



Brent Uzzo, Keynote Speaker 2024

Brent Uzzo started in photography as a boy of twelve years old when he converted his family's only bathroom in the house into a darkroom...*this was not received well and was short lived.* He then approached his local newspaper for some instruction and mentoring. To his surprise, he was given free reins to the darkroom at night, which included his own set of keys and free coke-colas from the break room...a career was born! He worked there and various other newspapers throughout high school and college.

In 1974, Brent was asked to manage a photo stand at the World's Fair Expo 74 in Spokane, Washington. He sold 24 x 36 black and white photo posters for \$4.95 each. When the Fair closed, he thought it was the end of his Amusement photography ride. However, that winter he went to live in Colorado and while there he visited a studio owned by Moses Swindler in Estes Park. Mr. Swindler was selling 4 x 5 polaroid costumed photos for \$30 a piece! He thought that was a great way to make a living. He had heard about an Amusement Park opening (Adventureland Park) in Des Moines, Iowa. So, Brent decided to open an Amusement photography studio there and just like that he was back in the business.

Over the next 49 years, Brent would have Antique Photo studios in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, Breckenridge, Colorado, Galena, Illinois, the Iowa State Fair, and the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota. He had ride photos, front gate photos, Santa Photos, commercial studios and portrait studios. His studios were featured in numerous local and national magazines, newspapers and on television. In 2022, Brent closed his longest running studio in Adventureland Park (1975 - 2022).

Brent will tell anyone who asks that his greatest achievement in the industry is helping to form AAPI. He says that *"Service to AAPI is a duty in which I take great pride. AAPI has helped our industry grow and prosper. Working together, we can build on this foundation to increase services to our members."*

Brent served as the first Vice President, the second President (1995 – 1998), and numerous years as a Board Member of this organization. He received the Martin & Bertha Glaser Award in 2001 and several service awards. Over the years, his studios received countless Photo Contest Ribbons including two Best in Show. At the January 2023 AAPI Convention, Brent was inducted into AAPI's Hall of Fame.

Brent will be the 2024 AAPI Convention Keynote Speaker sharing his history and wisdom from his many years in the business and as a member of AAPI.