There’s energy in the air. The wonderful climate of southern California with the coastal location for our 2018 FISA Annual Conference gives us an outstanding venue to learn and to network in a relaxing environment. Each year the FISA Annual Conference provides an unprecedented opportunity for owners and decision makers of distribution firms to meet face-to-face with top personnel of manufacturing firms. Listen to world class speakers presenting information on topics of interest selected by you, the membership. Engage with other FISA members and learn about new opportunities to strengthen your business.

Register today for the Conference by going to www.fisanet.org and clicking on the Meetings tab. Register for the Conference, your optional activities and sponsorships all at one time. For your convenience, you may pay by credit card or check. You also will find a link to book your hotel room at the Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort & Spa. The room block will be dropped by August 13th so don’t delay reserving a room. Nestled high on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean, the Resort is a AAA Four Diamond Resort offering numerous outdoor venues and an outstanding spa.

All first-time attendees can expect to be warmly welcomed and each will receive a phone call from a member of the FISA Board of Directors prior to the Conference. Board members facilitate introductions and are actively engaged as hosts for each activity. On Saturday, September 15th, the 5:00 PM First-timer’s reception is the chance for first-timer’s to meet the Board members and their spouses in an informal, fun gathering and then we go as a group to the opening reception. First-time attendees are an integral part of FISA with new employees joining companies that are long-time members, and new companies being added to the FISA membership. One of the FISA objectives is insure first-timer’s become regular attendees.

Several weeks before the Conference, each attendee will get an email listing everyone who will be attending along with a company profile for each company in attendance. By reviewing the company profiles in advance, members can plan ahead and schedule individual meetings during the Conference. You will also get the link to download the Conference app being created by Chris LoPresti of Andron Stainless. The app provides convenient access on your phone for names of attendees, locations of meetings and any last-minute changes in scheduling. If you have questions, call the FISA office at 336-274-6311.

REGISTER TODAY FOR FISA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

If you attend, you will receive:
- Practical content you can use
- Ideas for immediate impact
- Face-to-face meetings with distributors and manufacturers
- A cost effective way to meet potential vendors and/or distributors
- Introduction to new FISA members
- A friendly, welcoming networking event

TWO CLICKS WILL DO IT!

1. Go to www.fisanet.org and click on the Meetings tab. Click on To Register. Registration is online this year however you may pay by either credit card or check. Be sure to register yourself first and choose your activities; then register your spouse/guest and then if you want to be a sponsor of the 2018 Conference, include your sponsorship.

2. After you register for the Conference, be sure to go back to the Meetings tab and Click on the link that takes you directly to Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort & Spa to book your room.
Dear FISA Members,

I’m leading off my early summer letter with “Make Plans Soon” for the fall conference in Dana Point, CA. It is early June, and many FISA members and their spouses have already booked their rooms. Our gifted speakers will be discussing far-ranging topics like business leadership, attracting talent, and business in the age of Amazon. The always fascinating, Brian Beaulieu, will update us on our economic future. It is important that FISA members sign up early this year for the September 15-18 conference. Our room block will be dropped August 13th and we expect to sell out our room block. The activities are amazing, and numerous, but many of them have limited capacity for participants. Activities are filling up fast. Register today with our online CVENT registration on the FISA Website (www.fisanet.org).

There is great value in the educational content of the conference. However, more than ever, you should remember the value of networking and meeting new people from both manufacturing and distribution. Since our conference in Nashville last fall, there has been an accelerated process of business consolidation, new tax regulation, corporate vendor downsizing, and new standards for processing, reporting, and manufacturing. FISA members on both sides of the aisle have led the way in innovations to strengthen distribution and absorb a rapidly moving market place. More than ever, discussions among members educate us all. Once the attendee list is available, review participants and plan meetings early.

Laguna Cliffs Resort & Spa Dana Point, California is another special location for the FISA conference. It overlooks the Pacific Ocean and offers four-star amenities to its guests. There are a number of flight options in and out of Southern California, and, depending on the time of day, driving the Pacific Coast Highway is a little more time consuming, but beautiful.

One of FISA’s strengths is the active participation of our membership in sponsorships for our fall conference. These sponsorships provide marketing opportunities for all of us, but, more importantly defray the overall expense of the conference. Please consider participating. Pete Herb from Fristam Pumps USA and Brian Downer from Sani-Matic are spearheading sponsorships this year. We count on your generosity, and it’s a great investment for marketing your company to FISA members.

Each year, it is a real team effort on the part of the Board to make our conferences successful. Yvonne O’Brien from Tel-Tru Manufacturing and her husband, Jack, have graciously agreed to be our conference Chairs. Albert Marquez from Duhig is coordinating the golf outing, and Jason Ryan from FCX Performance has done an amazing job assisting Stella with the CVENT application process. Special thanks to Chris LoPresti for programming the conference app. I would be remiss if I did not thank Stella and Charlie, as well. Stella’s commitment to FISA is outstanding, and our association is prospering.

June and I have thoroughly enjoyed serving on the Board and look forward to our conference at Dana Point in the fall. Looking forward to seeing you in sunny California!

Have a great summer!

Rob
**Board Policies**

Any employee of a FISA member company is eligible to attend the Annual Conference if the 2018/2019 corporate dues which are payable July 1, 2018 have been paid.

A non-member considering joining FISA, may attend one Annual Conference as a guest by paying all applicable Conference charges but does not have to pay the annual dues before coming.

Ryan Avery is one of the Millennial generation’s most profound speakers on generational leadership and strategic communication. At age 25, Ryan became the youngest World Champion of Public Speaking in history, competing against more than 30,000 contestants from 116 countries to claim the 2012 World Championship for Toastmasters International. He has delivered keynotes and training sessions on the power of strategic communication and corporate storytelling on every continent in the world, is an Emmy-award winning journalist, and a two-time best-selling author.

Ryan will tell us how to: **Go From A to THE: Stop Being A Leader. Start Being THE Leader!**

His program is applicable to everyone so plan to join us. Spouses and guests are asked to register online for the breakfast to help us plan for how many people to expect. If you have any questions, feel free to call Stella Jones in the FISA office at 336-274-6311.

**By-law Change**

The FISA Board of Directors voted unanimously to establish the number of Directors serving on the FISA Board as a minimum of eight and maximum of ten members with a mix of Distributors and Manufacturers. The number of Manufacturers can be equal to but not exceed the number of Distributors.

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**CONSIDER SPONSORING THE 2018 FISA ANNUAL CONFERENCE!**

The FISA Board of Directors asks you to please consider being a sponsor for the 2018 Annual Conference to be held September 15-18 at the Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort & Spa in Dana Point, CA.

Sponsorship of this event provides a unique opportunity to show your involvement and support of this dynamic organization of industry professionals. Sponsorships are used to provide top-level educational opportunities for all attendees by bringing in speakers and educators that are leaders in their field. They are also used to subsidize the other conference events in order to keep costs down for all attendees.

We acknowledge our sponsors with signage at each event, which is intended to recognize these key supporters of our organization. In addition, there are verbal announcements and printed recognition in the Conference program and in the FISA newsletter.

Don’t miss your chance to invest in the largest gathering of professionals in the sanitary process industry!

Ready to Sponsor? Go to www.fisanet.org and download the Sponsorship Form from the “Meetings” tab. You may also include your sponsorship payment with your conference registration online, if you prefer.

**Sponsor Levels**

Sponsors will receive varying levels of visibility at the conference appropriate to their investment.

**Elite Sponsorship Levels:**
- Conference App Logo ($2,500)
- The Pinnacle Society ($1,500)

**Special Event Sponsorships:**
- Cocktail Reception Sponsorship ($600)
- Educational Program ($600)
- First-timer’s Reception Sponsorship ($500)
- Breakfast Sponsorship ($500)
- Coffee Break Sponsorship ($350)
- Various Golf Sponsorships ($250-400)

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**BOARD BRIEFS**

**Network with Ryan Avery:**

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**We have a change in format for the Conference this year. Rather than having separate breakfasts and programs for attendees and spouses/guests on Sunday morning, everyone is invited to attend the opening breakfast at 7:30 AM on Sunday, September 16th and to stay for the first speaker, Ryan Avery.

To encourage networking and meeting new people, we will continue the practice of drawing numbers for seating at breakfast.**

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Differentiation Has Never Been More Important

by Tom Gale

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www.mdm.com

Distribution has experienced a shift similar to what most other industries have in the past decade. The products – printing, cars, chemicals, industrial supplies, left-handed widgets – have become commodities. Companies have had to find new revenue sources in the services they can provide for customers. Printers, for example, have focused on design and marketing services they used to bundle with the printing jobs. Car companies are moving as fast as they can to a new generation focused not on product but on efficient transportation. Some distributors long ago shifted to selling cost-effective holes, not cutting tools.

Manufacturers, distributors, associations and marketing groups are all wrestling with defining their unique value to their customer segments. How do you differentiate in a marketplace that today offers more sourcing alternatives, delivery options, products and service options than ever before? Where there is so much greater access to information and knowledge, as well as higher levels of confusion and frustration?

There is no easy answer, but a key is to understand the total customer requirements, and then package your services and offerings to meet most, if not all, of those requirements. It’s a fundamental shift from product push to service pull.

I wrote the above thoughts as a commentary 15 years ago, when I had completed a book in partnership with Dr. William McCleave, Jr. on how a wide range of distributors were creating competitive advantage and crafting differentiation strategies in a struggling economy. Customer needs, market dynamics and technology have changed significantly; the fundamentals have not.

Across every business cycle and series of disruptions to markets, certain distributors have fallen victim to the changes and lost ground to competitors that figured out how to leverage the shift, whether in customer needs, new technology application or an innovative service offering (or a combination of all three).

In the course of our research, there was an “ah-ha” moment after we had interviewed dozens of leaders responsible for very different types of distribution models – from the multi-billion-dollar healthcare distributor Owens & Minor to a family-owned car wash supplies distributor that provided a turnkey package of services to local investment groups such as dentists and other professionals to finance, site, build, equip and market a new car wash business. That’s a different business model than selling detergents and boxes of wipes!

A few common denominators emerged from our interviews that applied no matter the company size or types of products sold. The first trait was company leadership – each successful differentiator had a leader with a crystal-clear vision of what customers wanted today and where they were heading in the future. They spent a lot of time on the front lines with customers as well as their own employees closest to the customer. They also articulated that vision clearly and often to their team to the point where almost every single associate had the same answer on the core mission of their company. It was consistently about their unique service differentiation, not a bland “we-do-it-better” statement.

The second characteristic that differentiated these successful companies was in their approach to process. They built systems and metrics for every process in the company and trained everyone on roles and responsibilities. That included effective customer feedback and communication systems that gave the company ongoing and unfiltered input. The systems intentionally kept them in “discomfort zones” that made it next to impossible for a competitor to disrupt these extremely close customer relationships. Their processes fed their ongoing innovation and new services development.

Obsessive customer focus and process efficiency – sound familiar lately? Amazon will most certainly displace a percentage of distribution companies that don’t have a strong enough differentiation strategy. Traditional competitors that invest in improving their productivity, sales models and differentiated service offerings will likewise displace vulnerable distributor models that have not evolved, as has happened across every cycle of consolidation.

In spite of all the uncertainty and speculation about how this plays out over the next five years, I
think there is a world of opportunity for distributors that successfully execute on an effective differentiation strategy. There is more competition, more noise and pricing transparency than ever before. But there will be increasing opportunities to clearly define the difference your company’s culture, service and value package make for customers in a sea of clutter.

The solutions that define success are radically different than what they were a few years ago; the core strategy to achieve that success has not fundamentally changed in the last 20 years.

(I hope you’ll consider joining us June 26-28 for our 2018 Sales GPS Conference in Denver, where we will have deeper conversations about what it takes to transform and differentiate your sales team in a digital world.)

I welcome your comments. You can email me at tom@mdm.com.

Tom Gale is the publisher of Modern Distribution Management. Tom has owned Modern Distribution Management since 1993. For decades, Tom has researched and written on significant trends in independent distribution channels, including consolidation, integrated supply, e-commerce, vendor reduction and shifts in value definitions. He is the co-author of Stand Out from the Competition! Four Pathways to Differentiate Your Wholesale Distribution Company and contributed to Outlook 2009: An Executive’s Companion to Facing the Forces of Change, both from the National Association of Wholesale-Distributors. He is a popular speaker on topics affecting independent distribution channels.

Tom is also the Principal for Gale Media Inc., which publishes MDM and MDM’s new division MDM Analytics (www.mdm.com/analytics).

TWO UID SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE

FISA is once again offering two scholarships to the University of Innovative Distribution (UID) to be held March 10-13, 2019 at the J. W. Marriott in Indianapolis, IN. UID is a concentrated educational program sponsored by FISA and other leading trade associations focused on the unique needs of wholesale distribution. In 2017, nine FISA members were among the more than 600 attendees from all different lines of trade who attended.

Any FISA member who has been employed for two years or more is eligible to apply for the two scholarships. The applicant writes a short essay saying why he/she wants to attend and includes a letter of recommendation. Go to www.fisanet.org and click on Member Benefits, education to download the application. Deadline for submission is November 1, 2018 and the winners will be announced in December, 2018.

Brandon Michael of Centro Inc. was one of the 2018 winners and Brandon says about his experience, “This program really brought forth great leadership advice and ingenuity that all generations can run with in this ever-changing market. Communication and productivity is always stressed upon in business, but this program provided great insight how to get the best results out of each individual so the whole team can be successful. The courses that really appealed to me were the Operations & Management 1 & 2 by Michael Workman and also The Power of Focus - Strategic Planning for Distributors by Steve Deist. These two gentlemen are great presenters and I really enjoyed the classroom atmosphere. They really seemed to grab your attention all times and kept your thinking about more opportunities to take advantage of.”

Eric Behling of Stuart R. Johnson & Co., was also a 2018 winner and Eric summarized his experience saying, “UID is a great experience, the knowledge shared by professors is outstanding, easy to comprehend, and they have courses that pertain to anyone who attends. The conversations and networking with fellow attendees in and out of classroom is invaluable and relationships will continue to evolve in the future. I brought back many ideas to our company, and I am able to view things with a diverse mindset.”

NEW MEMBER PROFILE

The Baumer Group is a 60-year-old global manufacturer of sensors, encoders, measuring instruments and image-processing components. As an owner-managed family business, Baumer employs 2600 workers worldwide in 38 subsidiaries and 19 countries. Headquarter and stocking facilities in the USA are located in Southington, CT.

Key to our FISA participation are Baumer’s hygienic process sensors and connections focused on the dairy/food/beverage market segment. Baumer is challenging the status quo with (1.) hygienic sensors designed in cooperation with our industry partners; and (2.) with the Baumer Hygienic Connection (BHC), our improvement over the traditional sanitary instrument fittings. The process sensor offering completes a portfolio of Baumer products that handle sensor applications from process to packaging; from the food zone to the splash zone to the non-food zone. From receiving raw product in…to boxes shipping out the door.

Baumer understands that our customers walk on a thin line in the balancing act between food safety and equipment efficiency. We are grateful for the trust and confidence this industry has placed in our products. www.baumer.com
**Member News & Views**

The who, what, where, when and whys of the FISA membership.

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**Miller Machinery & Supply Company**

Miller Machinery and Supply Company in Miami, FL traces their roots to 1916 but actually incorporated in Florida on July 18th, 1918. They will be 100 years old as a corporation on July 18th, 2018. The Miller family controlled the Company for forty-some years, and then the Deckers for almost sixty. Bill Rammos is VP of Miller Machinery & Supply Co. and is working with Bob Decker in transitioning the Company from the Decker family to Bill’s ownership control. Tony Villena, who joined Miller as a salesman in 1968, and has been a valued employee for 50 years, will retire mid-summer.

**Holland Applied Technologies**

Holland Applied Technologies, a leading distributor located in Burr Ridge, IL, is pleased to announce that Steve Joy has joined the company as President. Steve has deep roots in the sanitary processing industry and most recently was the president and part-owner of ASEPCO which was sold to Watson-Marlow.

**NewAge**

On May 14, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf visited plastic tubing manufacturer NewAge Industries located in Southampton, Bucks County, Pa. Governor Wolf was invited by Ken Baker, NewAge’s CEO, for discussions on the company’s employee ownership program and a tour of the newly-expanded facility. NewAge’s ESOP – Employee Stock Ownership Plan – has seen tremendous growth since it was established in 2006. In fact, the company’s stock price has risen over 850% since the plan’s inception. NewAge Industries’ recently renovated warehouse space converted over 40,000 square feet of vacant space into production clean rooms, inspection rooms and storage areas for the company’s AdvantaPure® division, which manufactures high purity tubing, Single-Use components and molded assemblies for the biopharmaceutical processing industry. The expansion was fully funded by the company and has helped create new jobs. NewAge employs 160 people and has hired 28 new employee-owners over the past year. The building is solar powered – over 4,000 solar panels on the facility’s rooftop absorb the sun’s energy – and the company is pro-recycling and landfill free.

**Duhig Stainless**

Pipe, valves and fittings distributor Wolseley Industrial Group, the industrial division of Ferguson Enterprises, has announced the acquisition of Duhig Stainless, completed January 22, 2018. The company will operate as Duhig Stainless, a Wolseley Industrial Group company. In business since 1943, Duhig Stainless is a Modesto, CA-based distributor of fluid control products, including valves, instrumentation, pipe and tubing and serves customers in the bio pharmaceutical, food and beverage, petrochemical and waterworks industries. They have three California locations: Los Angeles, Modesto and San Diego. “The acquisition of Duhig Stainless provides opportunities to grow our Southern California industrial footprint in high purity stainless while diversifying our customer base in California,” said Ferguson CEO Kevin Murphy. “We look forward to welcoming their knowledgeable associates to Wolseley Industrial Group.”

“When combined with Wolseley Industrial Group's national presence, the potential growth opportunities are tremendous,” said Duhig Stainless President Albert Marquez. “This is a win-win transaction for both companies.”

**Stuart W. Johnson & Company**

Stuart W. Johnson & Co., Inc. is pleased to announce that Lorna Bacle has joined the company as an Inside Sales Representative. Lorna comes to SWJ with nearly twenty years of chemical engineering, technical sales and continuous improvement experience. Most of that time was spent with PPG Industries and Henkel Corporation in Wisconsin and Illinois offices, respectively.

**Ryan Herco Flow Solutions**

SunSource Holdings, Inc. (“SunSource”), a leading distributor of fluid power and fluid process components and systems in the U.S. and Canada, recently completed the acquisition of Ryan Herco Flow Solutions (“RHFS”), a specialty distributor of flow solutions for mission-critical fluids. RHFS is a leading nationwide distributor of high-purity and corrosion-resistant fluid conveyance, measurement and control products used in mission-critical systems across a wide range of industrial applications. RHFS distributes a broad portfolio of filtration products, pressure piping systems, tubing and tube fittings, as well as pumps, valves, and process instrumenta—
tion. RHFS distributes more than 70,000 SKUs from 31 locations to more than 15,000 active customers. “We are extremely excited about what the future holds for the combined business,” said Randy Beckwith, CEO of RHFS. “The two companies share many of the same business philosophies, including an emphasis on adding value, a focus on customer satisfaction, a commitment to investing in the development of our employees, and a relentless pursuit of continuous improvement driving sustained growth, profitability, and shareholder value. Joining forces will create greater opportunity and value for our customers, employees and suppliers.”

Tel-Tru Manufacturing

Brad Smithling joined the Tel-Tru team in April, and has taken on the responsibility of overseeing all Engineering and Quality functions. A Mechanical Engineer by study, his background includes a mix of Manufacturing-Engineering, Quality, Industrial Automation, and Product-Development. Brad will be leveraging his past experiences in these areas to ensure that manufacturing processes are streamlined and optimized, and that Tel-Tru continues to produce the highest quality products in the industry. Roberta Favitta joined Tel-Tru in April with over 20 years in consultative sales and operations including hardware, software, printing and marketing. Roberta welcomes new opportunities to learn and grow and is excited to be part of the temperature and pressure instrumentation world that is Tel-Tru. Her focus is on OEMs and end users.

Rubber Fab

Rubber Fab, a Garlock Hygienic Technologies company -- a recognized supplier of high performance sanitary gaskets, hoses and fittings for hygienic process industries such as pharmaceutical, bio-processing and food & beverage -- was acquired by Garlock in 2016. Since the acquisition, Garlock has been leveraging its well-established sales teams and regional facilities to expand the reach of Rubber Fab’s range of products. Garlock Singapore, which is primarily responsible for business in Southeast Asia, Japan and Korea, has been strategically positioned as a regional hub to drive the growth of the food, beverage and pharmaceutical market segments across the entire Asia Pacific region, including Australia, China, India and New Zealand. 2018 marked the first year that all of Rubber Fab’s Asia-Pacific customers were served directly out of the regional hub in Singapore, leading to a number of customer improvements. The 3,300 square meter facility is now home to the first Rubber Fab hose shop outside of their US facility. As part of Garlock’s continued investment and growth in the Rubber Fab business, they have now established a European inventory for the first time. EnPro’s PSI Facility in Mössingen, Germany, is ideally situated to serve the whole of the European market.

M.G. Newell Corporation

M.G. Newell is pleased to announce the addition of two Control Systems Engineers to their Newell Automation team. Tim Sears joined the company in February. He comes to Newell from ADM in various roles including over 25 years of experience as an Automation & Electrical Specialist II. Tim will be based in their Louisville, KY office. Jason Mitchell joined the company in April. Jason spent 6 years in the U.S. Army as a Communications/Satellite Operator. He brings over 7 years of automation and IT experience from his previous roles at Chobani (Idaho), Carolina Dairy (NC) and Wright Foods (NC). Jason will be based in their Greensboro, NC office. Michael Pflugrad joined the Corporate Division in April as Director of Operations. Michael spent eight years with Frito-Lay in Kirkwood, NY in operations, manufacturing and engineering. He has spent the last 12 years at Ralph Lauren Corp in High Point, NC where he was the Director of Capacity Optimization and Production Planning. He also has experience in supply chain and E-commerce operations. Michael is a graduate of Clarkson University with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering.

Continued on page 8...
generate operational efficiencies by consolidating its two facilities, support the company's strong employee culture by being under one roof, accommodate continued growth, and provide positive, state-of-the-art experiences for Sani-Matic customers.

One of the company's main objectives for the new facility is to remain in the Madison area to ensure employee retention, support outstanding candidate recruitment, and to provide easy access and amenities for customers and partners who visit Sani-Matic.

**Steel & O'Brien**

Steel & O'Brien announces the completion of their ISO 9001:2015 recertification audit. This recertification is to update their current ISO 9001:2008 certification to the new 2015 standard. They want to recognize their Quality Manager, **Paul Davies**, and the entire Steel & O'Brien team for their dedication to continuously improving quality management systems. As Paul would say, “The continuous growth of our company is driven by the quality of our products.”

**ARCHON Industries, Inc.**

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**Richards Industries**

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**Netzsch, Inc.**

Contact: David Kirk
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Phone (484) 502-8884
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www.netzschusa.com

**Baumer**

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gsaganich@baumer.com
www.baumer.com

**NOTE:**

Remember to update your company information. Go to www.fisanet.org and look under the Membership Listing.

Email changes to stella@fisanet.org

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**Mark Your Calendar**

- **JULY 1, 2018**
  - Renew FISA Membership

- **AUGUST 13, 2018**
  - Room Block Dropped

- **SEPTEMBER 15-18, 2018**
  - FISA Annual Conference
  - Dana Point, CA

- **NOVEMBER 1, 2018**
  - UID Scholarship
  - Applications Due

- **DECEMBER 1, 2018**
  - UID Winners Announced