

2018 RIFDA Annual Meeting & Holiday Gala was a GRAND success!

The 2018 Rhode Island Food Dealers Association Annual Meeting & Holiday Gala was held this year at the Newport Marriott in Newport, Rhode Island on November 17, 2018. The evening was very well received and very well attended. This event brings RIFDA members together in a festive holiday environment. The location was wonderful, the food was great, and the grand raffle and door prizes continue to get bigger and better each year. The music by Andre Arsenault was also very entertaining throughout the cocktail reception and the dinner. The event was a true success thanks to the Rhode Island Food Dealers Association's members. Their support throughout the year is what makes these events happen.

The evening was inspired by a rustic fall theme. Corn stalks and bales of hay were adorned with lace, baby's breath and sunflowers. The evening was energetic and the ambiance was full of cheer and smiles. Fun and joy filled the cool November air.

The evening's schedule started with a cocktail hour and entertainment at 5:30 PM, followed by the Annual Meeting at 7:00 PM. Steve Arthurs, President of RIFDA, gave an overview of the RIFDA's activities and goals. At the end of the Annual Meeting, scholarship awards were distributed to the winning applicants. This year, RIFDA awarded five \$1,000 scholarships to: Steven Amaral (Stop & Shop), Constantine Coclin (Coclin Associates), Samantha Falkowski (Dave's Marketplace), Natalie Harris (Polar Beverages) and Matthew Skirzenski (Clements' Marketplace).

This excitement was followed by the installation of the newly appointed Officers and Board of Directors. Brian Pacheco of Clements' Marketplace fulfilled his term as acting Chairman and Scott Danis of Stop & Shop was inducted as the 2019 Chairman of the Board. Following the induction, David Dulude of Imperial Distributors was recognized for his dedication and commitment over the past forty years in the industry and as a member of the Board of Directors of RIFDA. He will be retiring at the end of the year. A surf and turf dinner was served at 7:30 PM. The Newport Marriott did an exceptional job with dinner. The room was full and the guests enjoyed a delectable dinner in an ambient setting.

Coming up next was the centerpiece drawing, door prize raffle, and then the grand prize raffle. The Grand Prize Raffle consisted of 5 packages full of marvelous prizes: a Weekend in Newport, a Weekend in Cape Cod, a Family Package, a Sports Package and a Golf Package...each package was valued around \$1,000. There were 30 Door Prizes...and almost everyone won something! Many attendees turned the special occasion into a weekend getaway with hotel accommodations at a group rate.



From Left to Right: Patrice Sabbagh of C&S Wholesale Grocers, Bill Minichiello of C&S Wholesale Grocers, John Sabbagh of C&S Wholesale Grocers, Meghan Burns of C&S Wholesale Grocers and Rick Burns of C&S Wholesale Grocers



From Left to Right: Jen Pacheco of Clements' Marketplace, Tracy Anthony of Clements' Marketplace, Meghan Burns of C&S Wholesale Grocers, Andrew Baldino of Supermarket Bookkeeping Services and Jean Baldino of Supermarket Bookkeeping Services



Scott Danis of Stop & Shop after induction as Chairman of the Board



Scholarship Winners: Steven Amaral (Stop & Shop), Matthew Skirzenski (Clements' Marketplace)
Constantine Coclin (Coclin Associates), Samantha Falkowski (Dave's Marketplace) and Natalie
Harris (Polar Beverages)



David Dulude of Imperial Distributors, Scott Danis of Stop & Shop, Steve Arthurs of RIFDA



Steve Arthurs of RIFDA and Brian Pacheco of Clements' Marketplace



Jeff Antil of Bozzuto's



Mike Cozzolino of Polar Beverages



Dennis Hogan of Dave's Marketplace



Scott Danis and Liz Chace-Marino of Stop & Shop