

IFEA WORLD BOARD

BY JAZELLE JONES

HERE'S TO A JOURNEY OF

GROWTH, COLLABORATION, AND SHARED SUCCESS



I am honored and excited to extend my warmest greetings as the incoming World Board Chair of our esteemed International Festivals & Events Association. Together, we embark on a transformative journey that encompasses not only elevating our association but also expanding our collective influence which will broaden our association's reach to new heights.

Our mission is clear – to collaborate with industry leaders, fostering a vibrant community that shares expertise and drives innovation. We are a globally united industry that touches lives in a very positive way through celebration. A pivotal aspect of our vision is to increase awareness of our association and bolster its membership. Through strategic partnerships, we aim to amplify awareness of our association and cultivate an environment where knowledge thrives.

The event industry is ever-changing and ever-growing – transforming to reflect the trends of the times and utilizing the technological advances of today to transcend our events for tomorrow. As we pivot with the times, it invites us to think outside the box, and engage with young talent and diverse leadership to bring new and fresh perspectives while honoring our association's rich history.

As the Director of Special Events for the City of Philadelphia, I know the importance of collaboration for creating a successful and sought-after event landscape. For eight years, Philadelphia has been recognized as an International Festival and Event City by IFEA. This recognition has helped Philadelphia foster global relationships with event leaders from around the world and has positioned Philadelphia with a unique opportunity to share its success stories and resources with the association.

Since 2015, when Philadelphia was honored with the distinction of being named the Nation's First World Heritage City by the International Organization of World Heritage Cities, Philadelphia has been on the map as a destination city. We understood the importance of leveraging this international recognition and retaining our high-profile status as a world-class city. Through proactive measures, following industry best practices, and showcasing a willingness to adapt and work with event leaders,

we've been successful in securing unique opportunities to host world-class events including the 2015 World Meeting of Families and Papal Visit, the 2016 Democratic National Convention, the 2017 NFL Draft Experience, the 2018 NFL Championship Parade, the 2024 Wrestlemania, and the upcoming slate of events scheduled for 2026 including FIFA World Cup matches, MLB All Star Week, and America250 celebrations.

I invite you to join hands in this endeavor, working collectively to strengthen our global presence and enhance the impact of our association. Let's build bridges, spark creativity, and fuel the passion that drives the event industry forward.

Your participation is not only welcomed but crucial in shaping the future of our association. Together, let's create a legacy that resonates across borders, inspiring generations to come and an environment where knowledge thrives, connections flourish, and our membership grows organically.

I want to thank our immediate Past World Board Chair, Karen Churchard, CFEE who has passed a baton full of rich information and knowledge that will help me build my momentum and get off to a great start. I also want to thank every board member for your generosity in sharing your industry wisdoms. I've learned a lot and want to continue our partnership towards a better IFEA. To our President & CEO, Steve Schmader, CFEE, you are so passionate about IFEA and I can't thank you enough for your inspiration and guidance.

Here's to a journey of growth, collaboration, and shared success.

Jazelle M. Jones

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