



Cornerstone Initiatives & Events

Each year, we plan and execute two dozen events. While the type of events remain the same, the topics, speakers, and overarching themes continuously evolve to mesh seamlessly with local and national AAF goals. Instead of segregating initiatives and subject matter, we actively look for ways to incorporate diversity, education, and government relations into individual events, Ad Week, and the annual awards show. Combined, these events and initiatives make up the core of who we are as a club.

Diversity Initiative Highlights

Buffalo Prep Student Engagement Day

Goal: Expose a younger, more diverse audience to careers in advertising.

Execution: Moving into our fourth year running Student Engagement Day alongside Buffalo Prep, we again worked closely with the organization and a few of our member agencies to create a valuable day for students. Fifteen students toured three member agencies in downtown Buffalo, each with a different discipline. They began their day at Crowley Webb, a traditional advertising agency, touring the office and meeting with different departments, including account service, PR, and media. The students then participated in a creative brief exercise in which they were broken up into small groups, given a brief for Milk Duds, and asked to create a marketing piece to promote the product. The students performed this exercise twice, firstly with a general brief and secondly with more details to help showcase the importance of including the right information within a creative brief. Before heading to their second agency of the day, each group presented their ideas to the creative professionals to get a taste of what real pitching is like.

After a tour and Q&A session at mid-size agency, Mr. Smith, the day ended at dPost, a video and post-production company. There, the students learned about set dressing and how each space can be transformed depending on script needs. Students then received detailed descriptions of shooting and editing equipment and toured the production office where they finished the day watching a few different samples of dPost's recent work, including traditional commercials and locally shot music videos.

Results: Buffalo Prep Student Engagement Day was a success for another year with 15 students participating. Before leaving dPost, we asked students what they learned throughout the day. A majority of those in attendance were unaware of the career options in advertising until that day. They were also pleasantly surprised by the workplace environments and how non-corporate they felt. The day has turned into an annual event and has created a long-term partnership that our chapter is very excited about. *[See exhibit 1]*

Spotlight Speaker: Keni Thacker

Goal: Actively seek out and recruit guest speakers from diverse backgrounds to cover topics of inclusive advertising to be showcased in our annual Spotlight Speaker Series.

Execution: Our Spotlight Speaker Series, in its fourth year, consists of four speaking events, each featuring a speaker from out of town. Because the series now has a strong foundation with our members, we felt that it was time to put an added emphasis on the most important industry topics, with diversity scoring high. Each year, our programming committee actively searches for the most qualified, diverse speakers that we can afford.

In October, we hosted Kenny Thacker, who spoke on diversity, culture, and inclusion in the advertising industry. He noted that people of color make up only 30% of our industry co-workers. To combat that low representation, Keni suggested assessing our recruitment pipelines and considering new ways to recruit employees. He also described culture as a balance of learning, caring, purpose, and enjoyment. Keni urged companies and agencies to take an active part in their employees' lives and get involved in what they are doing, inside and outside of work.

Results: Keni's speech drew a total of 63 attendees, ranging from entry level personnel up to agency executives

and founders. Member feedback was positive. They were impressed and thanked us for dedicating the final night of Ad Week to diversity. *[See exhibits 2a & 2b]*

CommUNITY Award for Inclusive Advertising

Goal: Provide a platform to recognize professional advertising that increases viewers’ perceptions and understanding of multicultural communities.

Execution: Created after attending the 2017 Mosaic Awards, the CommUNITY Award for Inclusive Advertising is another opportunity to bring diversity and inclusivity to the forefront of our local ad community. Now in its third year, this award falls under the “special award” category of our award show each spring.

Results: Our panel of out-of-market judges awarded The Martin Group’s drag-inspired and LGBTQ+ inclusive award show work, “Saints + Sinners,” as our third annual CommUNITY Award winner at Buffalo’s 2020 American Advertising Awards hosted on Friday, March 6, 2020. *[See exhibit 3]*

Advertising Education Initiative Highlights

Advertising Education for the Profession

Many of our events are designed to teach and provide value to our members. Two of our most valuable educational event programs are our members-only Skillshops and our Spotlight Speaker Series. The Skillshops allow for hands-on learning experiences with an expert providing detailed guidance and best practices.

Meanwhile, the Spotlight Speaker Series brings in experts from out of town to speak on a wide range of subject matter. Both of these series have even generated new memberships, inspiring people to join AAF Buffalo for a chance to attend or obtain discounted tickets. Our events include:

- **Signature Speaker: David Beebe** – May 2019 – “*Why, How, and ROI of Brand Storytelling*”

[See exhibit 4]

- **Spotlight Speaker Series: Keni Thacker** – October 2019 – “*What’s Culture Got to Do With It?*” *[See exhibit 5]*

- **Spotlight Speaker Series: Rob Baiocco** – November 2019 – “No Other Business I'd Rather Be In: A Life-Long Love Affair With Advertising From Buffalo to NYC” [\[See exhibit 6\]](#)
- **Adsecutive Panel** – October 2019 – A new event featuring local advertising executives answering questions and offering advice to audience members. [\[See exhibit 7\]](#)
- **Skillshop: How to Plan a Fire (Not FYRE) Festival** – March 2019 – A high-level look at music festival planning, branding, video production, as well as what it takes to create authentic experiences, manage crazy deadlines, and understand audiences. [\[See exhibit 8\]](#)
- **Skillshop: Influencing the Influencer** – April 2019 – A guide to finding and working with influencers. [\[See exhibit 9\]](#)
- **Skillshop: Content Strategy** – October 2019 – How to plan for content creation.
- **Skillshop: Design Tips for Personalized Marketing Campaigns** – February 2020 – Tips and tricks to get the most out of print materials, as well as information on proper document setup. [\[See exhibit 10\]](#)

Goal: Continue to increase member value through niche skillshops and out-of-town speakers.

Tactics: We provide education to professionals in our community via the following:

- **Planning** – A committee focused on programming meets monthly to discuss new event ideas, and then presents plans to the board at monthly board meetings.
- **Analysis** – After events, we always discuss the positives and negatives of the event along with member feedback we received. This review helps us determine areas of improvement and generate new ideas.
- **Events** – The events listed above create a forum that provides value and interest to all advertising professionals, from agencies to in-house marketing departments. We not only provide professional development opportunities to our members, but we also aim to educate those outside the industry.
- **Social Media** – For those who follow our social media platforms, they are informed of upcoming events and can view recaps of events they may have missed. This engagement allows for better communication and an effective way for us to connect with those interested in staying informed. [\[See exhibit 11\]](#)
- **Self-Promotion** – As a club, we strive to build awareness and fully communicate the resources available to members and non-members. We promote ourselves so that we can gain members, connect followers

with other professionals, and continue to finance bringing in experts in their fields who can better educate our local advertising community. [\[See exhibit 12\]](#)

Results: In total, 321 people – primarily members – attended our professional education events this year. This participation level is on par with attendance numbers in years past. [\[See exhibit 13\]](#)

Advertising Education for Students

While we encourage our students to attend any of our events, we also have events that are specifically targeted towards benefiting and educating our local students who are interested in advertising. Building on the success of last year's decision, we continued to offer free tickets to all student events for student members. Student events are focused either on providing scholarship offerings or connecting students with professionals, giving students the opportunity to network with people already in the industry and learn from those experts. Over the past year, these events have included:

- **Portfolio Review** – This day-long event gives students the opportunity to talk through their portfolio and consult with successful local creative experts on how to improve their work. The three junior-year students with the best portfolios at the event win scholarships from our club. [\[See exhibit 14\]](#)
- **Big Tip-Off** – This event raises money that goes directly to our student scholarship fund. One of our more popular events, it raised a record-setting \$5,000 this year. [\[See exhibit 15\]](#)
- **Buffalo Prep Student Day** – In partnership with Buffalo Prep, this day-long event exposes high schoolers to career possibilities in the world of advertising. [\[See exhibit 1\]](#)
- **Portfolio Seminar** – Local creatives hold a Q&A panel to teach students what it takes to build a portfolio and stand out amongst the competition when applying for jobs. [\[See exhibit 16\]](#)
- **Brand Hack** – This year, we held our fifth installment of this now annual event that allows students a hands-on opportunity to create their own brand while receiving guidance from creative professionals. Students are divided into teams captained by a professional. Together, they work for four-and-a-half hours to compete and create a branded look for a non-profit company. This year's benefactor was Family Promise of Western New York, an emergency shelter for homeless families. [\[See exhibit 17\]](#)

- **Meet Your Future Agency Tour** – In one afternoon, students were guided to several of our corporate member agencies, all located downtown on Main Street, for 30-minute tours and talks on job descriptions, internship information, and a Q&A session. *[See exhibit 18]*

Goal: Increase student involvement in AAF Buffalo.

Tactics: Accomplishing these goals was possible based on the following:

- **Events** – The above events provide the chance for students to connect and network with local professionals while gaining knowledge that will help them start their careers.
- **Scholarships** – We provide scholarship opportunities to encourage studying advertising.
- **Don Nichols Competition** – Our 21st annual design competition, this offering welcomes students to compete, entering a creative piece (in any medium they choose) based on the designated theme. The top three students are awarded scholarships. *[See exhibit 19]*
- **Social Media** – Through these channels, we can keep students updated in real time about our events and how we can support them in their education and future career. *[See exhibit 20]*

Results: In total, 276 students – primarily members – attended our student education events this year. This level of participation is on par with attendance numbers in years past. *[See exhibit 21]*

Government Relations Initiative Highlights

Ad Week Proclamations from City and County

AAF Buffalo provides programs for both professionals and students in the local advertising industry, but individuals who are not part of that community likely do not know much about our organization, as is often the case with government leadership as well. Each year in the fall, we hold Advertising Week, featuring events for students and professionals in an effort to provide professional development and networking and to celebrate our great industry. The last few years, this week of events has presented a prime opportunity to contact the mayor's and county executive's offices and strengthen the relationship between AAF Buffalo and local government leadership.

Goal: Raise awareness of AAF Buffalo among City of Buffalo and Erie County leadership.

Tactics: Leveraging our PR contacts from board members, we reached out to Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown's staff, as well as Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz's office, to share our plans for Advertising Week and seek a proclamation that October 7–11, 2019 is Advertising Week in Buffalo.

Results: The mayor thanked us for our continued efforts and issued us a proclamation for the fourth year in a row. The county executive also congratulated us on our local community work and issued us a proclamation for the second year in a row. *[See exhibits 22 & 23]*

American Advertising Awards Initiative Highlights

Preview Night – ADDYs Underground

Goal: Showcase the work submitted to the annual awards show.

Execution: We offered an early-bird ticket option for our awards show that included free admission to Preview Night. This discount was intended to incentivize people to buy tickets for both events as a way to maximize the ticket value for our supporters.

Results: This year's Preview Night was attended by 173 people, which was on par with last year's mark of 175. The attendance number alone speaks volumes about the success of the event. We continue to set new year-over-year chapter records, and Preview Night delivers a great value to many attendees, most notably those given a chance to have their work seen by even more eyes within the industry. Feedback was very positive, as this event is beloved, and we've managed to increase its profitability through a strong relationship with the venue, Big Ditch Brewing Company. *[See exhibit 24]*

American Advertising Awards – ADDYs Underground

Event Details: The local American Advertising Awards is the industry's largest creative competition in our area. The show's theme for this year: "Speakeasy 2020."

Execution: This year's show was held at Town Ballroom – a local concert venue in downtown Buffalo with the ability to hold 500+ people. The show format was revamped this year to give guests the feel of exploring different

rooms within a 1920s speakeasy. One area showed the winner work on a looping video reel, while another area featured cashless casino tables for people to play. For our biggest awards of the night, such as Best In Show, everyone was brought together in the main room for a 30-minute presentation. This year's awards show was attended by 438 people, surpassing last year's mark of 420 and making it our most-attended American Advertising Awards for the third year in a row.

Results: The American Advertising Awards continues to be our most successful event. As with Preview Night, we continue to set new year-over-year chapter records. The show offers our members, students, and others in our community immense value. Feedback from this year indicates that people enjoyed the new format and found they were able to chat with more people than ever while still appreciating the work and watching the special award speeches. *[See exhibits 25]*

Exhibit 1 – Buffalo Prep Student Engagement Day



Exhibit 2a – Keni Thacker with Attendees of His Speech and Presenting



Exhibit 2b – 2019 AAF Buffalo Ad Week Survey Responses on Keni's Speech

I think he definitely brought up some great, relevant points that a lot of people in business in general just don't think about (or don't want to think about because it makes us uncomfortable). I liked that it wasn't the standard "this is how I came up in the industry, this is the state of advertising as we know it" talk that a lot of speakers can give, it was much more thought provoking than that.

1 response

Keni was great and I think is the epitome of what we set out to accomplish with the Spotlight Speaker Series - an outside voice with experience who is able to speak to an important conversation in the industry. More people like Keni with a story and experience please!

1 response

Exhibit 3 – CommUNITY Award Call for Entries and Winner Show Book Page



Exhibit 4 – Signature Speaker: David Beebe Recap Blog

Brands using storytelling to bolster their market presence and/or customer loyalty may seem like a cliché, but the reality is that most brands aren't producing true storytelling and are coming up short, leaving them with little results to show for it.

David Beebe has been developing meaningful stories and consumer engagement pieces for some of the world's top brands, including Marriott. In his talk, at AAF Buffalo's new Signature Speaker event, David dove into the history of brand storytelling and some examples from the work he's done.

Throughout history, stories of company growth tactics and customer participation have driven some of the most successful brands to the top of their respective industries. Michelin created the Michelin Star rating system that the culinary industry lives and dies by today. Michelin stars have also, in turn, grown local businesses worldwide. Guinness started recording amazing human feats in a book, that in itself became a business in the line of being the ultimate authority for impartial validation of amazing accomplishments. Yet another worldwide phenomenon.



To make things even more unpredictable, the customers themselves have changed. No longer are they all drawn to a limited number of exposure pieces for storytelling and advertising (newspaper, TV, and radio). They now have access to tens of screens each day and have thousands of messages and stories delivered to them daily. How does a brand stand out in that world? Not through a half-hearted, underfunded digital video piece. Thought, quality, and an impactful story are all critical to the creation of brand storytelling that delivers ROI.

Today, with the ability for customers to record and publish their own content on social media, brands can choose to tap into those contributions or ignore them. Customer ratings, Instagram photos, story videos are all real time customer stories that are published into the wild without the constraints of brand identity, voice and tone, or values driven messaging. The customer holds the honest truth and brands can shape that experience, but not script it.

Tapping into real-time customer interactions can make or break a brand. Ignoring public feedback will allow that feedback to overshadow a brand's strategic messaging with the grassroots honest truth. If those messages aren't aligned, you're dead in the water. Some companies, like Marriott, have setup full departments of digital response teams to address and control the live customer interactions online.

Stories can come from the brand itself or the audiences it serves. The only question is, what is a brand doing to shape those stories to meet its own expectations of quality and customer experience? Brands need to be serious about these customer interactions and understand that the customer controls much of the narrative, so embracing their involvement is the key to success and the real return on investment.

Exhibit 5 – Spotlight Speaker Series: Keni Thacker Recap Blog

To help us rethink our approach to culture, Keni Thacker joined us on Thursday, October 10 to be our first presenter in this year's Spotlight Speaker Series.

Taking a page from a Tina Turner classic, Keni began his talk by asking attendees, "What's culture got to do with it?" The answer: everything. Culture has everything to do with diversity and inclusion. From there, Keni illustrated what diversity, culture, and inclusion mean for our industry and what we can do to be better.



The Intersectionality of Diversity, Culture, and Inclusion

He asserted that diversity is one of our biggest dilemmas in advertising, with people of color sharing only 30% representation in our industry. To combat that, Keni suggest you assess your pipeline and consider new ways to recruit employees.

Next, he described culture as a balance of learning, caring, purpose, and enjoyment. Keni urged companies and agencies to show your people you care. Take an active part in their lives and get involved in what your employees are doing, inside and outside of work.

Lastly, Keni discussed inclusion and what we could be doing to make people feel that they are a part of our organization. He encourages us to partake in team building exercise and give people experience they'll never get anywhere else.

Food for Thought

To improve the advertising workspace, Keni recommended you think of diversity, culture, and inclusion as a constant, reflective process. Always look for ways to evolve and reexamine what you could do better. He also suggested that decision-makers take a stand. If you have a seat at the table, use your influence to include more voices and keep your company progressing.

Keni concluded his talk with an engaging Q&A session that left the audience with plenty of ways to consider how culture makes an impact.

Exhibit 6 – Spotlight Speaker Series: Rob Baiocco Recap Blog

What do you get when you combine a Buffalo lunch pail work ethic with global advertising aspirations? It's hard to imagine it looking like anything other than Rob Baiocco.

Born and raised right here in WNY, Rob returned to his roots last Tuesday night to speak to the Buffalo advertising community on why what we do is unlike any other profession. Plus, he shared just how cool some industry experiences of his have been.



A life-long love affair with advertising

Throughout his hour-long conversation that ended with a lengthy Q&A session, Rob presented his top 12 reasons he can't get enough of advertising, ranging from the luxurious – perks of traveling around the globe to shoot for hundreds of clients, to the practical – clients will pay you to do this shit.

He showed dozens of work samples, all he was majorly involved in, including Six Flags, Captain Morgan and, in true Buffalo fashion, Crown Royal. Many of the pieces were from several years and even a decade ago, and still garnered laughs from the audience.

Once (or twice) in a lifetime

More than three decades in an industry leads to some pretty incredible opportunities, and Rob isn't short on them. He weaved his way in detailing his 20+ years at global phenom-agency, Grey, as well as his last 6 owning his own, The BAM Connection, in Dumbo Brooklyn.

In his time at both, Rob was fortunate enough to work on not one, but two, Super Bowl spots. The first coming at Grey for client E*Trade, which showcased the infamous talking baby brand icon. The second, just this year, was for client [yellow tail] and helped to strengthen their Tastes Like Happy campaign.

Special thanks to Rob for making the time to speak to the full house at Big Ditch, and for never forgetting his Buffalo blood as he's enjoyed massive success over the last 30 years!

Exhibit 7 – Adsecutive Panel Recap Blog

Last night, we hosted a panel event at Shea's Smith Theatre comprised of some of the top names in the Buffalo advertising industry.

The panel included:

Jim Hettich, CEO, Crowley Webb

Zach Schneider, partner, Fifteen

Patrick Finan, co-founder and principal, Block Club

Carolyn Human, Carolyn Human Communications

Bill Patterson, VP/executive creative director, Gelia

Christine Dougherty, senior vice president and managing director, Mower



The panel answered audience questions on a wide range of questions.

On the RFP process

Many on the panel agreed on being picky when responding to RFPs, not just to manage staff time, but also to be realistic about what a future with that client would look like.

On retaining talent

Each panelist discussed maintaining a work/life balance for employees to increase happiness. They each prioritized transparency throughout the agency, to further empower employees. Some ideas like flexible scheduling, dogs in the office, and even an abroad residency program were discussed.

On making mistakes

Misspellllllings, tpyos, and human resource mistakes colored the past of each participant. The main emphasis was to learn from mistakes. Advertising and creative endeavors are inherently risky. Mistakes happen. Though inevitable, the key is to not repeat mistakes.

Ad Week isn't over! We've got more events, including our Spotlight Speaker Series on Thursday.

Exhibit 8 – Skillshop: How to Plan a Fire (Not FYRE) Festival Recap Blog

Last week, the Ad Club hit the Southtowns with a visit to 42North Brewery, where we got to chat about branding and music festivals with Jennifer Brazill (Borderland Festival Producer) and John Cimperman (EVP, Match Marketing, 42North Brewery Owner, and Borderland Festival Producer).

The trip was well worth it—not just because of the delicious beer (thanks 42North!) and the snacks that our ravenous post-work bellies enjoyed—but because it ended up being a great discussion about all the stuff us ad geeks love to nerd out on. We chatted music festival planning, branding, video production, what it takes to create authentic experiences, managing crazy deadlines, and understanding audiences, to name a few. Creatives and pros chimed in from all walks of career, which allowed for an open-ended conversation with some great challenges and questions.



Sometimes it's not the big event with the famous speaker that energizes you to get back to the grind, but a meet up with your friends and colleagues over a topic, a beer, and a fun location. This event was quite invigorating and certainly has us craving the summer and festival season. See you at Borderland!

Exhibit 9 – Skillshop: Influencing the Influencer Recap Blog

Last month, AAF Buffalo hosted a members-only skillshop on the value of influencer outreach.

Hosted at Crowley Webb's first-floor bar, Local 86, PR veterans Andrea Gallagher and Katie Briggs took a dive into the hottest new marketing trend, using real-world examples and exclusive insights from the influencers themselves.

Some notable tips and tricks:

- An influencer is anyone who can change (or influence) thinking or behavior.
- Influencer marketing focuses communication efforts on key individuals who can influence consumers' thinking or behavior.
- Influencers can be traditional media, subject matter experts, celebrities, bloggers, and social media users and advocates.
- Influencer outreach can help your organization with brand awareness, expand social reach, increase sales, as well as share education, insights, and content.
- Influence isn't just having a lot of followers—it's driven by expertise and credibility.

Stay tuned for more information on our next skillshop, coming for you during Ad Week 2019 (October 7-10).

Get to know the leaders of the Spring Skillshop.

Andrea Gallagher is the Public Relations Director at Crowley Webb, bringing 10 years of public relations and corporate communications experience to the role. Before joining the Crowley team, Andrea most recently served as the Director of Marketing & Public Relations at the Buffalo Museum of Science, and was previously an account director at global PR firm, Weber Shandwick, leading integrated multi-disciplinary campaigns for top consumer lifestyle and technology brands.

Katie Briggs is a public relations professional with experience in developing PR programs for local to global companies across diverse industries. In a new role at Praxis—Crowley Webb's patient recruitment division—Katie is charged with growing its advocacy outreach capabilities through working with advocacy groups, patients, and physicians to generate awareness for clinical research studies.

Exhibit 10 – Skillshop: Design Tips for Personalized Marketing Campaigns Recap Blog

At the end of January, AAF Buffalo & Compu-Mail teamed up to host a skillshop on Design Tips for Personalized Marketing Campaigns.

Compu-Mail hosted the event at their headquarters in Grand Island. It was led by a team of experts, including Michael Oliver, National Sales Representative, Allison Jensen, Marketing Manager, and Anthony Marchioni, Chief Technology Officer.

The event was kicked off with a behind the scenes tour that showed us the inner workings of Compu-Mail and direct marketing. Attendees were able to see multiple printers in action and projects being completed right in front of them.



Once we completed the tour we regrouped over pizza & wings from Brick Oven Pizza to begin a presentation from Michael & Allison. The discussion was hitting on points from general direct marketing tips all the way down formatting for specific pieces.

A few design tips direct from the Compu-Mail team:

- Direct mail and print will help you create a strong and memorable brand presence.
- The 40/40/20 rule is important.
- Personalization can increase response rates by up to 135%.
- Know your audience.
- Testing and tracking are critical to campaign success.

Exhibit 11 – Professionals-Focused Social Media Examples



Exhibit 12 – Club Self-Promotion



Become a Direct Marketing Pro

Our first Skillshop for 2020 will turn you into a direct marketing pro. We're ringing in the new year with a presentation from Compu-Mail to learn more about direct marketing campaigns. Discover the benefits of personalization, industry-specific formatting techniques, and more.

Join us at 5:45 p.m. on **January 28** at **Compu-Mail** for **Design Tips for Direct Marketing** and give yourself a competitive edge when it comes to marketing strategy. This is a members-only event you will not want to miss!

[Get Your Ticket](#)

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THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF



We were ecstatic to see the great local work honored in the [2018 American Advertising Awards Student Division](#) competition. We saw winners from **Buffalo State College**, **Canisius College**, **Daemen College**, **St. Bonaventure University**, and **Villa Maria College** committed to meeting their future head-on but we still have plenty of opportunities for students to get on their career path.



Six Agencies. One Day.

Get a guided, behind-the-scenes tour of some of the top agencies in town. Learn about the work they create, the space they do it in, and meet some of the geniuses behind the magic. This event is open to college students with an interest in advertising, marketing, and communications.

AAF Buffalo members: FREE | Non-Members: \$5

[Register for the agency tour >>](#)



Portfolio Review 2018

Agency art directors, academic professors, successful freelancers and many other seasoned pros will be ready to review your portfolio and prepare you for success in your field. Structured like speed networking with a lunch break between two sessions of timed intervals, every student is guaranteed feedback from every pro.

AAF Buffalo Members: FREE | Non-Members: \$15

[Register for Portfolio Review >>](#)

Exhibit 13 – Professionals Education Event Numbers

Event	19/20 Attendance
Signature Speaker: David Beebe	59
Spotlight Speaker: Keni Thacker	63
Spotlight Speaker: Rob Baiocco	82
Adsecutive Panel	46
Skillshop: How to Plan a Fire (Not FYRE) Festival	21
Skillshop: Influencing the Influencer	20
Skillshop: Content Strategy	14
Skillshop: Design Tips for Personalized Marketing Campaigns	16
TOTAL	321

Exhibit 14 – Portfolio Review Recap Blog

On Saturday, April 13, students and advertising professionals gathered at Villa Maria College for the 2019 Portfolio Review. As Part II of the AAF Buffalo Portfolio Series, this event focused on putting what students learned from Part I, the Portfolio Seminar, into practice.

Senior, junior, and sophomore students from Villa Maria College, Fredonia, Buffalo State College, and Daemen College brought their portfolios to Buffalo area pros for critique and conversation in a speed-networking format.



This event style gave students the opportunity to discuss their work and hear valuable feedback from a mix of creative directors, art directors, writers, and freelancers. In turn, the pros offered guidance on how students could improve their portfolio and answered any questions from students about getting a job following graduation.

In addition to useful feedback, Portfolio Review gives students a chance to practice their interviewing skills and meet with a wide network of agencies and companies around town to get their name out there and inquire about internships or future opportunities.

Students presented their work from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with a break for lunch. At the end of the review, we asked our professionals to vote on the best portfolio, in their expert opinion, and on who would be the most deserving recipients of our three scholarships.

The Winners

Congratulations to these three students, who not only took home professional validation, but also an AAF Buffalo scholarship:

1st Place: Andrea LoPiccolo – Buffalo State College

2nd Place: Philip Miller – Buffalo State College

3rd Place: Lindsay Neilson – Villa Maria College

And a special thank you to our professionals who gave up their Saturday morning for us.

Exhibit 15 – The Big Tip-Off Recap Blog

The Big Tip-Off remains in tippity top shape.

Last week, we hosted our 9th annual “celebrity” bartending event, The Big Tip-Off. This popular event raised more than \$5,000 for the AAF Buffalo Scholarship Fund, which supports the local advertising community by awarding local high school and college students annually.



The event featured several of Western New York’s advertising bigwigs behind the bar at Soho, competing against each other to see who could bring in the most tips. A record 205 advertising professionals attended and contributed tips to the bartenders. A special thank you to our celeb mixologists:

- Tom Burtless (Mr. Smith)
- Joe Russell (Crowley Webb)
- Christopher D’Amato and Molly Christman (Block Club)
- Allie Friedman (Mower)
- Adam Bauer (FARM)
- Marilynn Millitello (The Martin Group)
- Jess Kobis (Luminus)
- Shannon Silva (dpost)
- Mike Christensen (Fifteen)
- Todd Harmon (Quinlan)

The Buffalo News Smiles photographer was kind enough to stop by and capture the event.

Shout out to Crowley Webb, the big winners of the night, raking in the most tips!

See you all next year, folks!

Exhibit 16 – Portfolio Seminar Recap Blog

RECAP: PORTFOLIO SERIES PART 1

Portfolio Series Part 1: Pro Panel Success. Several students and local pros spent their Saturday morning chatting about design, careers, and portfolio building on October 26th, 2019.

The annual AAF Pro Panel featured a diverse group of panelists this year, where they shared their stories and dropped their knowledge from both a student and professional perspective.

Tim Staszak, veteran designer at Block Club shared some of the awesome branding work he's done during his career for local greats such as Big Ditch and Swan Street Diner. He shared a ton of practical advice, including knowing how to build a mechanical file (Not sure what that is? Ask your professor or design mentor to teach you).

Holly Norris, designer at White Bicycle showed us all to embrace our paths and oddities, because they make for interesting skills and memorable interviews. Fun Fact: Holly started her career as an obituary proofreader, and noted how the weird job made a mark with interviewers, and knowing how to proofread has made her a better designer. If you see her out in the wild, ask to see the portfolio book she designed to get the job she landed; it's glorious.

We were thrilled to see a fully digital portfolio shared by 2019 portfolio review scholarship winner, Andrea LoPiccolo Her previous motion design degree shows in the beautifully designed motion page on her website. She shared all kinds of tips and thoughts for how students might land an internship, job, or win the portfolio review. And shameless pat on our back: she said that AAF changed her life because of the connections she has made. Just sayin'... [get your student membership here.](#)

Many thanks to all who attended, it was a morning well-spent and we are grateful for the panel who took the time to share insights, as well as the students who committed their morning to furthering their design skills.



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BRANDHACK 2020: FAMILY PROMISE OF WESTERN NEW YORK

The fifth installment of our BrandHack event featured a local non-profit looking for a new postcard, brochure, and social media campaign to generate awareness for their organization. Family promise of Western New York is an emergency shelter for homeless families. They help families experiencing homeless stay together during tough times. This event was hosted at Daemen College in Amherst, New York.

Five teams of students from Daemen College, Buffalo State College, Villa Mariam and Hilbert College were tasked with creating these final deliverables. Leading the teams were seasoned professionals from the area – Samantha Lonczak from Fifteen, Caroline Jette from Delaware North, Andrea LoPiccolo from Fifteen, Holly Norris from White Bicycle, and Cody Andrees from the martin group. These designers and art directors provided guidance and advice for the teams from brainstorming and development through execution.



The format remained the same from 2019. Teams had five hours to organize and create their ideas before pitching them to our two judges, as well as the representatives from Family Promise of Western New York.

Our professional judge for this year's event, President and CEO of Luminis Tim Bouchard, offered his expertise throughout the event, and made sure the teams were on track and accomplishing what they had to on the tight deadline. While representing Family Promise of Western New York, Annalyse Paulsen provided the students with valuable information as to the various needs of FPWNY, as well as their process for working with various individuals.

Each team beat the clock and produced some well-executed, unique work along the way. Congrats to all the students and captains for producing another great event!



WINNER: Hilbert College captained by Holly Norris
Check out the work!

[← RECAP: PREVIEW NIGHT](#)

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Exhibit 18 – Fall Agency Tour Recap Blog

FALL STUDENT AGENCY TOUR

On September 28, 2019, AAF Buffalo hosted its fall agency tour. Nearly 25 college students joined us as we strolled up Main Street visiting some of the top advertising agencies in the heart of downtown Buffalo.

Students learned about how agency departments work together to create high-impact campaigns, agency processes, and they picked the brains of some of Buffalo's top talent. Not to mention, the weather couldn't be better.

The first stop was Crowley Webb led by Matt Lowe. Matt gave students a tour of Crowley's newly renovated office space, a walk-through of their departments, and provided students with insight on getting started in the advertising industry.

From Crowley Webb, this group of students made the trip across Main Street to Luminus. Tim Bouchard, former AAF Buffalo President, gave students a tour of the Luminus office. This was followed by an overview of the company's history, their process for working with clients, and ended with showcasing a recent multifaceted campaign.

After Luminus came Mower. Sarah Neundorfer, Creative Director at Mower, led students on a tour through their beautiful office on the 13th floor with some great views of downtown Buffalo. Sarah provided insight into how their agency works with clients and between multiple Mower offices. Students asked questions on various aspects of advertising.

Afterwards, students made their way to The Martin Group. This tour, led by Caitlin Higman, allowed students to see the various areas of Martin's historic office building. As students ventured through three floors of historic greatness, they were able to see how different departments in their agency worked together to complete client work.



Then, the short walk was made to dPost. Andy Donovan and Shannon Silva took students through dPost and dStudio. While viewing dPost, students had the chance to see the final touches being added to a 3D video for a client. In dStudio, students had the chance to see what a professional video production is made of and how various set pieces can be created within their space.



The tour concluded at Block Club, which is just a stone's throw away from dPost. Brian, co-founder of Block Club, talked about how the agency and Oxford Pennant were started and a bit of their journey to where they are today. Students toured through both offices and it ended with some Q&A at the Oxford Pennant storefront.

The students were happy to participate in this event. They gained a lot of knowledge (and connections) from within the agencies and some even had the opportunity to turn in some resumes for future opportunities!

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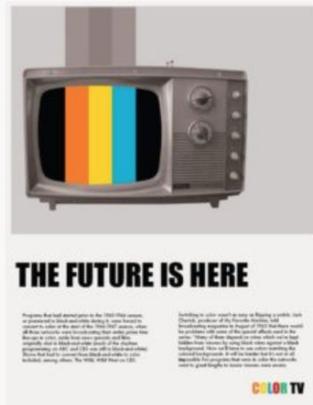
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Exhibit 19 – 2019 Don Nichols Scholarship Winners

\$1,000 First Prize: Emily Kaczynski – Villa Maria College



\$500 Second Prize: Michael Csizmadia – Villa Maria College



\$300 Third Prize: Ana Echeverria – Villa Maria College

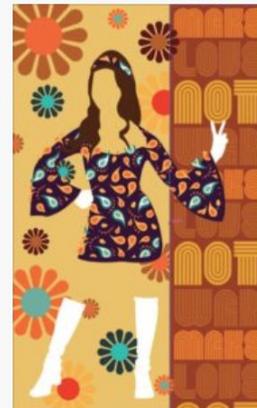


Exhibit 20 – Student-Focused Social Media



Exhibit 21 – Student Education Event Numbers

Event	19/20 Attendance
Portfolio Review	25
Big Tip-Off	173
Buffalo Prep Student Day	15
Portfolio Seminar	16
BrandHack	21
Meet Your Future Agency Tour	26
TOTAL	276

Exhibit 22 – Advertising Week Mayoral Proclamation



Exhibit 23 – Advertising Week County Proclamation



Exhibit 24 – Preview Night Promotion and Event Stills



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👤👤👤 Liked by theworkingdan and 25 others

aaf_buffalo Want to get an inside look at this year's ADDYs contenders? Preview Night will take place on February 12 at 5:30 p.m. at Big Ditch... more

January 22



Exhibit 25 – American Advertising Awards Promotion and Event Stills

PUT ON YOUR DRINKING SHOES
SPEAKEASY 2020

KNOCK TWICE, WHISTLE ONCE.
SPEAKEASY 2020

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February 28

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February 20

