

New Bedford's Oktoberfest is much more than a Party

by Leo Monteiro

Over the past twelve years the South Coast Business Alliance (SCBA) has put on one of the most anticipated events in the city: Oktoberfest. Each year the festivities have grown, the crowds have gotten bigger and the entertainment, top notch. What most folks don't realize is that everyone involved is volunteering their time and 100% of the proceeds have gone back into the community. The SCBA is a shining example of what a non-profit organization should be; its run by committed volunteers, no extravagant salaries, in fact there are NO paid positions at all. Every single dollar raised is donated, it all flows back to the community.

With this years Oktoberfest happening on Saturday October 14th its important reflect back on the good work they have accomplished. Now in its 12th year and after raising 500K in revenue over Forty organizations have directly benefited from over \$218,000 in net proceeds. Did you know that every year the UMass Dartmouth Foundation provides a scholarship to a local youth? Ever heard of the Star Kids Program? The SCBA covers tuition for children in low income communities to attend private schooling. By empowering kids and giving them opportunities to shine the whole community benefits.



Here is just a short list of some of the things the SCBA has managed to do and programs they actively support:

Smiles

Mentoring

Program:

<http://www.smilesmentoring.org/index.htm> SMILES is a school based one-to-one mentoring program serving New Bedford and Fall River.

The Boys & Girls Club of Greater New Bedford:

<http://www.bgcnewbedford.org/> In 2008 the SCBA raised several thousand dollars for the Boys & Girls Club to help build a boxing training facility. The SCBA didn't simply write a check for this project, they worked tirelessly on weekends to gut the basement of it's existing bowling alley and replace it with the boxing facility. The proceeds raised for this project allowed them to renovate the space, outfit it with several heavy bags and other training equipment as well as a top-of-the-line boxing ring.

The Zeiterion Theatre: <http://www.zeiterion.org/> In 2008 the SCBA began a working relationship with the Z and developed a program called "Front & Center." This program allows us an opportunity to send dozens of at-risk youth to different performances each year. To date we have sent over 150 youth, who receive the full red carpet treatment complete with a limousine ride to and from the historic theatre located in New

Bedford's Historic National Park.

Friendly Sons of St. Patrick: <http://www.friendlysons.net/>

This past year the SCBA helped the Friendly Sons with their annual Turkey Drive during the Thanksgiving holiday. The Friendly Sons provide a traditional Thanksgiving meal to those who can not afford the day with all the fixings.



The United Way of Greater New Bedford : <http://www.unitedwayofgnb.org/> The SCBA has co-hosted their fundraising events with the United Way in years past donating all the proceeds from those events to the United Way and their efforts in the Greater New Bedford area.

The Community Foundation : <http://www.cfsema.org/> The SCBA began a working relationship with the Community Foundation in 2008. The Community Foundation has several programs and scholarships that they continue to work on and achieve high marks. We are pleased to be working with them, creating new ways to give back to the community through their dedicated efforts.

The work they are doing largely goes unnoticed, but we're shining a light on them this week and showcasing a great local organization that should be applauded for its efforts. If you

support their goals and see value in the work they are doing head to Oktoberfest this weekend, not just for some brews but to really make a difference.

Check out their event page [here](#) and you can purchase tickets [here](#).