

## **AAF Tuscaloosa // Cornerstone Events 2021-2022**

### **INTRODUCTION**

American Advertising Federation of Tuscaloosa's (AAFT) Cornerstone Events & Initiatives were developed and implemented to further the club's mission to protect and promote the advertising industry in the West Alabama area. We believe that our diverse population of professionals, students, and community members are directly impacted by our efforts in advertising education, diversity and multiculturalism, government relations, and American Advertising Awards.

### **ADVERTISING EDUCATION**

**Details:** Tuscaloosa is home to The University of Alabama (UA), Shelton State Community College, and Stillman College. This affords AAFT the unique opportunity to directly impact the educational experience of students pursuing degrees in advertising in addition to educating the local community about the industry.

#### **Goals:**

- Provide professional development opportunities for area college students.
- Provide financial support to area college students.
- Utilize club programming and initiatives as educational opportunities for both club members and the community.

#### **Results:**

- *National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC):* The UA Ad Team, led by Jay Waters, competed in the 2021 National Student Advertising Competition. Students worked virtually for the entire competition due to COVID-19. Despite that, students surveyed more than 1,000 college students from all 50 states and produced a campaign featuring a faux new movie premier for Tinder, the client, in 2021. The District 7 NSAC competition was held via Zoom, and the team placed fourth at the district level – the 32nd time the UA Ad Team has placed in the top four at the district.

- *Awards:* UA students did well during awards season in 2021, winning two awards of merit from The One Club's Young Ones competition in New York. In the student division of AAF's American Advertising Awards, UA students earned 8 Silver, 2 Gold, 3 Judge's Choice, 1 Mosaic Award, and Student Best of Show at the local level, 3 Silver at the district level, and 1 Silver at the national level of the American Advertising Awards. They also had multiple campaigns published by Ads Of The World, part of the Clio network: [https://www.adsoftheworld.com/taxonomy/agency/the\\_university\\_of\\_alabama](https://www.adsoftheworld.com/taxonomy/agency/the_university_of_alabama).
- *Public Portfolio Reviews:* At the end of the 2021 fall semester, advanced portfolio students in the Minerva portfolio program at The University of Alabama had their work critiqued by the following top industry professionals:

**Brian Button**

Senior Creative Lead, DoorDash, Nashville

**Nelle Thomas**

Senior Copywriter, Chemistry, Atlanta

**Emeline Earman**

Art Director, Translation, New York

**Georgia Murphey**

Copywriter, BBDO, New York

**Mary Buzbee**

Copywriter, Barkley, Kansas City

**Sydney Pellegrini**

Creative, Mother, New York

**Walker Bowen**

Copywriter, 22squared, Tampa

**Elizabeth Swartz**

Copywriter, adam&eveDDB, New York

**MK Holladay**

Copywriter, Translation, New York

**Nessa Suarez**

Copywriter, 22squared, Atlanta

**Charlotte Frank**

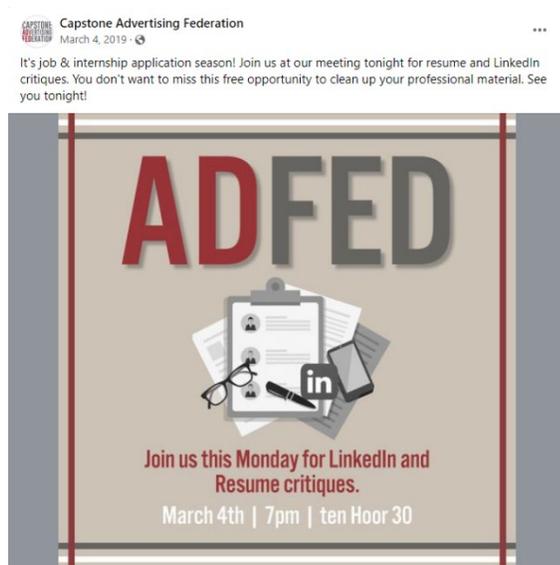
Art Director, adam&eveDDB, New York

**Katie Greco**

Art Director, 22squared, Atlanta

- *Capstone AdFed*: In response to member interest, Senior Instructor and AAFT Board Member Mike Little organized a meeting with Samantha Gale, PR Manager of Cartier, to give advice on how to break into the communication side of the fashion industry. The meeting was cross sponsored by Capstone AdFed, UA PRSSA, and UA PRCA. The club also hosted members of the Lewis Agency and ran a professional development workshop. Capstone AdFed officer Aliyah Gordon won a place in the 4A's Multicultural Advertising Intern Program and has been placed with Digitas. Member Ann Grace Singleton was named as the recipient of the Bruce Roche Alabama Advertising Education Foundation Scholarship.
- An officer of our club presented to the Capstone AdFed at the start of each semester an overview about AAF, told them about the benefits of staying involved as a professional, reviewed the requirements for the American Advertising Award and revealed the AAFT Brand Aid public service initiative as a way for them to enhance their portfolios.

### Exhibits 1 // Advertising Education



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#### AAFT PUBLIC SERVICE PROJECTS



Connecting Talent with Nonprofits Needing Branding/Design/Communication Help on a Small/Limited Project Basis

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#### AAFT PUBLIC SERVICE PROJECTS



Organization Requesting Aid:  
CAPS (Child Abuse Prevention Services)  
CSP (Community Service Programs of West Alabama/Meals on Wheels)  
Jesus Way Shelters  
Love, Inc.  
SAFE Center  
Sons of the American Revolution  
TES (Temporary Emergency Services)  
West Alabama Food Bank  
YMCA Barnes Branch

## DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURALISM

**Details:** We have someone on the board this year passionate about making DE&I recruiting a priority.

The officer is new to AAFT and has come in with a bang extending her relationships in other organization where she is a member to benefit our club.

### Strategy/Goals:

- Source speakers for diversity programming
- Build lasting relationships in the following areas with the underlying goal of cultivating potential and new members:
  - UA's Committee on Equal Opportunity
  - UA's Latino/A/X Community
  - UA's Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
  - Surrounding Latino/A/X Communities
  - Tuscaloosa's Small Businesses

### Results:

We were stoked to welcome, through our DE&I officer's connections, Lapedra Tolson, Founder of Friends of the City in NYC, to speak to the club about considerations when communicating with minority audiences.

The AAFT officer came into this position later in the term and has been actively seeking members through her relationships in the above listed groups. While we haven't seen success yet, we believe by following up and continuing to make contacts we will increase our chapter diversity next year.

We were also looking forward to hearing from Dr. Robin Boylorn, APR, host of “Crunk Culture,” as she presents a workshop on communicating to diverse audiences during an upcoming joint conference with our local PRCA chapter.

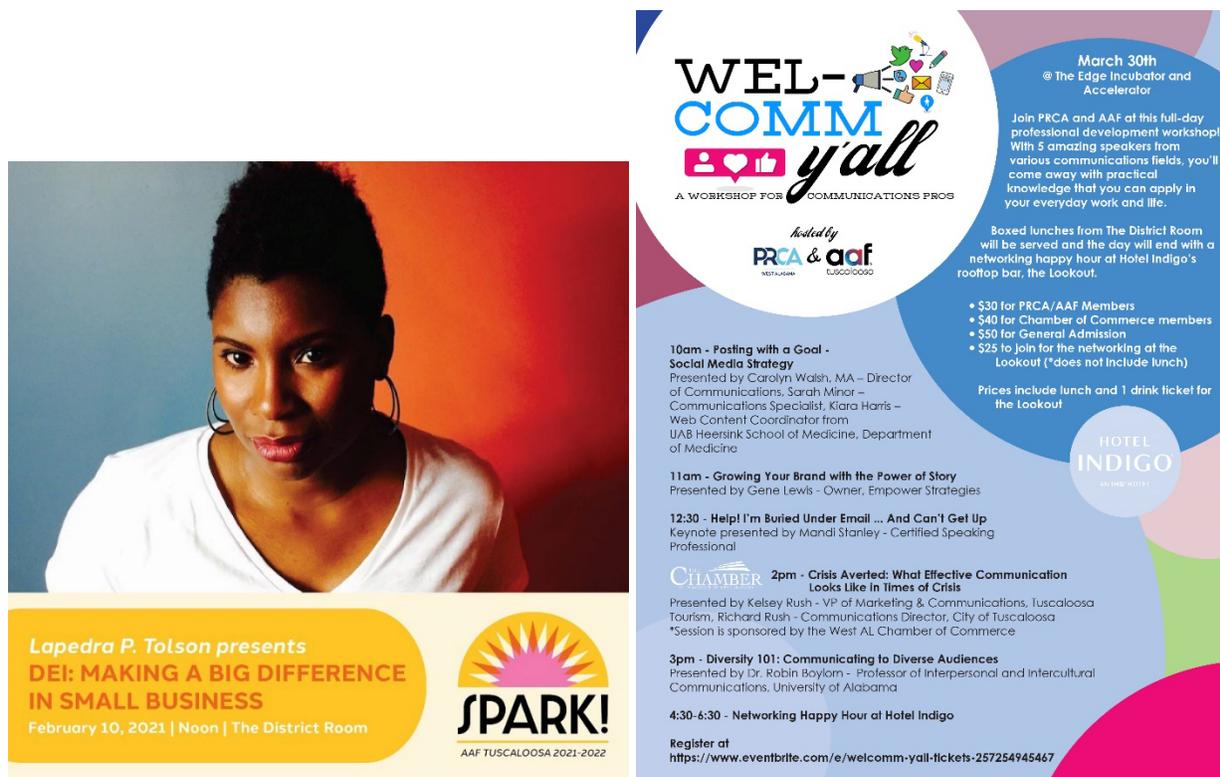
## **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

**Details:** We recruited an award-winning communications professional for the City of Tuscaloosa to become an AAFT member and serve on the board of directors in the previously vacant role of Government Relations this year. He was tasked with paying attention to any legislation on a local and state level that could affect our advertising, communications, and related industries/roles.

**Strategy:** Our Government Relations officer was to review upcoming legislation for anything that may influence member-related industries. Upon finding any legislation/material for review, he would inform the AAFT board. The officer would also look for engaging speakers or programming that related to strengthening government relations.

**Results:** While no legislation was tagged for review this year, we secured two speakers with government-related topics for our monthly meetings. The above-mentioned DE&I speaker, Lapedra Tolson, spoke directly to the needs/opportunities of including minorities in government communications strategies. She and her team work with government agencies to build websites and write content that is more inclusive. We have also secured the Communication Directors for the City of Tuscaloosa and Tuscaloosa Tourism and Sports to teach a workshop on Crisis Communication for a joint conference with our local PRCA chapter.

## Exhibits 2 // DE&I Speaker and Government Relations



**WEL-COMM y'all**  
A WORKSHOP FOR COMMUNICATIONS PROS

Hosted by  
**PRCA & aaf**  
TUSCALOOSA

March 30th  
@ The Edge Incubator and Accelerator

Join PRCA and AAF at this full-day professional development workshop! With 5 amazing speakers from various communications fields, you'll come away with practical knowledge that you can apply in your everyday work and life.

Boxed lunches from The District Room will be served and the day will end with a networking happy hour at Hotel Indigo's rooftop bar, the Lookout.

- \$30 for PRCA/AAF Members
- \$40 for Chamber of Commerce members
- \$50 for General Admission
- \$25 to join for the networking at the Lookout (\*does not include lunch)

Prices include lunch and 1 drink ticket for the Lookout

**HOTEL INDIGO**  
TUSCALOOSA

**10am - Posting with a Goal - Social Media Strategy**  
Presented by Carolyn Walsh, MA – Director of Communications, Sarah Minor – Communications Specialist, Kiara Harris – Web Content Coordinator from UAB Heersink School of Medicine, Department of Medicine

**11am - Growing Your Brand with the Power of Story**  
Presented by Gene Lewis - Owner, Empower Strategies

**12:30 - Help! I'm Buried Under Email ... And Can't Get Up**  
Keynote presented by Mandi Stanley - Certified Speaking Professional

**CHAMBER 2pm - Crisis Averted: What Effective Communication Looks Like in Times of Crisis**  
Presented by Kelsey Rush - VP of Marketing & Communications, Tuscaloosa Tourism, Richard Rush - Communications Director, City of Tuscaloosa  
\*Session is sponsored by the West AL Chamber of Commerce

**3pm - Diversity 101: Communicating to Diverse Audiences**  
Presented by Dr. Robin Boylorn - Professor of Interpersonal and Intercultural Communications, University of Alabama

**4:30-6:30 - Networking Happy Hour at Hotel Indigo**

Register at  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/welcomm-yall-tickets-257254945467>

**Lapedra P. Tolson presents**  
**DEI: MAKING A BIG DIFFERENCE IN SMALL BUSINESS**  
February 10, 2021 | Noon | The District Room

**SPARK!**  
AAF TUSCALOOSA 2021-2022

## AMERICAN ADVERTISING AWARDS

**Details:** We knew this would be a rebuilding year for our American Advertising Awards. We did our due diligence the prior year, delivering SWAG bags and making our advertising agency and other entrants feel as special as we could for a virtual awards gala. We also had to reestablish relationships with area universities. As two in the market went virtual last year prior to the awards being announced, we had a big drop in student participation. We had hoped that, with the special attention paid to professionals the year before, along with our planning for an in-person gala this year, those numbers would be on an upswing.

**Strategy:** With this year's overall club theme of "spark," we discussed what we could do to spark the awards to success during our annual board retreat. We took into consideration the economic climate we

are in and the lingering uncertainty the pandemic has caused as we constructed our budget. We set a schedule, determined a theme, and divided the tasks into two subcommittees: competition (entrees, judging, awards) and gala (venue, winners' reel, script, catering, talent).

**Goals:**

1. Increase the overall number of entries
2. Rebuild university relations/increase student entries
3. Increase the prestige of the gala/give the event a boost in spirit
4. Advance efforts for retention and growth for future competitions

**Strategies:**

1. Get communication out early and often. We wanted the dates and info to be available at the earliest time and include that in our newsletter, email communication and social media. We knew increasing numbers would take personal contact, reaching out to past and potential entrants. We paired our committee members with people/departments they had relationships with to reach out directly to the contacts and suggest what they might enter.
2. While the University of Alabama participated last year, we had a severe drop in the number of entries from independent students and those from other area colleges and universities. The University of West Alabama dropped off a couple of years ago and hadn't been brought back into the fold. Due to more of a technicality than to timing, with the university sending students home for virtual classes, Mississippi State University (in our market due to proximity) did not enter last year. This year, we reached out to each of the instructors with general information about the student competition, but we also followed up and asked them what they would like incentive-wise to submit more student entries. UWA asked for a multiple-entry promo code. MSU asked to be able to offer their students tickets to the gala at a reduced cost. We customized these rates for each school to get them back on board.
3. Feedback from our previous gala events (with the exception of last year's virtual ceremony) has included comments like we need to be fancier, that venue needs to match the prestige of the

award, guests want to dress up for a night out, etc. (You get the picture.) We have often used venues that we could get at no cost to us, for trade, or within the University in order to save money...or, in most cases, make a little money. As the awards are not intended to be a fundraiser, this year we moved to a nicer location — The Tuscaloosa River Market — and upgraded the catering from BBQ to a nicer buffet. It was a Friday night event with a cocktail hour for people to mingle and take pictures. We set the fiscal expectation at break even.

4. For those perennial guests, we wined and dined them and showed them a good time during a professional awards show ceremony. Each year, our club awards up to four local special awards: Ad Person of the Year, Silver Medal, Dan Kilgo Community Service Award and the Bruce Roche Hall of Fame Award. We reached out to the recipients' family members, past and present club members with whom they shared a special connection, and industry-wide friends who would want to be a part of the celebration. For some of those contacts, the hope is to reengage them with the club or to get them to come to one of our events and experience it firsthand for the first time. We used the induction of Joel A. Mask, who is the namesake of the club's annual golf tournament and longtime Director of Student Media at the University of Alabama, to recruit the new Student Media director, who brought the department to the awards.

**Results:**

- 1.) Our overall entries grew from 95 to 147. This total is still not back to pre-pandemic numbers but heading in the right direction.
- 2.) Because of the direct interaction and follow-up with instructors, student entries more than doubled from 44 to 89 entries. The University of Alabama, Mississippi State University, and the University of West Alabama were all represented.
- 3.) Our 105 gala guests seemed pleased with the changes made to the gala. Feedback since the mid-February event has only been positive. The 105-headcount was higher than both the virtual event in 2021 and the previous in-person event in 2020. Table sponsorships continue to be popular among professional groups.

4.) We had a number of “expired” members to attend the awards gala especially for Joel A. Mask’s induction into our local Hall of Fame. Those who haven’t been engaged with the club recently were impressed with the vibrancy of the evening and the “spark” in the air. The awards gala experience will hopefully spark them into coming to future events and rejoining the club. The University of Alabama’s Department of Student Media’s purchase of a table this year is especially significant. We have reached out to them repeatedly over the past few years about membership and entering student publications in the American Advertising Awards with no luck. After the gala, the new director said, “I get it. We’ll be entering next year.” That’s exactly what we hoped!

### Exhibits 3 // American Advertising Awards

**AAF Tuscaloosa**  
Published by Amy Eifler Martin · January 6 · 🌐

🌟 It's time to THINK BIG and enter the 2022 American Advertising Awards 🌟 Deadline January 14. Submit entries here: <https://bit.ly/3ndN2QK>  
#aaf tuscaloosa #ADDY

**AMERICAN ADVERTISING AWARDS**  
**THINK BIG** 2022

179 People reached      8 Engagements      - Distribution score      **Boost post**

👍 You and 1 other      1 Share

RE: UWA Community Engagement Course

 Julie Mann  
To: Walters, Caleb

 Reply  Reply All  Forward  

Wed 11/17/2021 3:52 PM

Hey, Caleb!  
Long time, no see! Yes, I'm happy to see who would like some help in those areas.  
And good timing. The American Advertising Awards are open right now if you've had any great student work this year that could be entered (in any of the categories you listed). We can offer a promo discount if that helps your students!  
[https://enter.americanadvertisingawards.com/a/organizations/07-TUS/home?goal=0\\_e16836259c-d321072692-500666130&mc\\_cid=d321072692&mc\\_eid=b43a5bd5b4](https://enter.americanadvertisingawards.com/a/organizations/07-TUS/home?goal=0_e16836259c-d321072692-500666130&mc_cid=d321072692&mc_eid=b43a5bd5b4)

I'll be back in touch about the organizations!  
Best,  
Julie

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**From:** Walters, Caleb <[cwalters@uwa.edu](mailto:cwalters@uwa.edu)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 3:42 PM  
**To:** Julie Mann <[Julie@uwa.org](mailto:Julie@uwa.org)>  
**Subject:** UWA Community Engagement Course

RE: Checking In

 Julie Mann  
To: Walters, Caleb

 Reply

Also, just heard back there is a BOGO promo code set up in the system: **STADY22**. It will only allow a user to use it up to 10 times (so 20 entries).  
If you have any questions once you get in the system, just let me know.

AAF D7 Scholarships & AAA applause

 Julie Mann  
To: Mike Little; Sims, Tracy ([sims@apr.ua.edu](mailto:sims@apr.ua.edu)); Barry, Mark ([barry@apr.ua.edu](mailto:barry@apr.ua.edu)); Walters, Caleb; Cumberland, Jonathan; [cjipson@caad.msstate.edu](mailto:cjipson@caad.msstate.edu); [cspalmer@ua.edu](mailto:cspalmer@ua.edu); Henley, Teri  
 You forwarded this message on 2/1/2022 10:14 AM.

 Reply  Reply All  Forward  

Tue 2/1/2022 10:13 AM

Good morning, everyone!  
First, I wanted to tell you that the judges for our American Advertising Awards agreed this was by far the best student entries they have ever judged! The work was outstanding, and we sure appreciate you entering the competition. Award email announcements will be sent this week.  
Also, I wanted to make sure your students are aware of a few scholarship opportunities through AAF District 7: <https://www.aafdistrict7.com/awards/>  
There are also a couple of professional awards you may be interested in applying for:  
*from the AAF D7 newsletter:*  
We are currently accepting applications for the [Mosaic Scholarship](#) and [Jan Gardner Memorial Scholarship](#).  
In addition to scholarships, we are also accepting nominations for the [Donald G. Hileman Award](#) and the [Bolton-MacVicar-Marlone Award](#).  
All scholarship applications and award nominations must be emailed to [Drew Beamer at drewbeamer87@gmail.com](mailto:DrewBeamer87@gmail.com) by March 23, 2022.  
Thanks again and please let me know if you have any questions.  
Best,  
Julie

2021-2022 AAA Budget

INCOME			qty	\$ ea
Entry Fees	Member Early Bird	\$ 1,820.00	28	\$65.00
	Non-member Early Bird	\$ 170.00	2	\$85.00
	Member Regular	\$ 1,520.00	19	\$80.00
	Non-member Regular	\$ 900.00	9	\$100.00
	Late Fees	\$ -	0	\$15.00
	Student Early Bird	\$ 1,110.00	37	\$30.00
	Student Regular	\$ 1,820.00	52	\$35.00
		\$ 7,340.00	147	
AAA Gala Tickets	Professional	\$ 2,420.00	44	\$55.00
	Student	\$ 630.00	21	\$30.00
	Table Sponsorship	\$ 2,000.00	4	\$500.00
Silver Forwarding	\$ -			
Duplicate Orders	\$ -			
Donations	\$ -			
Total Income		\$ 12,390.00		

EXPENSES				
District/National Fees	Gold Forwarding	\$ 720.00	8	\$90.00
	Student Gold Forwarding	\$ 225.00	9	\$25.00
	National Professional fees	\$ 1,102.50	4410	25%
	National Student fees	\$ 732.50	2930	25%
	Shipping to District 7	\$ -		
	Student Silver Forwarding	\$ 400.00		Board traditionally votes in favor
Judging	Hotel	\$ -		
	Airfare	\$ -		
	Mileage	\$ -		
	Shuttle	\$ -		
	Parking	\$ -		
	Meals/Entertainment	\$ -		
	Judging Supplies	\$ -		
	Judges Gifts	\$ 390.00		Proposed judges gift baskets & shipping
Awards	Gold Award Plates (Pros)	\$ 112.30		
	Gold Awards (Students)	\$ 1,005.33		
	Silver Certificates	\$ -		
	Mosaic Award	\$ -		incl with gold awards
	Awards mailed to MSU	\$ -		
	Reorders (duplicates)	\$ -		
Special Awards	\$ 743.62			
ADDY Event	Program Books	\$ -		
	Band/DJ	\$ -		
	Host stipend	\$ -		
	Décor	\$ -		
	Event signage/printing	\$ -		
	Call for Entries printing	\$ -		
	Venue rental	\$ 2,638.28		
	Gala Favors	\$ -		
	Catering	\$ 2,416.20		
	Appetizers	\$ -		
	Table/Linen Rental	\$ -		included w/ venue
	Tickets/Wristbands	\$ -		
	Bar & Security	\$ 1,027.38		
	Photography	\$ 150.00		selfie station
	Linens dry cleaned	\$ -		
Misc.	\$ -			
Total Expense		\$ 11,663.11		

<b>NET PROFIT</b>	<b>\$ 726.89</b>
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## tuscaloosa

### American Advertising Awards – Post Gala Summary

#### Entries

- 147 total entries
  - o 58 professional
    - Needs to be a prime focus for 2022-23 (City, Tourism & businesses)
  - o 89 student
    - Growth over 2020-21 but still lower than the 2019-20 awards
    - Entries from UA, UWA, & MSU
    - Growth opportunity (Stillman College)

#### Judging

- Judging Week went off flawlessly. Our judges (Leigh, Lauren & Madison) were truly amazing.
- Judging was done virtually again this year. Pros & Cons to this but it is definitely saves money on the budget.
- Huge thanks to Michele, Julie & Rebecca for their help in the Judging process.
- Proposing to spend approximately \$390 on thank you gift baskets and shipping to each of our judges.

#### Gala Ticket Sales

- 105 total tickets sold
  - o Four table sponsorships: UA APR, UA Student Media and two tables from UA Strat Comm
  - o 44 Professional
  - o 23 Student
  - o Slight growth over our 2019-20 show

#### Gala Overview

- Move to the Tuscaloosa River Market seemed to be very well received.
- Beautiful space that needed very little decorating. Overall, a relatively easy day for the committee, regarding set up and breakdown. River Market staff was great.
- Overall feedback on the event was extremely positive.

#### Budget Overview

- Revenue from Entries & Gala Ticket Sales: \$12,390
- All Expenses (includes proposed judges gifts): \$11,663.11
- NET PROFIT: **\$726.89**