



OUR SHARED RESPONSIBILITY TO THE FUTURE

As Chair of the IFEA Foundation Board, I am continually inspired by the impact we create together—impact that resonates through every event, every educational experience, and every professional milestone within our global festivals and events community. It's a privilege to serve in a role that gives me a front-row seat to the incredible work being done across the industry and the meaningful ways our Foundation continues to elevate and empower those at the heart of it all—you.

The IFEA Foundation exists with a clear and meaningful mission: to support and strengthen the programs that build up the professionals who bring magic and meaning to our communities through festivals and events. From emerging leaders to seasoned experts, the Foundation helps ensure access to the tools, training, and resources that elevate us all. Whether it's by helping someone attend their first IFEA Convention, pursue the CFE designation, or gain insight from one of our webinars, every effort is a step toward advancing our shared goals and our industry's collective future.

Thanks to your continued generosity and engagement, the Foundation is proud to support and fund:

- **Educational Program Support** – Creating access to learning opportunities that grow careers and organizations alike.
- **Convention Speaker Support** – Helping bring world-class speakers and thought leaders to the IFEA Annual Convention.
- **CFE Certification Program** – Supporting those pursuing the Certified Festival & Event Executive designation—our industry's highest professional achievement.
- **IFEA Webinars** – Making relevant, year-round professional education available anytime, anywhere.
- **"i.e: the business of international events"** – The Magazine for the Festival & Events Industry – Offering thought-provoking articles, insights and global perspectives to keep us all inspired and informed.

And this year is a special one for us all. As we look ahead to the 70th Anniversary of the IFEA Annual Convention, we're thrilled to be gathering in person from September 22–24, 2025, at the Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa in beautiful Palm Springs, California. This milestone Convention will be more than just a reunion of peers and colleagues—it's a celebration of seven decades of growth, innovation, and unity in the festivals and events industry. It will be a time to reflect on how far we've come, acknowledge those who have paved the way, and inspire the next generation to carry the torch forward.

As part of the 70th celebration, we are working hard to make this Convention one of the most memorable yet, and we need your help. One of the Foundation's most important fundraising efforts—our annual auction—will return, and we are actively seeking contributions. Whether it's a unique experience, a one-of-a-kind item, or a package that showcases the best of your event or region, your

auction donation will directly support the educational and professional development programs that define our industry's future.

These auction items not only raise essential funds for the Foundation, but they also represent the incredible diversity and creativity within our global community. They are a reflection of who we are and what we have to offer each other—and they always make the auction one of the most fun and engaging parts of the Convention.

Additionally, I would be remiss if I didn't encourage you, your staff, or fellow colleagues to apply for the IFEA Legacy Scholarships—a fantastic opportunity to grow professionally while experiencing all that the Convention has to offer. These scholarships are designed to remove barriers and expand access to the Convention and its invaluable learning and networking opportunities. The deadline to apply is May 15, and I hope you'll consider this not just for yourself, but for someone on your team who's ready to take the next step in their career.

The Foundation believes in investing in people, and the Legacy Scholarship program is one of the best examples of that mission in action. Each year, we hear stories from scholarship recipients who walk away from the Convention inspired, more confident, and more connected to the global events community. That ripple effect carries forward in the work they do at home—and in the lives they touch through their events.

Of course, none of this would be possible without YOU - our partners, supporters, and believers in the power of education and collaboration. Whether you've attended a webinar, pursued your CFE, submitted a speaker proposal, or simply shared an issue of "ie" with a colleague, you are part of the ripple effect the IFEA Foundation creates.

This 70th Anniversary year gives us the perfect opportunity to reflect not only on our shared history, but also on our shared responsibility to the future. Your involvement - no matter how big or small—helps sustain the educational programs that prepare our next generation of leaders, empower seasoned professionals to evolve, and keep our industry vibrant and resilient.

On behalf of the Foundation Board, thank you for your continued belief in what we do—and in who we do it for. Together, we're not just supporting an industry, we're investing in the people who bring it to life. I can't wait to see many of you in September as we celebrate 70 years of tradition, innovation, and connection.

Cherry-O!

Kat Paye, CFE

IFEA Foundation Board Chair
Executive Director – National Cherry Festival
CEO – The Festival Foundation
Traverse City, Michigan