



The Historic Altria Theater
Hosts 9th Annual

Best of Richmond AWARDS



Several hundred business owners and their employees, joined by many of the staff of the Richmond Times Dispatch, flocked to the historic Altria Theater on Thursday of last week, to celebrate the results, and the achievements they represent, of the RTD's annual BEST of Richmond contest. That contest not only gives readers of the newspaper, but everyone who cares about the businesses that make Richmond fabulous, a chance to vote for their favorites. It's a tradition that many have come to adore, and look forward to.

The historic Altria Theater in the heart of the City formed the perfect backdrop for the celebration, that included live music and a myriad of other forms of entertainment. The choice to partner with the theater was no coincidence, but rather by design, explained Regional Marketing Director for the RTD Billy Garland.

"We were so very excited to host this year's BEST event at the historic Altria Theater," Garland said. "Each year when we host this event, we start our search for a venue with one goal - finding a location that is truly iconic for the city of Richmond. From the moment I walked into the Altria the first time, I knew that this was the right venue for this year."

It is safe to say that The Altria Theater has been a staple in Richmond, with a storied history.

"The theater opened in 1927 as The Mosque Theater and was built as a temple for the American Masonic Society of The Shriners," Director of Sales and Marketing for Altria Brittany Griffith said. "From the very start, this iconic building was the place to be for the best musical and theatrical entertainment in the City of Richmond," Griffith said. "And that has never changed."

Griffith also said that in the almost 100 years the theater has stood across from Monroe Park, many have celebrated other milestones, like proms and graduation ceremonies, further cementing the theater as a true community-facing establishment.

The initial design included, among other things, 42 hotel rooms, four lounges and a swimming pool in the basement. The City purchased the theater in 1940, and a renovation in the mid-nineties restored the theater to its former splendor.

"Last year, we hosted around 130 commercial performances, ranging from Broadway shows to rock concerts," Griffith said. "But that did not include private events."

For those seeking an exquisite location for a private event,

on stage, in the theater or in the iconic ballroom, The Altria Theater promises an event to remember, said Director of Private Events Sarah Douglas.

"First of all, this theater has an amazing WOW-factor," Douglas said. "It's such a beautiful place with such rich history. Those who come here for private events can experience an exclusive behind-the-scenes look. That alone is special," Douglas said.

Celebrating a private event in an iconic venue sounds amazing. But what Douglas and her team are able to accommodate makes the experience unforgettable.

"Simply put, we take care of everything," Douglas said. "You can consider us a one-stop-shop. We customize every event, and we work with our clients to make sure their vision comes to life. We can offer advice on themes, will take care of any catering needs, connect with third-party vendors and we have an amazing and experienced staff to pull that off. It's all about the experience of

the event, whether a business meeting or conference using the stage or a fundraising gala in the ballroom."

In many ways, Douglas said, she is not only the Director of Private Events, but a consultant who will guide her clients through each event, from the first phone call, to turning off the lights at the end of the night.

"I get to be the 12th man on the team," she said. "I am very proud of the way we partner with our clients so they can focus the impact and purpose of their event."

Hosting The BEST of Richmond event was exciting to both Griffith and Douglas.

"We are really proud of the businesses that make Richmond

so wonderful," Griffith said. "We know there's a lot of hard work that goes into making a business work, and we are proud that we were able to offer The Altria as a venue for that important celebration."

Douglas agreed. "The BEST is about celebrating this community of Richmonders. What better way to do that at the venue that has meant so much to that same community for so long. We are proud we could give the businesses what they so rightly deserve; our spotlight."

For more information about private events, and all the Altria Theater has to offer, please visit: <https://www.altriatheater.com/> or contact Sarah Douglas directly: sdouglas@asmrichmond.com



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