

IFEA FOUNDATION BOARD BY KELI O'NEILL WENZEL, CFEE



THE IFEA CONVENTION IS OVER **BUT WE DON'T HAVE TO BE!**

For those of you that I was able to meet at 64th Annual IFEA Convention, Expo & Retreat in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia . . . it was a pleasure. I always leave the IFEA Convention on an exhausted high. My head is swirling with new ideas, my pockets are full of business cards and mostly I am energized to have just spent time with so many like-minded individuals. I made so many new connections this year and had so much fun catching up with some of those I have known for years. The IFEA Annual Convention allows us in the industry to really poke holes in what we are doing and see how others are getting through the very same challenges. I attended some great sessions and met some new vendors I am eager to try out. I also had some of my most productive, informative listening sessions over dinner or a drink in the hospitality suite with some new acquaintances - some I have been meaning to pick their brain for ages. We are not alone in this day and age of Festival planning, nor should we be. I hope you feel the same way. If you did not make it to the Convention this year, I encourage you to really consider attending next year.

On behalf of the IFEA Foundation Board of Directors, we thank all of you that participated in the IFEA Foundation efforts, either through volunteering, donating an auction item, bidding on an auction item, purchasing a 50/50 Raffle ticket or an Ultimate Experience Raffle Ticket, or just giving a donation or funds to a scholarship. We thank you greatly for your support!!

During the IFEA Annual Convention, the IFEA Foundation hosted a 50/50 Raffle, an Ultimate Experience Raffle in addition to Live and Silent Auctions. We are happy to report that all of these efforts raised over \$57,000 for the IFEA Foundation, a 23% increase over last year! Which will help the IFEA and the IFEA Foundation's efforts tremendously. All money raised this year will go towards:

- **Providing Legacy Scholarships to future leaders to attend the IFEA Annual Convention. Did you know in 2019 we provided 12 Legacy Scholarships!**

- **Assisting with funding the Certified Festival & Event Executive (CFEE and CFEA) Program. We had 14 CFEE Graduates in the 2019.**
- **Assisting with the Funding of top-quality speakers, Educational publications, Technology and electronic training services, Translation services and more.**

The IFEA Foundation Board of Directors will be meeting at the beginning of 2020 to kick off the year, and I am sure under the leadership of my friend Kevin Grothe, our 2020 IFEA Foundation Board Chair and Vice President Sponsorships at Memphis in May International Festival in Memphis, TN, we can increase our fundraising efforts by another 20%! No pressure, Kevin! Feel free to reach out to either Kevin or myself, if you have any fundraising ideas you'd like us to consider for next year, or if you would like to make a donation to the IFEA Foundation.

For now, I hope you all are still making connections with those you met or reconnected with at the IFEA Convention. Don't wait until next year to touch base. If I met you . . . let's connect. If I didn't get a chance to meet you . . . let's connect! Email me, call me, LinkedIn me. Don't be a stranger.

I wish you the best for the remainder of 2019 and a successful start to 2020!

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