. We all jumped right into the celebration and ended up dancing in mud that was up to our ankles. I even lost my shoes in it, never to be found again! It was one of the most fun and amazing experiences I've ever had.