



**For Immediate Release**  
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***Festivals Acadiens et Créoles Gives Back for the Holidays***

*Monetary donation of \$1,000 given to Second Harvest Food Bank during press conference.*

**Lafayette, LA, Dec. 13, 2016** – As part of a five-pronged philanthropic mission and increased financial stability, Festivals Acadiens et Créoles is able to give back following a very successful event in 2016. On Dec. 12 during a press conference at Le Centre International, representatives from Festivals Acadiens presented a \$1,000 check to Second Harvest Food Bank to help provide meals to South Louisiana families in need.

Brenda Pourciau, agency relations and programs coordinator, and Natasha Curley, food sourcing specialist, were on hand to accept the check. “We are very grateful for this donation,” said Pourciau. “The holidays are a crucial time for us. We can provide three meals per dollar for the Acadiana community.”

Also present for the press conference was Troy Meaux from Lafayette Coca-Cola, musician Zachary Richard, Chris Adams with Acadiana Food Alliance and Festivals Secretary/Treasurer Linzee Evans-LaGrange.

Lafayette Coca-Cola, a loyal sponsor of Festivals Acadiens, is leading its own campaign with Second Harvest and 97.3 The Dawg in December. Through Dec. 25, shoppers at any Acadiana Associated Food Store can look for the pre-packed red Coca-Cola bags at registers.

Richard, whose latest album project “*La Belle Vie*” was supported by Festivals Acadiens and debuts Dec. 13, thanked the festival for what it does to “promote the culture and to preserve and promote the language and music, which are absolutely unique to our area.” Festivals Acadiens was a major sponsor of Action Cadienne's 2015 album “*J'ai une chanson dans mon coeur*” with songs co-written by Richard and Anna Laura Edmiston, and also contributed to “*La Belle Vie*,” featuring French Immersion students from North Lewis Elementary in New Iberia.

Acadiana Food Alliance received monetary assistance from the festival to help with the expense of becoming a nonprofit organization and joins a growing list of community organizations and individuals who have benefited from the fruits of Festivals' labor.

Festivals founder and Board President Barry Ancelet spoke about the roots of the event and importance of financial stability. “The challenge we gave ourselves was to get to the point where Festivals is assured whether beer sells or not,” he said. “The festival itself is our first community contribution.”

Vice President of Programming and Development Chef Patrick Mould detailed Festivals philanthropic mission, which supports music, art, French language, food and the beautification of Girard Park. Since 2008, more than \$85,000 has gone toward these five cultural initiatives, and Mould estimates that number will top the \$100,000 mark by the end of 2017.

“As we begin to do well, we want to share that with the community,” said Ancelet. “We have a tradition of helping each other here, and the festival functions as one big neighborhood.”

Added Mould, "It's almost like the good times we create at Girard Park are doing some good in the community."

## **Festivals Acadiens et Creoles Philanthropic Donations**

### **Nonprofit Partners**

Each year, the festival works with at least five nonprofits, who assist with things like pouring beverages and collecting recycling. In 2016, donations to nonprofit organizations TRAIL, the Acadiana Writing Project, French Immersion Teachers Organization, New Hope Lafayette and the UL Biology Society totaled \$2,700.

### **Other 2016 Contributions**

Assisting bands with attending South By Southwest: \$1,000

Action Cadienne "La Belle Vie": \$1,000

Acadiana Food Alliance: \$1,000

Second Harvest: \$1,000

### **Scholarships**

Festivals has given out scholarships in the amount of \$5,850 since 2008 to approximately half a dozen musicians and artists to assist with their expenses in attending Université Sainte-Anne in Nova Scotia, so that they can bring the language of the Acadians back to Louisiana.

### **Park Beautification**

In 2015, worked with the Boy Scouts Evangeline Area Council to plant 50 assorted indigenous fruit trees along the walking path at Girard Park. Over the years, \$8,000 has also been spent on mulching of the live oaks in the park, and a seeding project is planned for 2017.

### **Other Contributions Over the Years**

Louisiana Folk Roots: \$5,000

UL Folklore Department operations support: \$15,725

Purchase of French language dictionaries for French Immersion classrooms: \$1,000

Chef Nicholas Glenn for assistance in getting to the Cannes Film Festival American Pavilion Student Culinary Program: \$1,000

Blacksmith Sam Riehl: \$1,000

Judge Babineaux Scholarship: \$1,000

UL Dewey Balfa Endowed Scholarship: \$2,250

*Festivals Acadiens et Créoles presented by Capital One can trace its roots back to the first Tribute to Cajun Music Festival organized by CODOFIL in 1974. Festivals was officially established in 1977 with components of music, food and crafts. Since then, it has grown into a multi-day event taking place during the second full weekend of October each year in Lafayette, La. Festivals operates as a nonprofit corporation and is run by a community board and volunteers.*