

NEWS

IAEE Debuts International Excellence Award

By Todd McElwee

IAEE announced the newest addition to its substantial lineup of honors, the IAEE International Excellence Award, on Jan. 21.

The program will shine a light on an individual and/or organization that has made exceptional strides in creating, launching, and managing an international event in the exhibitions and events industry.

The award will be bestowed during IMEX Frankfurt on May 20-22 in Frankfurt, Germany. Nominations are due by March 10.

"It is always very exciting to see our industry grow," David DuBois, CMP, CAE,

FASAE, CTA, President & CEO of IAEE, told *USAE*. "Naturally, as the exhibitions and events industry continues to expand internationally, IAEE plans to be at the forefront of that development."

Applicants must demonstrate their contributions to developing or improving the events and exhibitions industry on an international scale. Considered contributions will include, but aren't limited to, exhibitor and attendee growth at an international show, expansion of educational opportunities in a particular region, industry advocacy across international borders, and the promotion of IAEE's programs and presence on the world stage.

"The IAEE International Excellence Award came about as a result of IAEE's

strategic emphasis on international collaboration," said Dubois. "A key part of our strategic plan addresses developing our international presence, so we are partnering with various organizations abroad on various levels. We have received strong support that we feel merits recognition, thus we developed this award."

The International Excellence Award is the latest chapter in IAEE's global efforts. In April 2013, the association's board approved the creation of an IAEE Mexican chapter during its meeting at the Hilton Anatole in Dallas after being petitioned by a number of Mexican

members.

Patricia Farias Barlow, CEM, CEO of the Puerto Vallarta International Convention Center, was installed as Interim Chairman with Horacio Vazquez coming on board as IAEE Mexico Chapter President.

"In 2013, IAEE covered significant ground in expanding our international reach," said Dubois. "It became obvious fairly quickly that we have strong advocates across the

globe—not just on IAEE's behalf but for the exhibitions and events industry as a whole—and we are eager to recognize and encourage their efforts."

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Brand USA

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ny, Belgium and the Netherlands. Thomas Cook and Brand USA will produce a high profile campaign using all of the holiday company's consumer and trade touch-points such as in-store promotions, promotional literature, and social media activities.

Thomas Cook staff will also participated in a dedicated sign up for Brand USA's new agent training tool—the USA Discovery Program.

Thomas Cook is among the world's leading leisure travel groups. With more than 27,000 employees in 19 nations, the company served 23 million customers during its last fiscal year claiming sales of more than \$15 billion.

It recently launched Thomas Cook Media & Partnerships division, bringing together media and travel partnerships expertise within to deliver best in class marketing and media programs to partners, suppliers, and third-party brands.

Stuart Adamson, Thomas Cook's Group Head of Media & Partnerships, said working with Brand USA will produce a powerful combination to stimulate European travel to the U.S. by employing the full strength of Thomas Cook as an omni-channel retailer.

Adamson added the Media and

Partnerships team will combine the best in both travel expertise and media innovation. His staff is looking forward to delivering a fully integrated on and offline campaign aimed at stimulating further interest in the U.S. from Thomas Cook customers throughout Europe, he said.

"Discover America" looks to raise awareness of and inspire travel to the U.S. by highlighting the diverse experiences available in the nation. The partnership will take full advantage of the Thomas Cook Group and its brands—such as Neckerman in Germany—to build pan-European awareness of the U.S. getaways, such as Florida, California, and other gateway destinations, as well as stimulating further awareness of states such as Texas and Hawaii and regions such as the North East.

"This fully integrated campaign provides a platform for the U.S. to re-enforce Brand USA's efforts to deliver programs that increase awareness and enhance the image of the United States," said Christopher Thompson, CEO of Brand USA. "We take great pride in our ability to partner with such an established operator as Thomas Cook, allowing us the opportunity to engage the European market to not only consider visiting the U.S, but also enable them to book travel through a trusted operator."

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Event Service Professionals Association (ESPA) hosted its Annual Conference at the Westin Copley Place in Boston from Jan. 10-12. Shown here (left to right) Paul Ruby, ESPA, Board Member, Associate Director of Catering and Event Management, Sheraton Dallas; Laura Schwartz ESPA 2014 Annual Conference Keynote Speaker; Julie Pingston, CMP, CTA, Sr. Vice President, Greater Lansing CVB, ESPA President; Devon Sloan, Director of Events at Hilton Tucson El Conquistador; and Denise Suttle, CMP, Assistant Director of Convention Services, Albuquerque CVB.

Destination & Travel Foundation Dream Auction List Now Online

By Todd McElwee

The list of items for the 21st Annual Destination & Travel Foundation Dream Auction has come together and will be available online at www.biddingforgood.com/dmai/dreamauction2014.

Additional information, including a link to the inventory, may found on the Destination and Travel Foundation's website by the end of this week. Bidding closes at 4:00 P.M. on Feb. 12.

The Foundation Dinner honoring the James Beard Foundation will be held on Feb. 11 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C.

Tourism bureaus such as the Austin CVB, Lake Placid CVB/Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism, Greater Miami CVB, New Orleans CVB, Visit Niagara-Buffalo, Visit Denver, Visit Orlando, Visit Phoenix, and Visit Salt Lake have all contributed destination vacation packages.

Industry partners including *USAE*, Collinson Media + Events, PCMA, Schneider Publishing, Sojern, and USA Today have offered advertising.

Among the unique items to be sold

is an oil painting from the personal collection of Anne Daly Heller and her husband Ross, a print of the Golden Gate Bridge by Chuck Fazio Photography, and a custom pair of cowboy boots from the Oklahoma City CVB.

The James Beard Foundation will be honored with the 2014 Spirit of Hospitality Award. Foundation President Susan Ungaro will accept the award.

Preparing the three-course dinner will be celebrity chefs from across the country. They include John Fleeer, owner of the Rhubarb Restaurant and a Rising Star of the 21st Century Beard designee presented by Asheville Area CVB; Chef Tory McPhail, Executive Chef of New Orleans' Commanders Palace; and the reigning Beard Foundation Best Chef: South honoree, presented by New Orleans CVB; and Keegan Gerhard, owner of Denver's D-Bar Desserts and a judge of the Food Network Challenge, presented by Visit Denver.

"The James Beard Foundation is thrilled and humbled to be the recipient of the 2014 Spirit of Hospitality Award," said Ungaro. "Just as our namesake often said, we believe that 'food is our common ground.'"



IMN Solutions was the association and meeting management sponsor of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) Council of Manufacturing Associations (CMA) Winter Leadership Conference, Jan. 16-17 at the Salamander Resort in Middleburg, Virginia. Some of the 80+ executives who attended included (left to right) IMN Solutions COO Bill Hudson; CMA Executive Director Paul Hartgen; CMA Chairman Donna Harman, CEO, American Forest and Paper Association; and IMN Solutions President Brian Knapp.