



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **BIG FRESNO FAIR DEPUTY MANAGER LAURI KING RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FAIRS AND EXPOSITIONS (IAFE) CERTIFIED FAIR EXECUTIVE STATUS**

*King becomes one of only two California recipients this year, who join a group of only 28 total California recipients in the history IAFE*

**FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, May 3, 2018...**Lauri King, Deputy Manager II at The Big Fresno Fair was honored at the 2018 Management Conference of the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) in Minneapolis on Sunday, April 8 as a recipient of the Certified Fair Executive (CFE) designation. Lauri King was one of eight CFE recipients recognized during a ceremony at the IAFE Management Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

“Continuing education like this only makes our Fair that much better,” said King. “I am proud to be one of the few California fair executives who have achieved this designation and look forward to applying what I learned right here at The Big Fresno Fair.”

The purposes of the CFE program are to: a) provide incentive for professional improvement in fair management, b) recognize those who achieve the specific standards, and c) develop professional status in the field of fair management. Certification also honors those members who have demonstrated their abilities through years of service to their fairs, fair associations, communities and IAFE.

The CFE program first started in 1978 and since then there have been 501 fair professionals who have achieved CFE status. Out of those 501 fair professionals, only 28 were from California. This year, out of the member class of 40 professionals, only eight received their CFE designation and only two professionals were from California – Lauri King, Deputy Manager at The Big Fresno Fair and Lori Marshall, CEO, Cow Palace Arena & Event Center – The Grand National Rodeo & Stock Show.

“We are incredibly proud of Lauri achieving this designation,” said John C. Alkire, CEO of The Big Fresno Fair. “We know what an incredible Fair executive she is, but receiving CFE status from an international entity like IAFE shows that she is one of the best in the world in the fair network and we are lucky to have her in Fresno as part of our Big Fresno Fair team.”

Lauri King grew up in Templeton, California, where she and her family resided on the family farm. She was an active member of 4-H and FFA where she showed animals at county fairs through college. She graduated from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo with a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science also earning a minor in Communications and Agribusiness with an emphasis in Fair Management.

King has been involved in California Women for Agriculture, Farm Bureau and FACT Leadership Program. In 2008, Lauri was part of Leadership Fresno Class 24, which worked as an outlet for community leaders to come together to learn more about the city of Fresno and improving local communities. As a champion within the fair industry itself, Lauri has held a position on the Western Fair's Association Professional Development and Achievement Awards committee, holding the title of Professional Development Chair for three years. In 2015, Lauri became a member of the Western Fair's Association Board. She has also been on the International Association of Fairs and Expositions Young Professionals Board for three years.

Lauri King has been at The Big Fresno Fair for more than 14 years and has been instrumental in the expansion of interim events at the Fairgrounds, enhancing the grounds position as a multi-purpose facility, as well as helping to earn national recognition for the Fair's Health and Safety Program, which has grown to become an industry-wide model for other fairs and expos. She was named to the distinguished list of Business Street's '40 Under 40' Class of 2011 and has been part of the visionary Fair Management Team that has led The Big Fresno Fair to be awarded four Merrill Awards since 2007, the highest honor possible in the Fair industry through the Western Fairs Association.

Prior to working at The Big Fresno Fair, Lauri worked for five years at the Cal Poly Western Bonanza Livestock Show and four years at the California Mid-State Fair. She is an invaluable member of the fair industry for more than 16 years and is focused on helping take the industry into the 21<sup>st</sup> century tapping into new ways fairs can stay engaged with the new generations.

#### **About IAFE:**

The International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE), based in Springfield, Mo., is a voluntary, nonprofit corporation, serving state, provincial, regional, and county agricultural fairs, shows, exhibitions, and expositions. Its associate members include state and provincial associations of fairs, non-agricultural expositions and festivals, associations, corporations, and individuals engaged in providing products and services to its members, all of whom are interested in the improvement of fairs, shows, expositions, and allied fields. For more information, visit [www.fairsandexpos.com](http://www.fairsandexpos.com), follow the IAFE on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and Snapchat, or call 800.516.0313.

#### **About The Big Fresno Fair:**

The Big Fresno Fair, founded in 1884, is the fifth largest fair in the state of California and represents the 21st District Agricultural Association. More than 600,000 people from throughout the State visit The Big Fresno Fair each year making it the largest event in the Central Valley. Members of the Board of Directors include: Debbie Jacobsen, President; Larry Serpa, Vice President; Jerry Pacheco, Secretary/Treasurer; Leta Ciavaglia; Linda Mae Balakian Hunsucker; Elizabeth Hudson; Dora Westerlund and William White. John C. Alkire heads the daily operations in his role as CEO. The 2018 Big Fresno Fair will run October 3-14.

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