



**MID EAST
PERFORMANCE
ASSOCIATION**

SHOW HOST HANDBOOK

2023

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Introduction

Thank You!

Your show is important to us, not only does MEPA want to partner with you to make your show hosting experience as enjoyable and as profitable as possible, but each MEPA sponsored event is the face of MEPA. You represent us, and by hosting a great show, you help to make MEPA events the outstanding performance opportunities they are for all of our groups. We take that very seriously, and that is why we are excited to help you with every step of your preparations.

How are shows awarded to sites?

Each group wishing to host a show will complete a show application. The MEPA Director of Operations will consult with the President to complete a proposed competition schedule. If there are more applications than there are available dates, the MEPA President, with consultation from the board of directors and the Contest Administrators, will evaluate using the following criteria:

- Facility logistics
- Location (MEPA attempts to spread shows through our membership region)
- Other characteristics specific to each site
- Successful shows from previous years before have priority over new shows

Contact Information

Your primary contact throughout *the pre-planning and show selection process* will be the Director of Operations. Once your show has been finalized, the MEPA Director of Operations will send out your Show Host contract as well as other important details you should share with your Boosters, Directors, Administrators, and Facility team. This email will include information about your Contest Administrator. Your Contest Administrator will be your primary point of contact the day of the event. Up until then, you should continue to work with the Director of Operations to ensure one line of communication for logistical planning.

MEPA Director of Operations, Jonathon Shaw

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Facility Requirements

- All contest floors must be a minimum of eighty-five by one hundred feet (85' x 100').
- Seating for spectators and performers at least 18 rows high.
- Entrance and exit doors with removable center posts/standard double door width (32" wide). All paths used for percussion equipment must be at least this wide.
- Adequate warm-up facilities for body and equipment. **Body and Equipment should be combined (same side of gym) whenever possible.** An auxiliary gym works perfectly.
- Adequate and separate warm up facilities for two percussion warm up spaces. Band and Choir rooms will suffice, but separate gyms or field houses are ideal.
- A tarp folding area whenever possible.
- Hallways, foyer, or room for storage/staging of equipment and props.
- Adequate restroom facilities.
- Hospitality Room, **for Judges and MEPA Staff only**, with a mix of hot and cold food and drinks. This is separate from the room provided for your boosters and contest workers.
- A separate room must be provided for critique. This room should be able to **comfortably** accommodate three round tables with seating for 4-8 people at each table.
- Please do not host a Director Lounge. This is to avoid confusion and create a consistent experience from site-to-site.
- A concession stand or snack bar available during contest times.
- Area for MEPA merchandise sales and group/booster information tables that is accessible to spectator traffic. MEPA will receive the prime location.
- Parking for buses, vans, trucks, etc. of competing groups as well as spectators. If the parking location is more than a 5-10 minute, safe walk to the performance area, shuttles should be provided for drivers.
- Tables with easily accessible outlets/extension cords for the MEPA tabulation area (3 tables, 6 chairs) and sound table (2 tables, 4 chairs).
- Two (2) power sources in the performance area: one on the front boundary and one on the back boundary of the competition area. No power strips are to be used. Please use 10-gauge extension cords. When possible, these should be on separate circuits.
- Access to high speed Internet, with high-speed, large bandwidth, dedicated (Ex. staff or event) WiFi preferred. WiFi connection should be tested during the school day prior to the competition while school technology personnel are present to troubleshoot.
- Three radio/walkie talkies provided to the MEPA Contest Administrator, MEPA Back of House Manager, and another staff member to be determined for the event.
- A copy of the building's emergency management plan/evacuation procedures should be provided in advance.

NOTE: If your facility does not meet all of the above criteria, please contact the Director of Operations. We can review your individual site specifics on a case by case basis.

Financial Considerations

Show Hosting Fee

While MEPA hopes that you are partly hosting as a service to your circuit, we know that the most important consideration when hosting a show are the costs. As part of your show sponsor contract, you agree to provide all facilities to MEPA at no cost. MEPA will arrange and pay for transportation (flight, mileage) and judging costs for each judge—you will not be invoiced for these costs. The fees to host a MEPA show vary from site to site and are based on the number of groups participating, if it's a Saturday or Sunday event, if it's part of a double-header weekend, COVID capacity/ticket sale limits, the number of volunteers your boosters provide, and several other factors. To determine how to create the greatest profit possible from your event, please read through the rest of this document and heed the advice and suggestions provided. Additionally, you can discuss your concerns with the MEPA Director of Operations.

- 1-35 groups \$3,700
- 36-40 groups \$3,900
- 41-50 groups \$4,100
- 51-55 groups \$4,300
- 56-60 groups \$4,500
- 61-65 groups \$4,900
- 66+ groups \$5,100

Hotel Accommodations

Starting in 2022, MEPA will manage the hotel booking process, and is utilizing a group rate to keep costs as low as possible. It is the responsibility of each show sponsor to reimburse MEPA for hotel accommodations for each judge and any MEPA contest personnel that require housing. If you are sharing a double-header weekend, you will split the costs with another show host. The Director of Operations will include hotel accommodations as a line item in the show budget and present that to you when it is finalized, usually a few weeks before your event.

Late Fee

MEPA may charge a \$200 late fee if any of the following items are not returned to the MEPA Director of Operations by December 31:

- Signed show contract
- Contest chairperson name and contact information
- Digital images of show venues including warm-up areas, performance venue, and any “problem” areas if needed.

Hospitality

Each show sponsor is responsible for providing meals for all contest officials and MEPA personnel during the time they are working the event. Food should be a mix of hot and cold items. MEPA has developed some guidelines and recommendations that you will find in the “Judges and Contest Officials” section below.

Judges and Contest Officials

Overview

“It’s so hard to find good help these days!” That well-known cliché has been said countless times by people you know. Often, it’s true and in the case of judges, it absolutely is.

If MEPA wants these high-quality judges, so do the many other circuits around the nation. Quality judges are in high demand and the competition is fierce. Let’s be honest; while we are proud Ohioans, Ohio weather in the winter is sometimes less than vacation caliber. If you were a judge and were asked by a California or Florida circuit to judge their weekend contest in the middle of February amidst the palm trees, beautiful weather, and sandy beaches, what would make you say yes to the Ohio invitation for the same weekend?

The answer is simple: Incredible hospitality! MEPA is counting on you to treat our judges like VIPs. We want you to dream big and provide an experience that sends the judges away talking about your show and hoping to get the invitation again next year. Some things to consider:

- When picking up the judges at the airport, don’t make them wait.
- Leave a welcome package at the hotel front desk with sweet and salty snacks, a piece of fruit, gum or mints, and a bottle of water. Be creative!
- If there is no restaurant at their hotel or it is not open when they need to leave, have a hot breakfast waiting for them at the show site.

Meals

On the day of the show, the judges will need a private room where they will gather on breaks. When thinking about what to put in the Hospitality Room, please keep these ideas in mind:

- Coffee and tea in the morning is important. In the case of early departures from the hotel, sometimes the restaurant is not open and judges will need breakfast when they arrive. Things such as cereal, yogurt, fruit, muffins, bagels and granola bars are appropriate and easy. **A mix of hot breakfast and continental items is ideal.**
- Bottled water is usually the preference for most judges. Soft drinks (they seem to have a strong preference for Diet Coke) and sparkling water (Ex. LaCroix) are also appreciated.
- Lunch is usually soups, cold salads (coleslaw, mixed greens with dressing, broccoli salad, etc.), deli sandwiches, a simple crockpot dish like meatballs, and dessert (cookies, brownies, etc.) It helps to leave the dessert out after lunch so that judges can snack during their afternoon breaks.
- Dinner might include hot soup, salads, pasta, and/or casseroles. Chicken dishes seem to be the most compatible with the majority of judges. At least one MEPA staff member is a vegetarian, and others are avoiding red meat in their diets, so some sensitivity to this is appreciated by offering alternatives or have the meat to be added “on the side.”
- If a judge or staff member has dietary concerns or a food allergy, we will let you know.

NOTE: Remember that each judge is in an unfamiliar place and will be perfectly happy eating familiar foods. Think of somebody in your booster group who has a gift for making people feel welcome. This is the person you want taking on the job of running the Hospitality Room.

Privacy in the Judges' Room

The judges' room is restricted to judging personnel, the MEPA Board of Directors who don't have competing groups in the show, the Chief Judge, and MEPA contest personnel. This is the room where judges' meals are served, the show host's hospitality personnel should be minimal and unobtrusive when judges are present and their room should not be open to personnel other than those directly involved in the judging process or MEPA contest operations.

Other MEPA Personnel

Contest Administrator

The Contest Administrator is the person assigned to your event to ensure that all MEPA contest policies and procedures are being administered in a consistent manner. The Contest Administrator oversees tabulation and acts as the overall director of the contest on the day of your show. The main goal for the Contest Administrator is to balance the goal of running a contest to MEPA's standards, along with the host's needs, in order to have a successful and profitable event.

The Contest Administrator is a paid MEPA staff position. The CA may need a hotel room just as a judge or other contest staff person would, depending on distance from your site.

Tabulator(s), Sound Engineer, & Announcer

In order to provide a consistent contest experience for our performers and spectators, MEPA provides tabulators, a sound engineer, and an announcer for all contests. These are paid MEPA staff positions. These personnel may need a hotel room just as a judge or other contest staff person would, depending on distance from your site.

Back of House Manager

MEPA will provide a Back of House Manager for your venue. This person will act as a site manager and reports to the MEPA Contest Administrator. Their role is to assist in managing the event outside of the performance area, primarily focusing on the warm up and ready-line areas in order to provide a consistent contest experience for our performers and directors. This person may need a hotel room just as a judge or other contest staff person would, depending on distance from your site.

MEPA Interns and Board of Directors

In addition to the Contest Administrator, Tabulator(s), Sound Engineer, and Announcer(s), MEPA will have board members and interns working at each contest. MEPA provides housing for these individuals, but they will be included in the headcount given to you for meals.

All MEPA Staff and board members are easy to identify by their MEPA badge, which also allows them entrance to the performance area (in lieu of a wristband).

Host Supplied Personnel

Group Check In

- 2 people, start 2 hours prior to 1st performance & end after final group checks in
- Be the friendly face of MEPA and greet groups as they arrive! Check groups in and hand out wristbands as they arrive. Must be 15 or older with at least one adult in charge.

Admissions

- 3-5 people, start 1.5 hour prior to 1st performance & end after final performance
- Selling and/or putting on wristbands. Must be 15 or older with at least one adult in charge.

Gym Entry/Wristband Checkers

- 1 person per entrance, start 1 hour prior to 1st performance & end after final performance.
- Checking wristbands and badges at the performance area entrance. Must be 18 or older.

Warm Up Timer

- 2 people, start 15 minutes prior to 1st WARM UP TIME & end after final WARM UP. Time groups while in warm up area. Move groups out of the room at the appropriate time. Please provide a timer or use your cell phone. Must be 18 or older.

Group Performance Entrance

- 1 person, start 15 minutes prior to 1st performance & end after final performance
- Meet and greet groups as they line up to enter the arena. Check badges and wristbands for ALL PERSONS entering the performance area. Position is located OUTSIDE of the performance arena. Must be 18 or older.

Group Performance Exit

- 1 person, start 15 minutes prior to 1st performance & end after final performance
- Assist groups as they exit the performance area. Position is located **INSIDE** the performance area. Must be 15 or older.

Hospitality Room Manager

- 1 person in the Hospitality Room throughout the day, specifically during meals/breaks
- Assist judges and MEPA staff as needed. Replenish and manage food, drinks, etc.

Parking

- 4-10 people (depending on site), start 2 hours prior to 1st performance & end after final group checks in. Manage parking area, assist groups and drivers in locating Unit Check In. Manage parking flow and security/safety.

Loading Dock / Unloading Area

- 2-3 people, start 1.5 hours prior to 1st performance & end 30 min. after final performance. Must be able to lift up to 60 lbs. and assist with loading/unloading. Managing in/out in the loading dock area. 50/50 inside/outside job, dress for weather. Must be 18 or older.

Judge Drivers

- 1-2 people, help transporting judges to/from airport, hotel(s), show site. This is split with show hosts over the weekend. About 2-3 weeks prior to the show MEPA will provide a list of rides needed for the weekend. Drivers must be over 18 with a reliable vehicle and a cell phone. You may also request that a judge use a ride share service (Uber) and then your booster program will reimburse them at the contest. Number of rides needed varies from 1-10 shared between show hosts. Must have a clean vehicle at all times, and group hotel shuttles to/from the site will require a Van or SUV.

Ticket Policies & Broadcasting/Recording

Admission Prices

Ticket prices will be set by MEPA in 2023, but **the responsibility of carrying out ticket sales will be that of each show host.** If you are offering presale, you must share your store link with the MEPA Director of Operations so it can be put on the website for your benefit. If you are only offering tickets the day of the event, it is advised that you offer both a cash and card option.

MEPA can provide technology and software to accept tickets paid with a card and preorders for a fee of 4% of your net card profit.

Box Office Hours

MEPA has determined that your box office/admissions volunteers should be assisting spectators forty-five (45) minutes prior to the first performance and may close fifteen (15) minutes prior to the end of the competitive schedule.

Student Wristbands

Each group will receive backside passes for performers and 10 staff front side passes. It is a MEPA policy that there is no discount pricing for back side seating or for staff members beyond the first 10. **There can be no exception to this policy.**

Why doesn't MEPA allow show hosts to offer discounted or free tickets?

To help group directors keep their experience as consistent as possible, MEPA has a series of standardized policies. This keeps the director from having to make plans based on differing policies each week. And while you may feel like you're doing the directors a favor by offering discounted tickets to them or their parents, it can cause larger problems within the circuit and with directors who were counting on the standard policy.

Wristbands

Wristbands must be used for spectators/staff and backside (performer) admissions. Wristbands must be placed on the spectator's wrist at admissions and should be tight enough they cannot be removed and given to another person. This is to ensure spectators do not "swap" wristbands once in the gym or after performances—which helps your bottom line and keeps the MEPA contest experience consistent.

You will need a minimum of two different colored wristbands—at least one for spectators/staff and one for performers. MEPA suggests you use a white, black, or another nondescript color (beige, gray) for performer wristbands as these are less noticeable and less distracting during performances. Some show hosts use separate colors for each admission price (adults, students, seniors, etc.) which is fine but is not a requirement.

Group staff members should receive the SAME COLOR WRISTBAND AS SPECTATORS. Each group gets 10 of these "front side" wristbands at Group Check In. One of the group's staff

members, typically the Group Director, will not require a wristband, unless they arrive at the event venue without their official MEPA badge.

Alternative Means of Entry & Badges

MEPA staff and board members may enter the performance area using their MEPA badge. Judges are provided MEPA badges, but may also use their WGI badge to access the performance area. Please advise your door workers that if a person states that they are a judge or MEPA contest staff, but have misplaced or forgotten their MEPA badge, they should allow them to enter the performance area and then locate the Contest Administrator.

As mentioned above, Group Directors are provided a Director's Pass for the season. **This pass is good for one person and only the person whose name is displayed on the badge. If you notice multiple people wearing the badge from the same group, alert the Contest Administrator.** This badge allows the individual wearing it entry to the performance area.

MEPA Staff, Board of Directors, and Judge badges will look different from the Director's Pass badges so that show hosts and workers can easily identify them.

PLEASE NOTE: The only badges that allow entry to MEPA events are MEPA and WGI badges. We had incidents reported to us in 2019 of directors/staff from other circuits gaining entry to MEPA events using their TriState (TMA), OIPA, and/or other regional circuit badges.

MEPA will provide a sign prior to the event that should be printed and posted at each entrance displaying the accepted badges. Hosts should add their wristband colors to these signs in the space provided prior to posting them.

Video Recording & Broadcasting

MEPA prohibits any Show Host from videotaping, broadcasting, streaming, distributing, for a charge or complimentary, any group performance, including but not limited to director's copies. MEPA asks that you use all reasonable means to prevent the recording, reproduction or transmission of any part of the event by anyone without the express consent of MEPA's Director of Operations or Board President.

There are to be no video passes for groups nor is there to be any area set aside for groups to record themselves. If you have any questions about this, please ask your Contest Administrator.

Other Considerations and Requirements

Internet Access

MEPA must have high-speed access to the Internet at all times. Wi-Fi is required with a bandwidth able to handle uploading large media files.

Please secure—and test—all log-ins and/or passwords for Wi-Fi access prior to the contest date. Passwords and log-in information should be provided to the Director of Operations approximately 10 days before the contest date. PROPOSED FOR 2023 - MEPA will operate its own separate, self-provided internet hotspot for contest officials and staff.

First Aid

Winter guard and indoor marching ensemble performances are physical in nature and because of that, minor injuries often result. **MEPA requires that each show have first aid available on the premises at all times.** This can be anyone with medical training (EMT, RN, physician, etc.) that allows them to treat minor injuries (give ice packs, apply Band-Aids, etc.) and/or assess a performer in order to call for additional help.

This person should be stationed in, or very nearby, the performance and or/warm up areas and should be dedicated to the task of first aid (not working a shift in the concession stands, etc.) so they are ready and available when needed.

Awards

Show hosts are responsible for purchasing and handing out awards using the standard certificate template provided by MEPA.

The certificate must meet the following requirements:

- 8.5" x11" in size
- High quality, full color copy – please use a professional printer or printing service (ex. FedEx/Kinkos) Printing on a home office INKJET printer is NOT acceptable. An office color laser printer is acceptable.
- Presented in a high-quality frame.

MEPA will provide a template for the certificate that must be used. If you have questions about this process, please contact the MEPA Director of Operations.

You must award the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places in each class as well as certificates for groups performing in exhibition. No additional awards may be awarded.

Please provide a single table and boosters and/or student representatives to distribute for awards. MEPA will provide a tablecloth for the table on the competition day.

MEPA representatives will assist in lining students up for awards, but our staff/board do NOT distribute awards. Please designate an adult to manage the awards process and have students or booster representatives assigned to hand them out.

Vendors

As a show host, you may receive calls or e-mails from vendors who would like to sell guard and percussion related items at your event. The MEPA policy on this is as follows:

- Priority is given to MEPA Sponsors. All for profit vendors must be prescreened by the MEPA Director of Operations prior to your event.
- If requested, two tables and two chairs must be placed in the most ideal position (for spectator traffic flow) for MEPA merchandise sales at no cost to MEPA.
- The next most ideal positions should go to any member group who wishes to sell items or set up an informational/recruitment table. While these vendors may not be charged, you are not required to provide tables if they aren't available. If possible, please be accommodating.
- The third type of vendor would be anybody else who wishes to sell something. MEPA suggests that you charge outside vendors at least \$50, but MEPA prohibits any charge above \$200. Often, school rules prohibit the use of appliances related to preparing food items by kiosks so make sure to check with your school district policies.
- One final thought: While MEPA appreciates outside vendors, when MEPA or individual groups sell items at your show, those profits are being put back into the performing groups. MEPA appreciates anything you can do to help support these efforts.

“MEPA Contest Box” & Tarp Transportation

MEPA requires that show sponsors facilitate the moving of the MEPA performance floor, sound system, merchandise, and tabulation equipment. These items will be secured in the “MEPA Contest Box” which will be padlocked. A trailer with a ramp or box truck with lift is needed to transport it.

If you're a Sunday show, you make arrangements to pick the box up with the Saturday show sponsor. If you're a Saturday show sponsor, make arrangements with the show sponsor from the previous Saturday or Sunday competition. (MEPA is the host for all Nutter Center events—please contact the MEPA Director of Operations for pick up from Nutter Center.)

The MEPA box must arrive at the contest location and be housed indoors *at least* 4 hours prior to the start of the show. Because this box may also contain expensive equipment, we ask that you keep it in a secure place

Important Forms

At the end of this manual you will find important forms and documents related to your show. Digital copies are available independent of this handbook. If you have been selected to host a MEPA event, please complete the show contract ASAP. It must be returned no later than October 31. If you have not returned this form by this date, MEPA may assess a \$200 late fee that is added on to your show sponsor fee.

All forms should be completed online and will go to the MEPA Director of Operations at the e-mail listed in the Contact section of this document.

For any additional questions, please contact the MEPA Director of Operations at the contact information in the Contact section of this document.

Running a Profitable Event

Concessions

Many Show Hosts have said that donations of their concession food and drinks are one way they save a lot of upfront expenses.

Possibilities for Concession Donations:

- Establish a connection with your local food distributors and contact those companies armed with information about who you are and what you do and ask for the donations.
- Ask your boosters for donations.
 - Divide your students into groups based on last name. Have the A-F names bring a case of diet soda. F-M bring a case of non-caffinated beverage. N-Z bring in regular or non-carbonated beverages. This potentially saves you a couple hundred dollars in costs, and yields 100% profit from anything sold.
 - Bake Sales also help concession sales. Cookies, brownies, and cupcakes are very popular. If a few parents of the group bring in a tub of cookies, it can create an all profit scenario.
- Check with local bakeries or donut shops who might toss out day old items.
- Your school may have the ability to purchase items in bulk from their distributors or may be able to put you in touch with their distributors who are willing to work with you.

Promote your event

The more tickets sold for the event equates to more income for you as a Show Host. Do whatever you can to spread the word about your event. Use Social Media, hang fliers in your hallways, and tell your community churches and diners about what you're doing for the kids in your community.

50/50 Raffle

Review with your district the possibility of conducting a 50/50 raffle at your hosted event.

Money Saving Ideas

Judge / Staff Meals - Most Show Hosts ask their booster parents to make the meals in a potluck style for the event team. When booster parents provide a dish they made for under \$10, it saves the booster budget hundreds of dollars in catering costs.

Use Booster Parents as resources - Challenge your team to find the best deals when it comes to concessions. Compare prices at Costco vs Sam's Club vs Walmart vs Kroger.

Offer free marketing for corporate donors - If your local grocery store provides you significant discounts or donates all of your pizza for the event, show your appreciation by offering them a spot on your boosters website, a placard on your equipment truck, or on a banner that hangs in your band room. You can also work with the MEPA Director of Operations for ideas.



APPENDIX A - 2023 SHOW HOST CONTRACT

[TO COMPLETE THIS CONTRACT, CLICK HERE!](#)

Organization Hosting Event (group, school, circuit, etc.):

School or Booster Group Contact Info

Competition Site Name: _____

Complete address:

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Mid East Performance Association (MEPA) has created a show host handbook which is included with this contract. Please read this manual in its entirety as you will be responsible for adhering to all rules and guidelines contained in it.

I have read the above and certify that our facility and the sponsoring organization meet all requirements. I also certify that I have notified all district personnel of this event and have gained official approval. Finally, I have read the 2023 Show Host Handbook in its entirety and agree to follow all guidelines.

[TO COMPLETE THIS CONTRACT, CLICK HERE!](#)

IF THE ABOVE LINK IS NOT CLICKABLE, VISIT www.MEPA-CIRCUIT.ORG/Resources to locate this contract and other documents.



**APPENDIX B - FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR MEPA EVENTS
(DUE 30 DAYS AFTER CONTEST)**

NOTE TO HOST: This information is for demographic information only. It will not be used to increase your fees or diminish your profits. The number of tickets sold is of extreme importance.

CONTEST DATE & EVENT HOST _____

Number of adult tickets sold (19 yrs old and over)	COST PER TICKET	\$?
Number of student tickets sold (7-18 yrs old)	COST PER TICKET	\$?
Number of senior citizen tickets sold (62 and over)	COST PER TICKET	\$?
Number of child ticks sold (6 yrs and under)	COST PER TICKET	\$?

INCOME:

TOTAL TICKET SALES	\$
PROFIT ON FOOD CONCESSION	\$
PROFIT ON PROGRAM BOOK (if applicable)	\$
PROFIT ON EVENT SPECIFIC APPAREL (if applicable)	\$
PROFIT ON VENDORS/EXHIBITORS	\$
PROFIT ON PRACTICE FACILITIES	\$
DONATIONS AND/OR SPONSORSHIPS	\$
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME (detail on next page)	\$
TOTAL INCOME	\$

EXPENSES:

MEPA CONTEST FEES	\$
FACILITY RENTAL	\$
WRISTBANDS	\$

ADVERTISING	\$
AWARDS	\$
SECURITY	\$
HOTEL (JUDGES, ETC)	\$
STAFF/JUDGES FOOD	\$
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES (detail below)	\$
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$

Miscellaneous Explanations:

PROFIT:

TOTAL INCOME	\$
	less
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$
PROFIT	\$

Authorized Signature _____ **Date** _____

Print Name _____ **Title** _____