

### **Objectives**

1) Change conversations around innovation and creativity and Maine's place in those conversations; 2) Position MCC as a catalyst for creativity and innovation to shine a national spotlight on Maine; 3) Grow and leverage existing MCC programs, increase membership and support for the Maine Network of Innovation and Creativity ("the Network"), and raise funds; and 4) Capitalize on mounting momentum and opportunity to have high-impact; thereby necessitating a condensed timeframe for execution (five months) 5) Demonstrate the importance of a successful "marriage of arts and industry" 6) Use traditional and non-traditional methods to create a buzz around a must attend, first of its kind event, in Maine, thereby promoting and strengthening public support for MCC; and 7) Earn positive media coverage for the award, MCC, and the Network to gain visibility and support for an infrastructure to sustain it for the future.

### **Situational Analysis**

Forbes' coverage of Maine as the least business-friendly state in the nation prompted the Maine Center for Creativity (MCC) to fix the problem. First, MCC researched and determined that there was no formal process to recognize creativity and industry as a combined discipline, despite it being known that together they create success and can drive economic development. Next, MCC sought to position itself as a leader to springboard a statewide conversation around this question: How can creativity and innovation be fostered to put Maine in the spotlight in terms of growth and visibility? The solution: Attract national attention and assemble the most diverse group of leaders the state has ever seen. MCC tapped one of Maine's most prominent residents to receive the inaugural Maine Creative Industries Award: leading entrepreneur and founder of Idexx, David Shaw, and his Oscar-nominee wife, Glenn Close. Shaw and Close embody a true partnership of creativity and innovation, signifying the marriage of arts and industry? MCC proceeded to develop the Maine Creative Industries Award Gala and to use this event as the platform to launch the Network, create accelerated collaboration, support innovation and creative development, and build Maine's reputation as a center of creativity. Target audiences included: general Maine public, specifically those unaware of MCC; companies, national and Maine-based; arts and cultural organizations; and business leaders and influencers.

### **Methods**

**Planning:** BPR was tasked with creating a unique approach to launch initiatives; the award, the event, and the Network.

**Phase I: The Award Program:** Developed criteria and announced the award and its inaugural recipients to national, regional, and local audiences using traditional and social media. Created and implemented a comprehensive media outreach plan leading up to the Gala, including leveraging trends and other MCC events.

**Phase II: The Gala:** Collaborated to host Gala, drive messaging, manage VIPs and media coverage, supplied social media posts and general counsel during event. Liaised with vendors to gauge event acceptance and ensure high quality.

**Phase III: The Network:** Capitalized upon momentum to announce the creation of the Network.

### **Results**

- Balanced and aligned messaging with MCC mission and vision for the future.
- Achieved significant message pull through and achieved significant MCC mention/quotes.
- Worked seamlessly with MCC and The VIA Agency, which created ad' materials to promote the event.
- Guided myriad providers cohesively to ensure highest caliber of event; worked within significant constraints with respect to how award recipients would be promoted.
- 525 attendees, the largest event of its kind, creating a need for a contingency plan and action for accommodation.
- Attracted the most diverse gathering of arts and industry leaders and organizations.
- Earned over 1 million positive impressions during a three-month window (in a media market where the largest publication has a statewide circulation of less than 54,000).
- Reached the desired diversity of audiences and geography.
- Tripled views to MCC Facebook page during the week prior, week of, and week following the Gala.
- Engaged 50% of business leaders reached in initial development of the Network and identified the need for corporate education on innovation and creativity.
- Raised \$120,000, exceeding goal by 20%.
- David Shaw now serves on selection committee for the biennial Maine Creative Industries Award.