

# SHOWFEST 2026

FEBRUARY 16-17  
Charlotte, NC

COLLABORATE.CREATE.CELEBRATE



EVENT INNOVATORS  
CONFERENCE



**FEBRUARY 16-17**  
**Charlotte, NC**

**COLLABORATE . CREATE . CELEBRATE**

From small-town traditions to large-scale celebrations, festivals and events bring people together, strengthen local economies, and create moments that matter.

ShowFest is where creativity meets strategy — a place to share ideas, spark inspiration, and connect with peers who understand the passion and purpose behind every event.

We hope this conference inspires and motivates you to connect, share ideas, and build meaningful relationships as we embark on a new year filled with fresh opportunities and new beginnings.

During the conference, you'll experience educational sessions led by industry experts, offering valuable insights and practical tools for professional growth. You'll also engage with an outstanding lineup of first-class supporting members in the exhibit hall, enjoy artist showcases highlighting incredible talent, and take part in numerous networking opportunities designed to bring our industry together.

We are pleased to welcome you to our annual Event Innovators Conference, proudly hosted by the North Carolina Association of Festivals & Events, the ShowFest Conference Committee, the NCAF&E Board of Directors, and our valued sponsors. We look forward to connecting with you, exchanging ideas, and preparing for a successful and exciting year of festivals and events ahead.

We're glad you're here. Let's learn. Let's connect. Let's celebrate — ShowFest!

*Special Thanks to the 2026 ShowFest Planning Committee!*



**Roy Brown**

**Tina Gibson**

**Theresa Mathis**

**Caroline Hasty**

**Julie Beck**

**Dr. Brianna Clark**

**Amanda Justice**

**Margot Clark**

**Stephanie McIntyre**

**Pam Hester**

**Jeff Freeman**

**Stephanie H. Saintsing**

**NCAF&E Director – Stephanie Saintsing Naset**

**FEBRUARY 16-17**  
**Charlotte, NC**

**COLLABORATE.CREATE.CELEBRATE**

## *Conference Schedule at a Glance*

- 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM **Exhibit Hall Set-Up** *Lakeshore Ballroom*
- 10 AM - 11AM **Ed Session-Building Long-Term Sponsor Partnerships** *Lakeview Room*
- 11 AM - 12:30 PM **Exhibit Hall Open-Lunch in Exhibit Hall** *Lakeshore Ballroom*
- 11 AM – 4 PM **Award Room Open** *Welwyn Room*
- 11 AM - 6:15 PM **Silent Auction Open** *Foyer-adjacent to Registration Desk*
- 1 PM – 2 PM **Keynote: Measuring the Impact That Matters** *Lakeview Room*
- 2 PM - 3 PM **Ed Session-Tourism Trends & Visitor Insights  
An Update from Visit NC** *Lakeview Room*
- 2 PM – 3 PM **Ed Session-Safe & Responsible Service of Alcohol** *Glenwaters Room*
- 3 PM - 3:45 PM **Exhibit Hall Open-Break in Exhibit Hall**
- 3:45 PM - 4:45 PM **Ed Session-Understanding and Leveraging Event Data** *Lakeview Room*
- 3:45 PM - 4:45 PM **America 250 NC & Your Festivals** *Glenwaters Room*
- 5 PM - 5:30 PM **Association Meeting & Elections** *Walden Room*
- 6:15 PM **Silent Auction Closes**
- 6:15 PM - 10:30 PM **Dinner, Ent. Showcase, & Awards Program** *University Ballroom*

# Conference Schedule at a Glance

## Tuesday, February 17

8:00 AM – 9 AM	<b>Coffee Bar</b> <i>Foyer-adjacent to Registration Desk</i>
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM	<b>Registration Desk Open</b> <i>Midway Room</i>
9 AM – 10 AM	<b>Ed Session-Weather Preparedness</b> <i>Lakeview Room</i>
9 AM - 10 AM	<b>Ed Session-Social Media Strategy, Topics &amp; Trends</b> <i>Glenwaters Room</i>
10 AM - 11AM	<b>Exhibit Hall Open</b> <i>Lakeshore Ballroom</i>
10 AM – 1 PM	<b>Award Room Open</b> <i>Welwyn Room</i>
11AM – 12 PM	<b>Ed Session-State of the Festival Industry: 2025 Insights &amp; 2026 Trends</b> <i>Lakeview Room</i>
11 AM – 12 PM	<b>Ed Session-Logistics: The Devil's in the Details</b> <i>Glenwaters Room</i>
12 PM – 1 PM	<b>Lunch in Exhibit Hall</b> <i>Lakeshore Ballroom</i>



Thanks to  
our 2026  
conference  
sponsors!



# Kay K. Saintsing Memorial Scholarship

The Kay K. Saintsing Memorial Scholarship was established in 2005 to honor the late founder of the North Carolina Association of Festivals and Events (NCAF&E). Kay was a leader within the tourism community and highly admired for her commitment to public service. She also founded several other non-profit organizations including the annual Barbecue Festival in Lexington, North Carolina. Under her direction, the festival became one of the largest one-day events in North Carolina and had received numerous, national and regional awards.



Sadly on June 7, 2002, the tourism industry and NCAF&E lost a leader and visionary to a heart arrhythmia; her family received countless cards and condolence letters. Annually, a \$1000 scholarship will be awarded to a returning student at a North Carolina college or university. Students from all campuses, who meet the requirements, may apply. We are proud to have awarded a total of five scholarships to deserving students thus far. NCAF&E wishes this award to be made to a student who has serious academic pursuits, who loves learning and who is interested in the breadth of learning in relation to recreation and tourism. The Executive Board of the NCAF&E has established the selection criteria and process for this award by recognizing Kay Saintsing's intentions when she initiated NCAF&E, the criteria is:

- Minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average, with no grade earned lower than a "C".
- Enrolled as a full-time student at a college or university in North Carolina
- Must have sophomore or junior standing
- Must be returning to his or her home university the next year
- Must be a Parks, Recreation, Tourism or Event Management major
- The recipient must attend the annual ShowFest Conference

The NCAF&E Executive Board will review all essays and applications. The recipient of the scholarship will be announced during the annual Awards luncheon.

*"Kay was an outstanding individual who was highly regarded by many for her leadership and hard work both locally and statewide. Those of us in the NC Tourism industry, and many others across the state, will miss her leadership, energy and wonderful attitude on life."*

— Lynn D. Minges, Former Director of the NC Dept. of Commerce Tourism, Film and Sports Dev.



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# Showfest 2026

## EVENT INNOVATORS CONFERENCE • EDUCATIONAL SESSION SCHEDULE

### SESSIONS - MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16

#### SESSION A – 10AM LAKEVIEW

#### **BUILDING LONG-TERM SPONSOR PARTNERSHIPS**

Presented by: Stephanie McIntyre, CFEE

Founder, Staircase Event & Sponsorship Consulting



#### **HOW FESTIVALS CAN MOVE BEYOND ONE-YEAR DEALS**

Festivals and events don't fail because of a lack of sponsors—they struggle because sponsorships are often treated as one-time transactions instead of long-term relationships. In this interactive work session, attendees will learn how to move beyond annual sponsorship deals and build meaningful, year-round partnerships that benefit both the event and the sponsor.

This session breaks down what sponsors truly value today, why renewals fail, and how festivals and events—can create sponsorship experiences that last. Participants will leave with practical tools, real-world examples, and a clear framework they can apply immediately.

Stephanie brings over two decades of experience in the industry, and has successfully worked with corporations such as Microsoft, Chevrolet, Ford, Texas Pete, Challenge Butter, NC Department of Agriculture, Food Lion and more. Cultivating corporate and community connections one step at a time. When she's not helping organizations strengthen sponsorship strategies, you'll find her enjoying a good latte, teaching Pilates, walking her black lab Onyx on the Southern Outer Banks, or spending time with her two grown children.

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## **OPENING KEYNOTE – 1PM LAKEVIEW**

### **WHY IT MATTERS: MEASURING THE TRUE IMPACT OF FESTIVALS & EVENTS**

Presented by: Greg Fuson, Chandler Thinks

Director of Research & Community Engagement, TMP, FEP



Festivals and events are far more than moments of entertainment—they are powerful catalysts for economic growth, community pride, and human connection. This keynote explores why the work of festival and event professionals truly matters and how their efforts create lasting value for the communities they serve.

Through relatable examples and real-world data, the session highlights how festivals and events support local businesses, generate jobs, and strengthen a sense of place. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the tangible and intangible impacts their events deliver—and, most importantly, leave feeling inspired, validated, and confident in the meaningful role they play in shaping vibrant communities.

Greg has been helping clients understand their market through research for more than 25 years. He has developed his skills in survey design and management for both quantitative and qualitative areas of research. He oversees survey design, group questionnaires and analysis; and has been part of the Chandlerthinks team since the beginning.

Greg has managed studies for a number of national-branded clients, including a stint as the Director of Research for the Country Music Association. But his passion is in marketing research for places. Greg has worked with over 150 communities around the country. Greg is also deeply involved in helping cities determine the economic impact of festivals and events. Leading this effort for Chandlerthinks, he helps cities and organizers understand the value and importance in measuring and tracking those statistics.

## **SESSION A – 2PM LAKEVIEW**

### **TOURISM TRENDS & ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF FESTIVALS & EVENTS: An Update from Visit NC**

Presented by: Marlise Taylor



Understanding who your visitors are—and how they travel, spend, and engage—is critical to planning successful festivals and events. This session explores current tourism trends and visitor behavior, providing valuable insights into how and why people choose destinations and experiences.

Attendees will learn how to use visitor data and research to better understand their audiences, align events with broader tourism goals, and demonstrate meaningful community and economic impact. The session will offer practical takeaways to help organizers make more informed decisions, strengthen partnerships, and enhance the overall visitor experience.

Marlise Taylor has been Director of Tourism Research for Visit North Carolina (formerly the NC Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development) since 2005. Prior, she was Director of Tourism for Goldsboro (NC) from 2000-2005 and Tourism Research Analyst at the University of New Orleans from 1996-2000. In her current role, Marlise provides strategic direction and oversight of Visit NC's research program and works closely with the entire team to implement initiatives that help guide marketing decisions to support tourism in NC. She is a past president and chair person of the international Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA), board member from 2009 – 2015 and a past board member of Southeast Chapter of TTRA. Marlise received her MS (1996) & BS (1993) degrees from North Carolina State University, and was a recipient of the 2018 NCSU Parks, Recreation & Tourism Management Outstanding Alumna award.

## **SESSION B – 2PM GLENWATERS**

### **SAFE & RESPONSIBLE SERVICE OF ALCOHOL**

Presented by: Charlie Fuller, Vice President of Alcohol Management LLC



This session provides an overview of North Carolina alcohol laws and key compliance requirements for festivals and events. Attendees will learn best practices for responsible alcohol service, including age verification, risk management, and incident prevention. The session will also cover practical training tools and strategies for preparing vendors and volunteers to serve alcohol safely, confidently, and in compliance with state regulations.

Charlie Fuller currently serves as Vice President of Alcohol Management, LLC. Charlie recently retired from the NC ABC Commission after 18 years of service. Charlie worked as an Information and Communication Specialist in the Education and Training Division and as a Compliance Office in the Audit Division. Charlie has trained thousands of employees and volunteers in responsible beverage service in North and South Carolina. Charlie has provided alcohol risk management consulting to colleges and universities throughout the state. Charlie was a frequent guest speaker at numerous associations on ABC laws and regulations.

## **SESSION A – 3:45PM LAKEVIEW**

### **UNDERSTANDING AND LEVERAGING EVENT DATA**

Presented by: Greg Fuson, Chandler Thinks

Director of Research & Community Engagement, TMP, FEP



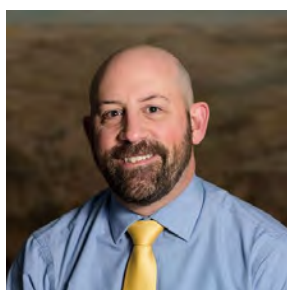
Event planners are increasingly expected to demonstrate the value of their events to elected officials, residents, and sponsors. This session provides a practical deep dive into how to effectively collect, interpret, and leverage event data to support informed decision-making and strengthen stakeholder confidence.

Attendees will learn best practices for conducting event research, identifying the data points and touchpoints most important to sponsors, and packaging results in clear, compelling ways that communicate economic, community, and brand impact. Participants will leave with actionable strategies to better quantify outcomes, tell their event's story through data, and clearly demonstrate value.

## **SESSION B – 3:45PM GLENWATERS**

### **AMERICA 250 NC & YOUR FESTIVALS**

Presented by: Dan Brosz, Project Coordinator, America 250 NC



Learn how America 250 NC can enhance your festivals and events. We'll share who we are, the resources we offer, and easy ways to bring the America 250 theme into your programming. Walk away with practical ideas to celebrate North Carolina's history and engage your community.

Dan Brosz serves as the America 250 Project Coordinator and oversees the agency's grant program and outreach efforts. Dan is originally from South Dakota and has a bachelor's degree in history, and a master's degree in museum studies.

Dan's professional experience includes working as Curator of Collections at the South Dakota State Historical Society in Pierre, SD, Arts in Communities Director with the North Carolina Arts Council, and president of the Association of South Dakota Museums.

# SESSIONS - TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

## **SESSION A - 9AM LAKEVIEW**

### **WEATHER PREPAREDNESS**

Presented by: Brad Panovich, Meteorologist



Weather can be a major obstacle when it comes to planning and executing successful and safe events. Due to the weather, many events are delayed, disrupted, or canceled each year. With proper planning, communications, and expert weather guidance, events can better mitigate these challenges and hold successful and safe events.

Brad is a well-known and respected meteorologist who has been working for WCNC-TV in Charlotte since 2003. He is the chief meteorologist and hosted the weekly segment “Carolina Weather School” during COVID lockdowns. He is also an avid skier and snowboarder who provides weather forecasts for ski resorts across the southeast.

Brad has a passion for weather and science education. He holds a bachelor’s degree in meteorology from The Ohio State University. He is a certified broadcast meteorologist by the American Meteorological Society and a member of the National Weather Association. He has won several awards for his work, including two Emmys and The American Meteorological Society Broadcast Meteorologist of the year in 2017. He is also an adjunct professor at the University of North Carolina Charlotte in their Meteorology department.

Brad Panovich is not only a meteorologist, but also a social media influencer. He has more than 500,000 followers on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, where he posts daily weather updates, videos, live streams and interactive Q&A sessions. He is known for his engaging and informative style, as well as his use of humor and emojis. He is also an advocate for environmental issues, such as climate change and renewable energy.

Brad Panovich is a proud husband and father of two children. He enjoys spending time with his family, skiing, hiking, biking and playing video games. He is also a fan of the Ohio State Buckeyes, the Carolina Panthers and the Charlotte Hornets.

## **SESSION B - 9AM GLENWATERS**

### **SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY, TOPICS & TRENDS**

Presented by: Liz Hynes, 57 Marketing



Social media continues to evolve rapidly, and festivals and events must adapt to stay visible and engaging. This session breaks down what’s working right now across major platforms, with a focus on trends, content topics, and strategies that drive real engagement.

Attendees will learn how to create compelling, timely content, identify which trends are worth adopting (and which to skip), and align social media efforts with event goals before, during, and after their event. The session will provide practical ideas and actionable takeaways that organizers can implement immediately to strengthen reach, engagement, and community connection.

Liz has worked in the marketing and advertising industry for over 25 years. From sports marketing to large scale concerts, to radio and TV, to launching brands, to digital and social media, she’s covered quite a bit! Her passion is helping local businesses grow by expanding their digital footprint and understanding all the tools at their fingertips in this social media world. Liz has lived in 8 states, enjoys spending time with her husband Brad and loves to travel.

## SESSION A – 11AM LAKEVIEW

### STATE OF THE FESTIVAL INDUSTRY 2025 INSIGHTS & 2026 TRENDS

Presented by: Jennifer Williams, Eventeny



Drawing on data from more than 50,000 festivals and events, this session unveils the inaugural State of the Festival Industry report, offering a clear picture of where the industry stands today—and where it’s headed next. Attendees will gain data-driven insights into how events performed in 2025 and what trends are shaping planning, partnerships, and profitability in 2026.

The session will explore where events are truly making—or losing—money, what’s driving stronger and more sustainable vendor and sponsor relationships, and how top organizers are simplifying operations while navigating tighter budgets and rising expectations. Attendees will leave with practical takeaways and benchmarks they can apply immediately to strengthen their own festivals and events.

Jennifer is a Sr. Tech Support Specialist at Eventeny. She is a dynamic leader, customer champion, and product expert. With a passion for unlocking the potential within others, Jennifer loves to listen to people’s stories and help them discover their own inner superhero

## SESSION B – 11AM GLENWATERS

### LOGISTICS: THE DEVIL’S IN THE DETAILS

Presented by: Theresa Mathis, Theresa Mathis, City of Wilson and NC Whirligig Festival



Come join a lively discussion and case study of festival and event logistics. Keeping in mind that the simplest things often have hidden complexities that can easily create problems. Avoid the label of being controlling, by giving proper attention to logistical elements well in advance. Shifting our focus on thoroughness puts “good vibes in the details” of event planning.

Theresa started event planning in higher education as part of Student Activities, Admissions, Orientation and New Student Programs. After more than a decade of being on college campuses, she moved into community programming. Coordinating concerts, holiday celebrations, award events, Special Olympics, and other large scale public events. She volunteers as the director for the NC Whirligig Festival, the largest event held annually in historic downtown Wilson.

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# 2026 Showcase Artists



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PRODUCTION PROVIDED BY: IMAGINE DESIGN & PRODUCTION SERVICES

## Evening Showcase Performances

### Showcase Emcee : ERIC BOWMAN

*IMAGINE Music Group*



Eric Bowman is CAMMY Award Winning, FM DeeJay of the Year ERIC BOWMAN, is one of the most beloved personalities in the Carolinas. From hosting his weekly award winning radio show, to serving as deejay/emcee for endless festivals and events throughout the season, Eric always brings that fun energy that puts smiles on everyone's faces. His special and unique talents for engaging with an audience enhances every single event he hosts, and his incredible excitement and energy is that special sauce that all events need to take it to the next level. Bringing ERIC BOWMAN to host your festivals or events will be fun for all from start to finish!

Proudly represented by IMAGINE Music Group

### N-SPIRE BAND

*Self-Represented*



N-SPIRE BAND was born from friendship, faith, and the simple joy of making music together—evolving from an all-male gospel group into a tight jazz ensemble and ultimately a dynamic, multi-genre band whose very name reflects its mission: to inspire. Founded and guided by its music director, a veteran bassist and songwriter with extensive national and international touring experience—from major U.S. venues to stages across Europe and Tokyo, including recording work with well-known labels—the group brings a deep respect for musical tradition alongside an instinct for reading a room and creating a polished yet personal live experience. Carrying those lessons forward, N-SPIRE delivers rich vocals, warm horn lines, and an irresistible rhythm section, with a repertoire spanning Pop, R&B, Motown, Funk, and Inspirational music, perfectly suited for weddings, festivals, and corporate or private events. Blending seasoned musicianship with fresh energy, the band does more than perform; they host the night, shaping the set in real time and leaving audiences smiling, humming, and feeling better when the music ends than when it began.

### AI G & FRIENDS

*Self-Represented*



AI G & FRIENDS Band is a five-member, high-energy group based in Charlotte, North Carolina, bringing over 40 years of combined musical experience to every performance. Known for “keeping the party groovin’,” the band delivers crowd-pleasing performances that keep dance floors packed and audiences engaged from start to finish.

AI G & FRIENDS has entertained audiences at weddings, corporate events, retirement and birthday parties, festivals, bar lounges, family and community reunions, and even Carnival Cruise Ships. Their seasoned musicians have also had the honor of sharing the stage with legendary artists such as The Chairman of the Board, The Drifters, and The Temptations, just to name a few.

Their versatile setlist spans classic and contemporary R&B, Beach Music, Motown, Classic Soul, Line Dance favorites, Gospel, and more, making them a perfect fit for any celebration or event.

### RIGGSBEE ROAD

*IMAGINE Music Group*



Riggsbee Road is an all-female country and “new” grass band based in Raleigh, NC. Covering pop, country, and classic tunes with a big banjo sound and smooth vocal harmonies, this is one unique and powerful femme phenom.

Shelley Kelly, former lead singer with Huckleberry Blue, had a dream of creating an all-female project with a banjo signature and full three-part harmonies. Long-time friend and keyboardist Laura Schuchart signed on immediately with a similar vision. Next, Amy Hall joined on drums and Megan Maloney on bass, followed by Sarah Hollis on fiddle and vocals, Monika Jaymes on acoustic guitar, and Heather Sarona on banjo. They are having a blast covering your favorite tunes in their unique style!

# Evening Showcase Performances Continued



## DALTON DAVIS BAND

*Self-Represented*



Dalton Davis is a country music artist and songwriter from Mainers, North Carolina, who began his music career in 2019 through local open mic nights that quickly led to small regional gigs. He wrote and released his debut single, "Good Man," in January 2020, and soon after performed at notable venues including the Bowery in Myrtle Beach, SC, and on Broadway in Nashville, TN. In late 2022, Dalton released "Take You Away," followed by "Phone Number to Heaven," a heartfelt tribute to his late grandfather who inspired his passion for music.

In January 2024, Dalton earned multiple Carolina Country Music Awards nominations, including Country Single of the Year, Emerging New Artist, and the Damian Horne Humanitarian Award, and was a finalist for Entertainer of the Year. He performed "Phone Number to Heaven" at the 2024 awards ceremony at the House of Blues in Myrtle Beach. Following the event, he released the single "Wild Child" and his debut EP, Where Has My Country Been, in May 2024. With over 100 shows performed across multiple states last year, Dalton continues to grow his audience through festivals and songwriter events in Nashville and Key West, sharing his music with thousands of fans.

## CAPTAIN MIKE & THE SHIPWRECKED

*Providence Music Group*



Captain Mike & The Shipwrecked is a premier Jimmy Buffett tribute band, playing hits and deep cuts from the Coral Reefer catalog. High energy evening with music to set your sails to!

Jimmy Buffett is on the playlist every trip and now it is time to honor his legacy and continue to play these songs for old parrotheads and new fans alike. Now with the Shipwrecked, a 9pc band consisting of a blend of pirates and musicians alike, Captain Mike is ready to sail into any venue. Singing songs and telling stories about time on the sea.

## SEPTEMBER: AN EARTH, WIND, & FIRE TRIBUTE

*IMAGINE Music Group*



September: A Tribute to Earth, Wind & Fire is a vibrant and dynamic tribute band honoring the legendary sound, energy, and spirit of Earth, Wind & Fire. Formed by a group of passionate musicians from diverse musical backgrounds, the band captures the essence of the original group while bringing its timeless hits and electrifying performances to life with authenticity and showmanship.

With a powerful live band, dazzling choreography, and colorful costumes, September delivers an uplifting, high-energy experience that invites audiences to dance, sing along, and relive the magic. Whether performing at festivals, private events, or local venues, the band is dedicated to keeping this iconic music alive for longtime fans and new listeners alike.

## FEELING 22

*Providence Music Group*



Taylor Swift needs no introduction, as she is one of the most significant artists of our time. Feeling 22 - A Tribute to Taylor Swift is a spectacle to be witnessed, recreating her vast catalogue with incredible detail live in concert. This is not your typical impersonator act, but rather an expertly curated celebration of the music of Taylor Swift. From spot-on vocals to world class musicianship with more than half a century of combined experience, this show is sure to impress all fans of the legendary pop icon. Feeling 22 is a family-friendly event, so bring the whole family to "Shake It Off" and sing along to all the eras of Taylor Swift with us!

# Trade Show Exhibitors

Stop by and find out about the wonderful goods and services that our trade show exhibitors have to offer to make your event shine!

They are on hand during these times:

## Monday, February 16

11 am - 12:30 pm Lunch in Exhibit Hall

3 pm - 3:45 pm Break in Exhibit Hall

## Tuesday, February 17

10 am - 11am

12 pm - 1pm Lunch in Exhibit Hall

## EXHIBITORS (as of 2/10/26)

Al G & Friends Party Band  
Best Tent & Events/Piedmont Portables  
BrandSpeed  
BrightWave FX  
Captain Jim Is Magic  
Carolina Balloon & Décor  
Carolina Rhythm Machine  
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Dalton Davis Music  
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N-SPIRE Band  
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# Excellence Awards

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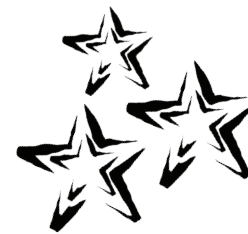
The ShowFest Excellence Awards are a long standing tradition of highlighting the best and brightest of festivals, events and associates across the Carolinas. Our full membership is dedicated to identifying the professionals that raise the bar and provide outstanding examples. We also use this program as a way to set new goals and standards for the profession. We can all learn from each other and give a hardy round of applause to those who distinguish themselves with great work. While many of the award categories lend to self-nomination, we encourage all planners and associates to take a wider look within our membership and submit nominations for other members who are leaders, do outstanding work and deserve recognition. *Size Distinction: Small = Festival Overall Budget of \$25,000 or under / Medium = Festival Overall Budget of \$25,000 - \$149,000 / Large = Festival Overall Budget \$150,000+*

## 2026 AWARD CATEGORIES

- Event of the Year
- Director of the Year
- Betsy Rosemann Volunteer of the Year
- Sponsor of the Year
- Supporting Member of the Year
- Rising Star Award
- Event Associated With An Event
- Best Children's Program
- Best Community Outreach Program
- Andy Smith Exhibitor Award
- Best Press Kit
- Best Non-Print Media



- Best Event Photo
- Best Sponsorship Packet
- Best Event Website
- Best Supporting Member Website
- Best Festival Social Media
- Best Merchandise (small, medium, large)
- Best Brochure (small, medium, large)
- Best Print Media (small, medium, large)
- Best Event Poster (small, medium, large)
- Best T-shirt (small, medium, large)
- Student Choice Award



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## **Showcasing**



Riggsbee Road "Americana"

September: A Earth, Wind & Fire Tribute



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Stephanie McIntyre, CFE  
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# Hilton Charlotte University Place Floor Plan



## Legend

-  **Midway** (Registration & auction winner's pick-up location)
-  **Welwyn** (Awards display)
-  **University Ballroom/Suites**
-  **Lakeview**
-  **Walden**
-  **Glenwaters**



## Connect ShowFest 2026

X @ncfests use hashtag #Showfest26  
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