



## Marine Retailers Association of the Americas

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### MRAA to Host Second Annual Opening Night Awards Celebration

MINNEAPOLIS, MN July 30, 2018 — The Marine Retailers Association of the Americas announced today that it will host the second annual Opening Night Awards Celebration at the upcoming Marine Dealer Conference & Expo.

The [MRAA Awards Celebration](#) will shine a spotlight on marine industry workforce efforts, showcasing a series of awards and scholarships to be presented by both the MRAA and the MRAA Educational Foundation. Other recognitions will include Marine Industry Certified Dealerships, as well as the second annual MRAA Lifetime Achievement Award.

“In bringing this exciting event back to the marine industry for a second year, we’re looking to not only top the energy, laughs and celebratory vibe of last year’s event, which kicked off our annual conference in style,” explains Matt Gruhn, President of MRAA, “but also to recognize the men and women who work tirelessly to make our industry such a great place to work.”

The MRAA Educational Foundation will present several life-changing scholarships, worth a total of more than \$30,000, including Technical Scholarships, the Marine Industry College Scholarship, the Kevin Lodder Scholarship, and the Duane Spader Leadership Development Scholarship. Additionally, the Foundation will recognize the Darlene Briggs Woman of the Year. The MRAA itself will recognize Marine Industry Certified Dealerships, in addition to honoring a MRAA Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.

In addition to the recognition of these outstanding individuals, the event will feature a Marine Industry Talent Show. Attendees will be able to vote for their favorite acts through their donations, which will benefit the MRAA Educational Foundation.

“Last year’s event not only celebrated the incredible passion and hard work that fuels our industry,” says Liz Walz, Vice President & Director of Education at the MRAA and Executive Director of the MRAA Educational Foundation, “but it also was a ton of fun. We can’t wait to learn more about the hidden talents within the marine industry community as part of this year’s event.”

The MRAA Opening Night Awards Celebration has already generated the sponsorship support of Barletta Boats, Correct Craft, Priority One Financial Services, Protective Asset Protection, *Boating Industry* and *Soundings Trade Only*. For more information on sponsorship opportunities, contact [Allison Gruhn](#).

To be held Sunday, Dec. 9 from 6 to 10 p.m. at the Rosen Plaza Hotel, the MRAA Awards Celebration will immediately follow the MDCE's regular opening night poolside reception. That reception will be held from 4 to 6 p.m., after which the doors to the Awards Celebration will open to all MDCE attendees for entertainment, awards and scholarships presentations.

**About the Marine Retailers Association of the Americas**

At the Marine Retailers Association of the Americas, we believe that for the marine industry to thrive, the retail organizations that interact with the boaters in their community must thrive. With that in mind, MRAA works to create a strong and healthy boating industry by uniting those retailers, providing them with opportunities for improvement and growth, and representing them with a powerful voice. For more information, visit [MRAA.com](http://MRAA.com) or contact us at 763-315-8043.