

the chatter



November/December 2019 | Vol. XXVIII No. 22

Making the Capital Chapter “Unmissable” in 2020!

JOHN RUBSAMEN

It's that time of year when our chapter reflects on the hard work and accomplishments of the past 12 months. It is also a time to look toward the future and set our sights on goals we want to achieve in the new year, and new decade!

The Capital Chapter has focused on a theme of “DISRUPT + PARTICIPATE!” in 2019. Our current President, Vicki Johnson, has guided us through a series of innovations designed to encourage participation. This included the incorporation of new meeting set designs, interactive event apps, and new branding. This vision was brought to life by the hard work of our volunteers and chapter leaders.

I want to congratulate Vicki on her leadership, guidance, and accomplishments as she continued to move the chapter toward a strong future. I also want to thank the volunteers who made these highlights a reality. These accomplishments have set the stage for an exciting transformation into the next generation Capital Chapter!

In line with disruption and innovation, the goal for any business event is to be “unmissable”, and that will be our focus as we head into 2020.

In order to accomplish this, a Strategic Planning Taskforce of chapter members was assembled to evaluate the chapter's needs, strengths, and areas for opportunity to grow and further engage membership in the chapter. We have listened, and before the end of the year we will be revealing a new three-year strategic plan for the chapter. This plan will be focused on the member experience and creating opportunities to engage YOUR way!

To give you a glimpse of what to expect in 2020, we are working with our supplier partners to revamp the formats of chapter education and networking events. This change will provide a collaborative and immersive experience for all. Watch for more integration of technology, experimental

formats, and a consolidation of events designed for high impact and to meet a broad spectrum of member needs. Content will be curated to provide relevant best practices for every career level, and valuable networking to expand your community of resources.

This dynamic new model will enrich the volunteer experience through collaboration, while providing more opportunities for members to be engaged at a variety of levels crafted for busy work/life schedules.

As we build on the strong foundation set over the course of the past few years, I encourage each of our members to maximize the investment of being a PCMA Capital Chapter member: by discovering the incredible impact you can have on the business events industry through volunteering at any level that fits your lifestyle.

2020 will be an exciting year for the PCMA Capital Chapter! I look forward to working with each of you as we re-imagine the member journey and set the course for our chapter's future! Let's build an “Unmissable” 2020 together!

John Rubsamen
Director of Meetings and Events, Americans for the Arts



The PCMA Capital Chapter is where “You Belong”!

Mission: The mission of PCMA and the Chapter is to be the leading organization for meeting and event professionals by delivering superior and innovative education and promoting the value of professional convention management.

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If you have ideas for future Chatter Issues, please send them to pcma.capital.comm@gmail.com - we are also accepting articles for our library to be used for future issues, if you would like to write something, send an email for article guidelines.

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

**message from the board****FROM YOUR OUTGOING PRESIDENT**

I started my year as President with the goal to bring a bit of disruption to PCMA's Capital Chapter educational programs. I truly believe we accomplished that vision!

From the messaging, branding, program content and delivery, our dedicated Chapter volunteers have focused on offering fresh content that speaks to the changes taking place in our industry and our world. The feedback we have received from each of you has been tremendous and allowed us to continue to alter not just how and what we offer our members, but examine why we do what we do.

The Capital Chapter has been busy with various "projects", each one critical to continuing to build a strong framework for the future. We are wrapping up our work on a three-year strategic plan which will guide us moving forward in our approach to member benefits and ROI. Additionally, we are firming up the agreement with an Association Management Company to provide tactical and logistical support and also offer a resource for the board to learn best practices and more strategic methods in all aspects of our work on behalf of the Chapter, PCMA and you! Finally, we continue to evaluate the number and types of events/programs we offer with a goal to consistently be the outstanding leader in the greater DC area for education and networking.

Personally, this journey has been incredibly fulfilling for me. I won't lie, it's a lot of work, but the very best kind of work. The ability to see measurable results, engage with members in a more personal way, and extend any insight I may have has been a true pleasure. I have learned so much from my fellow board members. Chairs and Co-Chairs along the way. It's a gift they have given me that I will treasure for the remainder of my career.

While volunteering may seem overwhelming, we are also in the midst of working on making it more manageable and I feel sure that the incoming board and leadership will continue to work in this area. The goal is to ensure that volunteer engagement is not an ugly word and instead brings the kind of satisfaction that I have been fortunate enough to receive.

Our membership could not be in better hands with the 2020 Board slate. It has been a tremendous honor and privilege to serve and as I have told John Rubsamen, your incoming President, I am not going anywhere, just moving over to allow for more innovation and growth in everything we offer the membership.

Who says disruption is a negative thing? It rarely is when you direct your focus toward making positive impact, something I feel we have certainly excelled at this year. Thank you for this opportunity.

|| **Vick Johnson**, CMP

HOW BETTER AUDIENCE INSIGHTS LEAD TO BETTER MEETINGS

Events, by their very nature, need an audience. It sounds simple, but surprisingly, it's where many meeting planners stumble. Why? Because they fail to emphasize the **#1 rule: Know your audience.**

It's easy to understand why. Planners have a myriad of things to worry about leading up to an event. From registration to housing, session content to budget management, and many lose sight of the purpose or mission of their work: to execute an amazing experience for the people who attend the event.

Audiences, however, are not a monolith, and one size fits all is for mittens, not messaging. Think about how you consume products or services. Are your needs, habits, and motivations the same as your neighbor's? Your coworker's? Your uncle's?

While you may already have a grasp on who your audiences are, every marketer can benefit from gaining a deeper understanding of what their audiences want. By first figuring out who you want to talk to and how you need to talk to them, your efforts will resonate with the people who will benefit from what you have to say. And the better you understand your audiences, their goals,

and their concerns, the more likely you are to achieve your objectives and desired outcomes. **How to do this? Audience segmentation.**

SEGMENTING YOUR AUDIENCES ENABLES YOU TO:

- > Know the level of investment you'll need relative to the size and value of each target audience
- > Strategically justify these investments
- > Identify the internal stakeholder resources (financial and otherwise) you'll need to optimize reach and impact for each target audience
- > Develop robust personas to inform your marketing and experience design approach for maximum engagement

And there's good news! Audience segmentation studies don't need to be performed annually. Instead, consider completing one every 2-5 years, depending on your industry and the velocity of change within your business.

|| **Bill Kitto | FREEMAN**
Vice President, NE Region

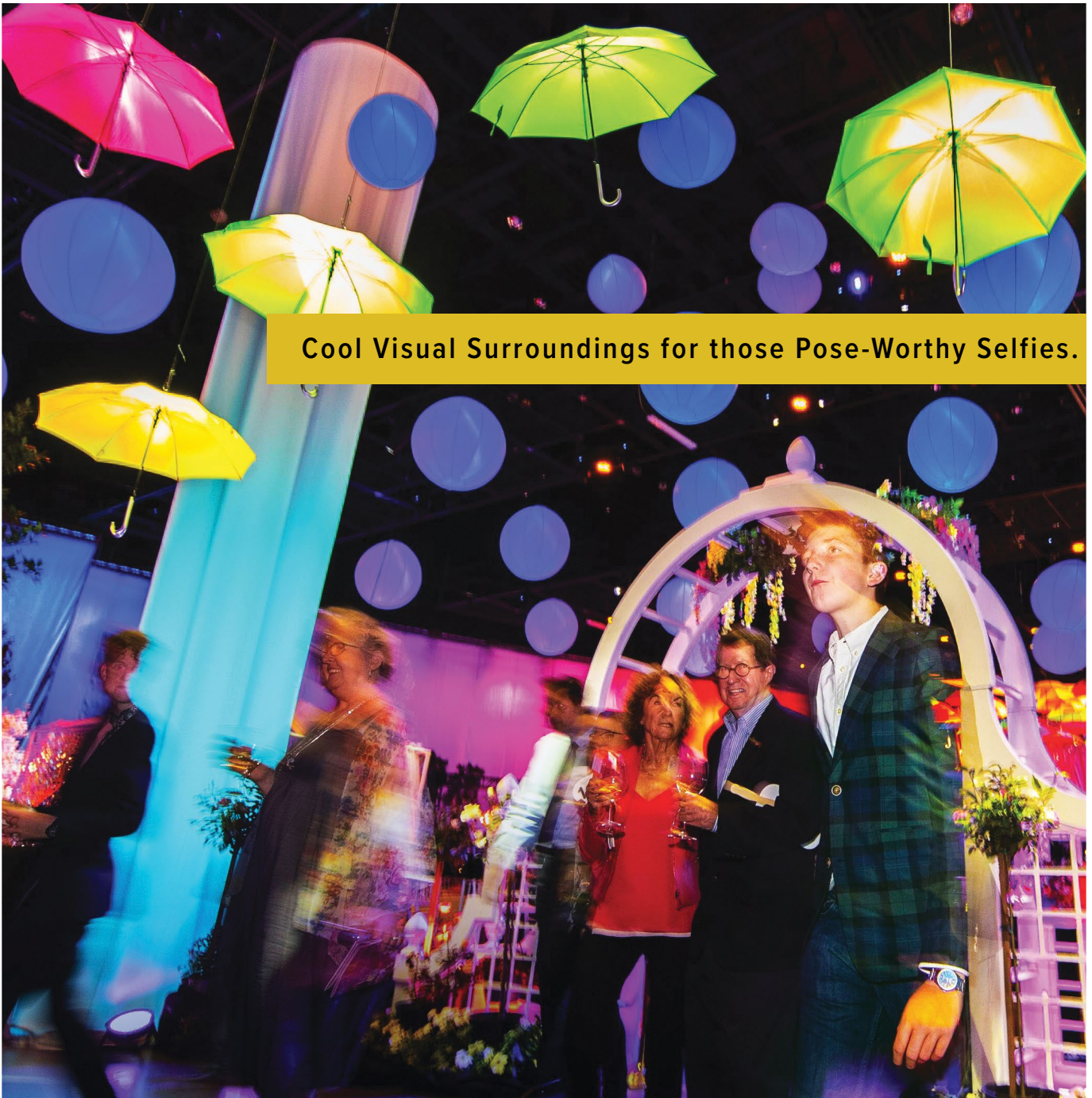
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Bill Kitto | Vice President, NE Region

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Sponsorship Committee

Sponsorship kicked off 2019 with a fantastic opening reception at PNC Park in Pittsburgh during Convening Leaders. The momentum continued from there with events throughout the DC metro area during the year.

In partnership with Marriott Hotels, the Capital Chapter for the first time ever, was able to identify hotels in advance with a specific date for all our meetings during the year. This gave the Sponsorship Committee more time to work with our monthly sponsors - before, during and after the program. Making sure that each and every sponsor received and used their benefits this year was a key focus for the committee. We also solicited feedback from each sponsor, asking how we can continue to engage with them and enhance their sponsorship with the Capital Chapter.

This year, communication with our sponsors was front and center. Our sponsors told us what makes them stay engaged and we listened. As a result of these efforts, we are rolling out a new "Partnership Prospectus" beginning in 2020. The Capital Chapter truly views our sponsors as partners. Gone are the heavy metal categories of Diamond, Silver, Gold and Bronze. In place are new categories and benefits. As always, we can customize a package to any financial level.

Thank you does not seem to cover our gratitude to the venue sponsors who were wonderful to work with this year - PNC Park, Holiday Inn Alexandria, Pinstripes, The Ronald Reagan Building, The Westin DC, Westfields Marriott Washington Dulles, Marriott Wardman Park, Marriott Metro Center, Marriott Bethesda North, The Conrad Washington DC and the Renaissance Arlington Capital View.

We know that if it were not for our sponsors, we could not host such high quality education and networking events each year. A huge thank you to all of our sponsors - Visit KC, Three City Collective, Visit Indy, Experience Grand Rapids, Visit Cleveland, Projection, San Francisco Travel, Visit Raleigh, CMR-Convention Management Resources, Pike Productions, LA Tourism, Choose Chicago, Destination Madison, Louisville Tourism, Visit Austin and Cincinnati USA. For our Platinum Level Sponsors this year - Experience Kissimmee, Accor Hotels, Visit Charlotte and Vancouver CVB - a huge round of applause comes from our committee to each of you!

Our Annual and Premier Sponsors keep our well-oiled machine moving forward each and every month. Thank you to EPNAC, Freeman, performedia, PRG and Marriott International.

The Sponsorship Committee would like to wrap up 2019 with a big Thank You to each of you, for making this a great year. We look forward to working with our Partners in 2020 as the education and networking will be unmissable.

Geralyn Krist, CMP
Global Account Executive, ConferenceDirect



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Communications Committee

It's hard to believe another year has come and gone. We are so proud of our committee and their hard work writing, editing, and corralling content for the Chatter.

Producing six issues rather than 12 went really well last year, so we continued with the same plan in 2019. Not only does it help the budget bottom line, but it streamlines production processes for everyone involved.

In keeping with the theme of disruption, we created some new features designed to get to know our members a little more. These features included "Chapter Members and Their Pets", "What I Thought I'd Do", and "What Are You Reading". We also kept useful features that proved to be valuable to our members like "As Seen in the PCMA Catalyst". We hope you had as much fun reading our light-hearted and informative content as our team had creating it.

Our Communications Committee is small but mighty, and no committee can be successful on its own. We are grateful for the support of our stellar sponsors and work of the Sponsorship Committee. Additionally, Emerging Professionals, Professional Development, Membership, Government Relations, and Advocacy and Community Services create the events we enjoy all year long and ultimately help craft the content for articles and features.

We are also grateful to Bea Tijerina and the entire Interel team for their creative design and production of the Chatter. Interel's design team (shout out to Anna Genova!) brings our ideas to life and makes each issue look amazing.

This year was filled with sharing experiences, focusing on our members and highlighting how we can learn from one another, laugh with one another and build a stronger chapter.

Once again - thank you to each of our committee volunteers who work to make sure deadlines are met, relevant material is presented and each of you are represented in our six issues. Volunteers are what make our chapter work, be sure to find your place on the team in 2020.

Amanda Clark, CMP
Associate Director NGA Meetings,
National Governors Association

Tanna Pearman
Business Development Director,
THE ROW Reno

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Marketing Committee

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 Our first full year on Instagram resulted in **621** followers! Don't forget to follow us [@pcmacapitalchapter](https://www.instagram.com/pcmacapitalchapter) - and join the conversation!

The Marketing Committee is sixteen members strong and delivers all your social media content – pre, during, and post event! Additionally, publishing monthly campaigns covering a range of topics from Setting Your Professional Goals and Personal Health and Wellness to campaigns tied to speakers for our monthly education events such as Spark!

Our committee designs the graphics you associate with our various events as well as the eye-catching graphics for all of the social media posts. New 'green' graphics were created this year, to allow seamless marketing for each series of events such as Discovery Studios, Capital Classrooms, and Lunch N Learns. We also created over twenty-five unique graphics to promote monthly campaigns, showcase scholarship and award winners,

promote upcoming scholarships and calls to participate, and inform our members of chapter 'goings on' for various other committees.

We strive to elevate our #PCMACC community by bringing the conversations online and featuring you, our members! Thank you for interacting with us in 2019! We look forward to serving you and hope to hear from you using #PCMACC on our social media channels in 2020.

Belinda Humes Hanson
CMP Operations and Program Manager, International Society for Computational Biology

Membership Committee

2019 started off with a bang as Sue Stemley championed our Capital Chapter reception at Convening Leaders in Pittsburgh! This event was different than others, as it was held at PNC Park instead of a standard hotel ballroom. The event was a "home run"!

Mix N' Bowl was another huge success, held at Pinstripes in Georgetown lead by Lauren Chelf and Annette Suriani. These women are organized and run this event like a well-oiled machine. They did such a great job that we have recruited them to do it again in 2020!

Our PMPI/PCMA joint event underwent a change of venue this year and was held at Audi Field. This event was lead on our end by Ashley Eubanks who did a fantastic job!

Our Annual Awards Night formally known as REWIND was renamed Celebrate! Anissa Ladd led this event for us and demonstrated extreme organization and detailed planning. She truly did an outstanding job!

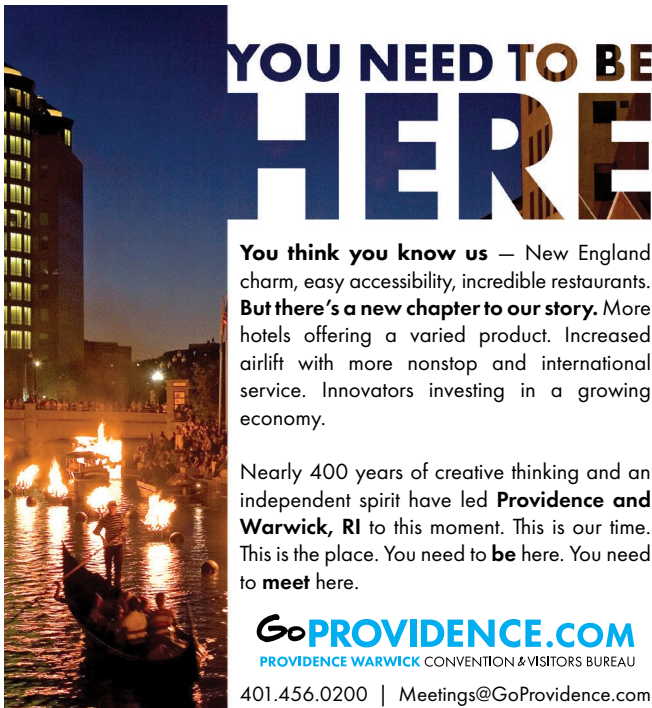
Our PCMA HQ Team took on retention calls this year, and asked the chapter to focus on recognizing birthdays and anniversaries. Marilyn Atuche-Zuill leads a sub-committee including Melinda Colon, Trudy Singh, Juliadi Two, Melissa Tighe, and Brock Bradley, who reach out to all Capital Chapter Members with birthday wishes and significant anniversary wishes. Thank you team!

Other items our committee handled include Star of the Quarter lead by Marilyn Atuche-Zuill, and our Scholarship Task Force for Educon and Convening Leaders lead by Barb Herod. Both Marilyn and Barb did a tremendous job getting these tasks completed!

The entire committee jumped in whenever we were asked to complete a project such as calling members from many years ago by PCMA HQ. Thank you!

Last but not least, I want to thank my Co-Chairs, Christine Fairman and Sue Stemley for a tremendous job this year!

Damara Gomez
National Sales Director, San Diego Tourism Authority

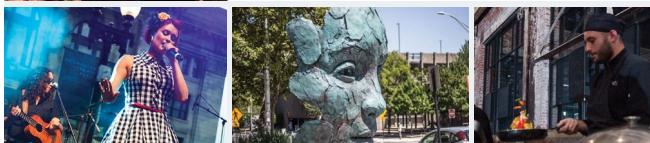


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Community Services Committee

OUR COMMITTEE OF 28 PEOPLE HAD A BUSY YEAR!

In April, Marianna Gallo arranged for our chapter's involvement with the Humane Rescue Alliance, and a group of our members participated in "Meow DC" for the first large cat event of its kind in DC.

In May, Regina Rinks spearheaded participation in Joyful Markets, organized by Martha's Table. Joyful Markets take place in 53 elementary schools in DC, and was created to help reduce hunger by providing access to (and consumption of) fresh fruits and vegetables collected from farmers in the region. We set up fruits and vegetables on tables at a DC school, and helped pass out food to the children who "shopped" for what they wanted.

In July, Phil Saims initiated a collection for "Welcome Home Starter Kits". These kits are provided to people at The Carpenter's Shelter who are transitioning to homes. Phil also arranged for Ms. Jamila Smith from The Carpenter's Shelter to join us at our July 18th meeting. She spoke about the mission of The Carpenter's Shelter and showed a video. The Carpenter's Shelter serves more than 625 homeless and formerly homeless children and adults each year.

In October, Mariana Gallo led our group as we participated in the Humane Rescue Alliance for the fifth year in a row. Thirty-five of our members met at the Humane Rescue Alliance DC building, where we made dog toys and spent time with the shelter dogs and cats. We raised \$1300 for the H.R.A. Thanks to Tourism Toronto for donating \$500 to the cause!

Our ongoing fall project "One Warm Coat" will benefit the organization So Others May Eat and was organized by Pam Lackland and Lisa Luks. We collected coats at our monthly meeting in August and joint event with PMP in October. Thank you to Alisha White for delivering our collected items!

Our final event was held in early November. Peter O'Brien launched this annual event over five years ago in cooperation with the Capital Area Food Bank. Our members spent three hours helping to sort and package food for the 500,000 people in the DC Region who are struggling with hunger and food insecurities. Each year the Capital Area Food Bank sources and distributes over 30 million meals.

A big thanks to all the committee members who participated in making this year an overwhelming success!

Donna Del Gallo
Director Citywide Accounts – DC, San Francisco Travel



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Government Relations and Advocacy Committee

The Government Relations and Advocacy Committee had a memorable year beginning with a newly redesigned Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID) in partnership with the MPI-Potomac Chapter. The committee used our chapter's unique proximity to Capitol Hill as the perfect opportunity to try something new by adding a lobbying element to the program.

Mindful of the varying levels of participation, two different tracks were offered, a morning training in preparation for afternoon appointments on Capitol Hill and a second session filled with education related to advocacy, government relations and community service. Those attendees who visited the hill met with members of congress and their staff to cover The Jolt Act and The Online Booking Scams Act. In addition to these sessions, an event at the Reagan Building, hosted by Experience Kissimmee, found our members creating crafts for the Give Kids the World Foundation. These crafts will be distributed to the many visitors who annually visit the Give Kids the World Village located in Kissimmee, FL.

After GMID, the committee focused their attention on preparing the education session How Regulation and Law Affects Our Industry for the newly rebranded SPARK. The committee used this session for education and to simultaneously engage members during the networking time with a goal of inquiring about how/why our members advocate and support the industry.

In November the PCMA Capital Chapter social media channels were taken over by the Government and Advocacy Committee. The committee focused on educating members of the chapter by sharing news and updates from our monthly calls, photos and

Emerging Professional Committee

WHAT A GREAT YEAR OUR COMMITTEE HAD THIS YEAR.

As a committee our commitment to the ongoing development of emerging professionals in the professional event planning space remains the priority.

This year we continued to drive our mission by elevating and educating those individuals who are new to the industry and remain focused on their own development. The Emerging Professionals Outreach Subcommittee participated in over seven college and university panel discussions and facilitated several shadowing opportunities for students at the Gaylord National. The Emerging Professionals Mentorship Subcommittee continued to match mentors and mentees through our "Meet The Mentor" drive at our chapter events. We had the distinct pleasure of posting over 80 jobs and internship opportunities on our "Generation Meet" blog site this year. Speaking of events the August Capital Classroom was one of our most though provoking classrooms to date. Having a representative of Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials and Gen Z's was both engaging and fun!



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comments from our members about why they advocate for our industry and the future of legal and regulatory implications that may impact our industry in the future.

Thank you to all of the committee members and volunteers who have supported and championed all of our amazing events and initiatives this year! I Look forward to 2020!

Mark your calendars for GMID 2020: April 14, 2020!

Kelly Ferrante Land
Senior Conference and Meeting Manager, National
Association for College Admission Counseling

Lastly, we are very proud of our PCMACC student intern Allison Brennan. As an intern Alison represented both our committee and the chapter as she worked with SPARGO, Omni Shoreham and the American Association for Clinical Chemistry. Alison worked alongside the PCMA team at this year's EduCon conference and also wrote articles and blogs for the committee. We look forward to seeing her rise to new heights in years to come and are certain she will be nothing short of amazing.

As committee chair, I would like to thank the Emerging Professional Committee for making this year such a success. Special thanks to Christine Faiman for assisting with the Internship program, Rasheena Wilson for her work with the Mentorship program, Jessica Baker for her tireless effort with the shadowing program and Rachel Chadderdon my co-chair for all of the hard work on the Capital Classroom event.

Rene McCoy
Area Complex Director of Sales and Marketing, The St Gregory Hotel
Dupont Circle and The Hilton Garden Inn Georgetown

Election & Inauguration Season: Top 3 Factors to Consider When Planning Your Next DC Event

From campaign season through Inauguration Day, there's no better place to plan a political event than in the city that drives policy change and legislative decisions. The nation's capital plays host to influential summits, convenes world leaders, and offers a unique setting for events. But don't overlook these key considerations when selecting a destination for your next high profile event.

POWERFUL VENUE

As with any event, finding the right venue for a fundraiser, rally, debate, election watch party, or inaugural ball is imperative. In a city that is home to prominent venues such as museums, historic buildings, and iconic landmarks, make a statement by staging your political event close to the seat of American democracy. Political events, by nature, derive cachet from their location – opt for a space within close proximity to the White House and U.S. Capitol. This central area also provides opportunities for guests to explore notable sites of Downtown DC, and local attractions including the National Mall, Smithsonian museums, the Washington Monument, and more.

FLEXIBLE EVENT SPACE

In addition to selecting a fitting location, ensure that the space works for your needs. Find a venue with multiple rooms that can be used concurrently based on your event's components. A larger venue that has the capacity and flexibility to host your daytime conference, while also accommodating an evening gala, is ideal. Don't let the space limit you – consider housing all of your programming at one location.

EXPERIENCE & SECURITY

Planning an event is stressful enough without the added demands of managing event VIPs. From security logistics to event planning stressors, seek out a venue where experienced staff is on hand to streamline the process and manage all of the moving parts that come with event execution. Does your venue have experience hosting high-profile summits, coordinating VIPs with security details, or have existing relationships with reliable vendors? Ask the question, because safety and experienced staff are a key consideration when choosing a venue for your political event.

Karen Shao Coberly
Director of Sales, Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center

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Disrupt + ED with the Professional Development Committee

In the year of "Disruption," the Professional Development Committee (PDC) has been quite busy with just that – disruption or change.

Our chapter president Vicki Johnson challenged the committee to tap NEW voices for our market. We gladly accepted the challenge and got to work.

The committee started by rebranding all Capital Chapter education events changing the afternoon education sessions to Discovery Studios and the half-day education program to Spark.

If you attended any of the events, I'm sure you noticed the change in room set. We didn't want traditional sets like theater or classroom and our first Discovery Studio in February was a great example of the change. This room set was requested by our speaker Priya Parker who asked us to create the fishbowl which is a key element to this author's "The Art of Gathering" interactive experience. This format allowed attendees to participate by stepping into the circle when questions applied to them. These questions led to a very open and honest dialogue among the attendees. It was truly a unique event!

We continued "Questioning Our Industry" with tough questions by entering the world of "What If's". This room set featured a soap box platform in the center of the room and tables surrounding, our moderator who was presented with

three rounds of hypothetical questions, crowdsourced by the attendees, including the last and toughest question – "What will break our industry?"

The newly rebranded Spark event featured Kevin Iwamoto's presentation on "Disruption in the Event Industry = Change Management For You". He discussed the impact on Strategic Meetings Management to our industry and the impacts we will continue to feel. The Spark event included six afternoon breakouts including cost saving strategies, how regulation is impacting the industry, and event design. ConnexMe app from Evenium was a great new tool that allowed attendees to be an active part of the content.

The final Discover Studio focused on meeting professionals as agents of change. Industry professional and CEO Scott Steen provided insight and tools on how best to be heard and affect change in your association no matter what role you hold. Desiree Knight joined Scott for a Q & A session to dig further into this conversation.

Your PDC worked hard this year to disrupt the PCMA Capital Chapter learning experience. We hope we achieved the goal of providing new and unique education for your professional and personal life.

Will Trokey
National Sales Manager, Visit Charlotte

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2019 Year in Review

The year 2019 has been an exciting time of innovation and new trends in the meeting industry. Planners are adapting to make conferences and events more engaging and dynamic than ever. With attendees looking to do more outside of the typical meeting space, the opportunities to enhance experiences have grown and give new meaning to the overall attendee definition of a successful meeting.

Previously meetings were promoted to attendees with primary business goals in the forefront and supported by leisure activities and experiences outside the meeting room. That mindset has shifted and meeting participants are now blending business travel with leisure, creating the industry buzzword "bleisure". Activities for attendees before and after the meeting are now as much a priority as the meeting itself with increased attendance the typical result of promotion of the pre/post destination activities for participants and their families.

In the past year, meeting planners have put a growing focus on health and wellness; your destination professionals have answered that need by incorporating overall wellness programs as an additional option for planners to use. These additions include certified yoga instructors for morning programs, outdoor coffee break options and teambuilding excursions. The new programs have proven to be a powerful addition to the overall attendee experience and created a more memorable event for the attendees.

Meeting participants now represent multiple generations, leading to various preferences for where they prefer to stay and meet for business meetings. These unique locations include luxury vacation homes offering hotel-like amenities and spacious accommodations with unique spaces for a more casual and collaborative environment. These venues are especially beneficial to smaller events such as board retreats and incentive trips. Conducting business in these spaces help to increase engagement and encourage creative thinking among meeting participants.

Evolving meeting trends are redefining what success looks like. While it is impossible to predict where the industry will be in a few years, it's an exciting time for planners to be a part of the change and inspire creative solutions for successful meetings.

Cassandra Ruelle
Meeting Sales Manager, Experience Kissimmee



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