



## REFLECTING ON THE YEAR

**O**n behalf of the IFEA World Board, thank you to those who attended and supported the recent 66th Annual IFEA Convention, Expo & Retreat presented by Clover!

From our presenting sponsor Clover, to attendees, presenters, sponsors, exhibitors, volunteers, and staff, your dedication and participation is much appreciated. A special note of gratitude to the exceptional team from the City of McAllen for hosting IFEA for a second consecutive year and for showcasing the traditions of Dia de Los Muertos through décor and a special alter in honor of our deceased IFEA “family.”

The IFEA Convention & Expo is always a special time to network and share, educate through CFEE and convention sessions, and celebrate and honor the recipients of our awards programs such as the Volunteer of the Year, Hall of Fame Inductee, and the Haas & Wilkerson Pinnacle Award Winners and the World Festival & Event City Award recipients. Additionally, the fundraising events produced and hosted by the IFEA Foundation Board were exceptional! A shout out with much thanks to Foundation Board Chair, Cassie Dispenza, CFEE for her passion in continuing the Foundation Board’s purpose of ensuring that the IFEA has the resources to fulfill its educational mission.

It’s hard to believe 2023 is already coming to an end. As I reflect on this past year, I greatly appreciate the work that was done to create a three-year Strategic Plan as well as the continued support and participation by our IFEA World Board members. The Strategic Plan, to be implemented by the board and staff, focuses on four goals:

1. Increase and Expand Membership
2. Expand and Strengthen Educational Offerings for our Membership
3. Define the Association and Who it Serves
4. Elevate and Grow IFEA’s Brand Awareness.

If accomplished, these goals will strengthen this organization and its membership, which is truly the heart of IFEA.

As the board works on implementing the Strategic Plan, I encourage each of our members to renew your membership, participate in the Virtual Affinity Groups held throughout each year, engage in all the IFEA education offerings, and make plans to attend next year’s IFEA Convention & Expo.

Again, my thanks to the many members, board members, sponsors, staff and beyond who wholeheartedly support this important organization! My hope for 2024 is that IFEA’s membership continues to grow through the leadership of our incoming 2024 World Board Chair - Jazelle Jones, Deputy Managing Director / Director of Operations for the City of Philadelphia Office of Special Events.

It’s been an honor to serve as your 2023 World Board Chair. Having the opportunity to do so twice has been humbling.

**Karen Churchard, CFEE**

IFEA World Board Chair  
Tourism & Events Director  
City of Scottsdale  
Scottsdale, AZ