



Memorandum

TO: Diane Marlin, Mayor
FROM: Paris Baldarotta, Executive Director
DATE: January 3, 2018
SUBJECT: Urbana Business Association Activities Report – January 2018

2017 in Review and a Glance at 2018

Business and Community Involvement

- **FOR OUR BUSINESSES:** Through our many events, workshops, festivals, and networking functions, Urbana Business Association provides an array of promotional, marketing and sponsorship opportunities for our member businesses to reach our community. These opportunities provide valuable avenues that allow our members to develop and build their brand and reach an abundance of people that they would not otherwise be able to reach on their own.
- **FOR OUR COMMUNITY:** The UBA is also committed to serving the entire community by coordinating and managing the most popular summer festivals in the area, hosting Urbana's only indoor winter farmer's market, partnering with other community organizations and continually striving to connect with all of the unique and wonderful people that make up Urbana, our friendly little town that we all love to call home! After all, our community is formed by our friends, family, and neighbors, which are also some of our favorite local business owners!

Membership

- We currently have 128 member businesses
- **Membership Appreciation Program 2018** – UBA has designated one day per week in which we make it a point to visit and further get to know our member businesses. While visiting our members, we will also bring them a UBA swag bag to show our appreciation that they are part of our organization and community.

MARKETING & EVENTS

- **Market IN the Square** – This is our 6-month indoor farmer's market and is now in full swing! The Market occurs every Saturday in November and December and twice a month on Saturday's January through April. We accommodate over 110 vendors per season. The Market is not only a great asset to our community but also an awesome platform for our small local entrepreneurs to get their product and/or service in front of consumers at a reasonable investment.
- **Connections Over Coffee/Cocktails** – These are UBA's monthly networking events that occur on the 4th Tuesday of every month and alternate between morning and evening. These events serve a dual purpose. On one hand, it allows our business community to network at different venue each month. On the other hand, it allows member businesses to host and showcase their business at a very affordable price. For only \$175, a member business can host an event and the UBA will provide all of the marketing, food and beverage for the event. A host business can expect 50-100 guests to visit their business during a Connections event.
- **World's Shortest St. Patrick's Day Parade** – In partnership with Illini Radio Group/Rewind 92.5, we held the first annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. This parade was only a block long and attracted over 300 people to the downtown area!
- **Uncork Wine Festival** – Annual wine festival held at Meadowbrook Park that attracts over 1500 people to visit Urbana each year. This year, Uncork will be on June 9, 2018.

- **Sweetcorn Festival 2017** – 2018 Dates: Aug 24 & 25.
 - **Presentation Date:** There will be a 2017 SCF Review presented to City Council, next Monday January 8th during the Monday evening council meeting.
- **Downtown Trick or Treating** – October 2017 was another first for the UBA, the annual Downtown Trick Treating! In conjunction with the Urbana Free Library's Halloween children's activities, the UBA coordinated with approx. 40 downtown businesses to provide a safe and fun trick or treating evening prior to Oct 31st. The event was very successful as there were over 150 children that attended the trick or treating and over 300 adults. Many parents visited businesses that they had never been in before! WIN for businesses! WIN for a new community activity! We expect an even bigger turn out in 2018!
- **Spring Workshop Series 2018** - UBA will host a series of 5 workshops in Spring 2018. Below is a summary but please visit www.urbanabusiness.com/workshops for full details and to register.
 - January 30 - Abbey Members - Campus Director of Tricoci University of Beauty Culture - Overcoming Your Public Speaking Fears
 - February 22 – Stefanie Santo McLesse, CEO Santos McLesse Public Relations Firm -CEO Activism: The Risks, Rewards and Business Implications
 - March 27 - Natalie KennyMarquez - - Revamping Your Marketing & Social Media Strategy
 - April 25 - Gina Johnson - Owner of Goodthingz/Blueprint - Let's Make It a Habit: Train Your Brain to Navigate Negativity
 - May 15- Stefanie Santo McLesse, CEO Santos McLesse Public Relations Firm – The Business Case for Internal Communication
- **Sponsorship Opportunities** – We provide valuable opportunities through our events, social media, e-newsletter and other avenues for our members to affordably market their business to large audiences that may not otherwise be able to reach on their own.
- **Ribbon Cuttings** – Each year the UBA coordinates and promotes a multitude of ribbon cuttings.
- **Talk of the Town** – The UBA publishes a bi-weekly e-newsletter. This publication provides our members and our community valuable information about the UBA as well as our member businesses and community organizations.

REALTOR/DOWNTOWN TOURS 2018 - The UBA is proud to partner with the City of Urbana's community development department to conduct realtor and downtown tours. These tours will allow real estate agents/companies as well as developers gain understanding on what our neighborhoods and downtown have to offer citizens of Urbana and why Urbana is a wonderful city to live in.

UBA BOARD

The UBA is excited to welcome four new board members to our organization!

- Gina Johnson – Owner, Therapist, Life Coach – Blueprint
- Marianne Hartman Tichenor – Director of Residential Property – JSM
- Kathryn Zimmerman – Executive Vice President – APTEch
- Fallyn Paruleski – Graphic Designer – Urbana Park District

They will be joining our current board members:

- Matt Cho – Downtown Development
- Josh Laskowski – SJ Broadcasting
- Mohammed Al-Heeti – Strawberry Fields/World Harvest
- Edith Peacock – H2O Salon and Spa
- Mauricia Salinas – El Oasis
- Chris Lukeman – CU Adventures in Time and Space
- Jack Wallace – First Federal

STAFF

We are proud to announce that we have hired a new Marketing and Events Manager, Warren Thomas. He started full time this past Tuesday, January 2, 2018. If you would like to meet Warren, please feel free to stop by and introduce yourself or attend our Connections Over Cocktails on January 23, 5:30 pm – 7pm. This month's Connection Over Cocktails will be held at Weiner Companies, 507 South Broadway on the 2nd Floor above PNC Bank.

Paris Baldarotta – Executive Director – Two year work anniversary was this past October!

We are the small but mighty team of two who successfully does it all!