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Chatter

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Sustainable Tourism Ecosystems



UNITED STATES

Sustainable Tourism Ecosystems: Driving Green Meetings

Amid COVID-19 recovery efforts, sustainability has emerged as a critical strategy for organizations, governments, and consumers alike. So, what does this mean for destinations and the events industry?

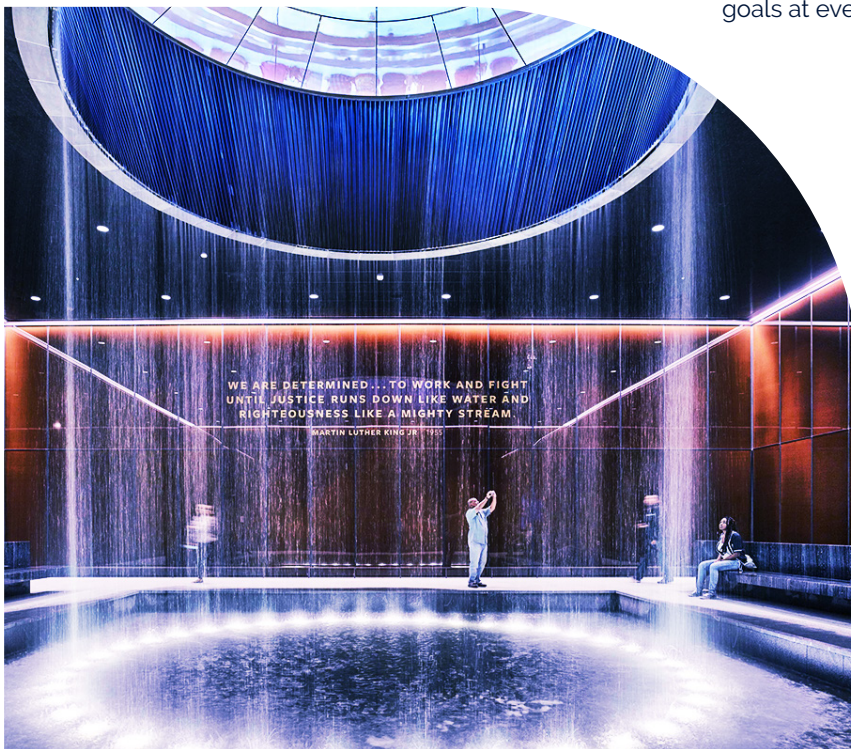
This growing demand for action has created exciting opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of meetings and events. Washington, D.C., the world's first LEED certified green city, is home to nearly 30 LEED certified hotels and structures dedicated to lodging.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is the most widely used green building rating system in the world. Available for virtually all building types, LEED provides a framework for healthy, highly efficient, and cost-saving green buildings, cities, and communities.

The nation's capital, home of our Capital Chapter, has emerged as a sustainable destination with third party green certifications at the city level and provides green options supporting every aspect of travel, tourism, and the business of meetings.

In 2020, a year when public health and safety needs were paramount, net zero goals also rose to the forefront as many cities prioritized climate action in their COVID-19 recovery strategies. In the first nine months of 2020, the number of local governments and businesses making **net zero emissions commitments**, as reported by the United Nations Climate Change, roughly **doubled**: 1,541 companies, 823 cities and 101 regions. Companies are evaluating how their investments connect to the achievement of ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) goals at every level.

[Continued on page 4](#)



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**MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD**

What an amazing virtual Global Meetings Industry Day 2021 to celebrate! Designed by our very talented Government Relations and Advocacy and GMID Committees, not only for the PCMA Capital Chapter but the greater Washington DC industry community, as well as several PCMA Chapters across the country. For me it was a stark reminder of when GMID 2020 was cancelled and our world came to a grinding halt.

As I reflected on this, I thought why is there so much emphasis on just one day? Aren't we celebrating this industry all year round? Isn't this what we have dedicated our careers to, made sacrifices for, and told others about? Haven't you found yourself explaining what you do (multiple times) to your family, friends, and perfect strangers on an airplane? So I ask again, why is Global Meetings Industry Day only 1 time a year?

The answer lies in how it got started. GMID was created in 2016 to raise the profile of the meetings and events industry by Meetings Mean Business, an industry-wide coalition to showcase the value that meetings and conventions bring to businesses and communities. What came out of this collaboration was great advocacy for the industry, and that's where we come in to keep this moving.

This year we focused on the American Rescue Plan Action of 2021, Hospitality and Commerce Job Recovery Act of 2021, and the Clean Start: Back to Work Tax Credit. Each of these important policies are needed to help our industry recover. Prior to the pandemic, direct travel and travel-supported jobs accounted for **17%** of the workforce. However our industry lost over **65%** of its workforce during Covid-19. And we need help!

So, what's next? Write a letter to your legislators about these policies and why they are important to you and our industry. Share your personal stories of how the pandemic has affected you, your family, and your industry colleagues. Use your voice to ensure our industry is heard and recognized for the significant value we bring to businesses and communities. I had never written a letter like this before, but I have now, and I ask you to consider the same. Together we can make a difference!

Mary Kreins, Senior National Sales Director
Disney Meetings & Events

CAPITAL CHAPTER | capital@pcma.org

THE CHATTER | pcma.capital.com@gmail.com

Email if you have comments or suggestions. We are also accepting articles for our library to be used for future issues. If you would like to submit an article, send an email for guidelines.

continued

Sustainable Tourism Ecosystem**Driving Green Meetings**

For Washington, D.C., the commitment to sustainability is nothing new. In 2017, it was named the world's **first LEED-certified city**, earning a Platinum rating, the highest level of certification. With nearly 1,800 LEED-certified green buildings and interior spaces, the nation's capital topped the 2020 annual **list of top 10 states for LEED in the United States** (although it is unranked because it is a federal district).

Those of us living and working in the District of Columbia may appear biased about the achievements in our back yard. And to be transparent, we are—but not without reason. These efforts have established Washington, D.C. as a sustainable destination focused on delivering visitor journeys that reduce the environmental impact associated with events. Today, D.C. is a green tourism ecosystem: a complex network of interconnected systems that work together to deliver triple-bottom-line results, benefiting people, the planet, and profits.

EVENTS AND CONVENTIONS

Venues are the cornerstone of this tourism and event planning ecosystem. There are over 40 LEED certified public assembly spaces within the city including stadiums and arenas, entertainment spaces, galleries and more. The LEED Gold **United States Institute of Peace** building, shown in the cover photo, features floor-to-ceiling windows and an iconic domed roof. Construction and materials were locally procured and made to last, including the cast-in-place concrete and its reinforcing steel. The five-story headquarters is a unique venue for receptions, seated dinners, film screenings, meetings, and conferences.

ACCOMMODATIONS, FOOD AND BEVERAGE (to name just a few...)

- Founded by activist Katharine Lo, **the Eaton DC hotel earned LEED Gold** certification in 2020.
- **The Concordia**, also LEED Gold, features a green roof and green screen that reduce rainwater runoff from entering local waterways and helps insulate the building from the elements.
- **The Marriott Marquis Washington DC** is a LEED Silver 15-story property.



- Three of the farm-to-table restaurants in the Farmers Restaurant Group located in Washington, D.C., including **Founding Farmers (2009 LEED Gold)**, **Farmers Fishers Bakers (2014 LEED Silver)** and **Farmers & Distillers (2018 LEED Silver)**, are LEED-certified.
- Within the LEED Silver **Motto by Hilton DC City Center**, formerly known as The POD DC hotel, the **Crimson View** features large bi-folding glass doors that transform it into a large indoor-outdoor porch.

ATTRACTIONS

- The **LEED Gold National Museum of African American History and Culture** brings together people to explore and celebrate the African American story. It opened its doors in September 2016 and welcomed more than 3.5 million visitors in its first two years.
- Located in the Navy Yard neighborhood in Southeast Washington, D.C., the 41,546-seat **Nationals Stadium** was the first professional sports venue in the nation to gain LEED certification.
- As important as it is to have such a diverse approach to sustainability contained within a single city, that is not what makes Washington, D.C. so unique. And while the sheer volume of green buildings found within the District's 68.34 square mile boundary is greater than any other city in the U.S., the true value here is in the synergistic interactions that make it a green tourism ecosystem. The LEED certified **Marriott Marquis Washington, DC** is connected to the city's largest convention center and resides in the same zip code with nearly 200 other LEED green buildings that serve both visitors and the local community. This interconnection means that as a destination, Washington, D.C. supports the achievement of sustainability, ESG and CSR goals via a strong established network.

Mayor Muriel Bowser couldn't have said it better when she noted, "It is in the best interest of Washington, D.C.'s safety, economy and future to take sustainability and resiliency seriously, and as the nation's capital, we have a special obligation to lead the way on environmental issues."

Britt Jackman, CMP, Conferences & Events
U.S. Green Building Council

Selina Holmes, VP, LEED Marketing
U.S. Green Building Council



PHOTO CREDITS:

U.S. Institute for Peace (photo credit: © U.S. Institute for Peace) | Marriott Marquis (Photo credit: © Rick Lew)
Founding Farmers (Photo credit: Greg Powers) | Nationals Stadium (none)
Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture (Photography by Alan Karchmer for the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture)



Two *Flagship* Convention Centers Leading the Way



Boston's AIPC GOLD-Certified Convention Centers.

No other city offers two industry-leading convention facilities – the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center and the Hynes Convention Center. Both provide flexible, world-class exhibit and meeting space that easily adapts to your needs. Plus award-winning services and state-of-the-art technology, including free building-wide Wi-Fi. So you can plan your event your way, setting your sights on success as your vision comes to life.

Schedule a site visit or learn more at SignatureBoston.com or 877-393-3393.

Boston. Bringing Great Events to Light.



MASSACHUSETTS CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY

WELLNESS

The Wellness Series How To Stay Well In The Office

As we approach 12 months of transitioning and pivoting to the pandemic lifestyle, many Capital Chapter members have gotten used to their homes being their offices. This situation causes a lack of boundaries for the employee to separate work from their personal life. We asked members what their employers are doing to recognize this shift in balance and what they've appreciated about these opportunities. Additionally, we focused on what organizations can do to bring back the momentum of being in-person and promote team building.

As more vaccines become available, some offices are starting to open up. Many of us have become used to our at-home routines, and the transition of going back to the office may not be as easy as we think. We encourage you to put your mental and physical health at the top of your priority list while adjusting to the office routine.

To best prepare for what your office has adapted to, research any new policies and procedures that the building has in place due to COVID-19. You may want to purchase or pack your own items to use at your desk, such as a personal hand sanitizer or headset, to strategically avoid exposure to germs.

Many businesses are starting to bring employees back on a staggered schedule. You may find it useful to start preparing yourself every day as if you are going into the office to get your body ready for the routine. Try to develop a more consistent sleep schedule, dress in full work attire, and pack a lunch or snacks so you can test the ease of eating at your desk safely.

While at your office, take some time to look for any seating areas or outdoor space that you can safely go to during your break. Fresh air

can help your mindset and may make you feel more at ease eating your lunch if avoiding exposure to other people without masks causes concern. Be sure to schedule time in your day to take a break. You may find yourself so consumed with navigating the "new normal" that you could easily forget.

Be sure to hydrate throughout the day to support your physical wellness. Bring a refillable water bottle and a straw to make it easier to drink with your mask on. Additionally, take the time at your desk to practice stretches to keep your body moving. Examples are lowering your chin to stretch the back of your neck, lifting your legs, and straightening them out, or reaching your arms back to release tension in your chest.

It will be an adjustment to find what works best for you to get back into your work routine. Be sure to make any efforts possible to maintain a strong body and mindset.

Christina Pino, CMP, DES
Stellato Meeting Solutions, LLC

Bringing Accessibility to Virtual Meetings

As meeting industry leaders, we have an opportunity to raise the bar on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). When considering DEI in event planning, the focus is on ensuring that all who participate truly feel a sense of being a valued stakeholder. As vital conversations continue on implementing effective DEI strategies, one aspect to consider is those who are differently abled and may have specific barriers to fully participating in our meetings. As event professionals, we must provide bridges for our attendees for them to be fully included, for example, in the very design of the events that we produce. Though the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has long provided basic guidance to follow for accessibility compliance, many of us are delivering content in a virtual environment, which carries new and perhaps unfamiliar barriers to providing an available, effective experience enjoyable for all.

Event professionals have the opportunity to showcase how a carefully planned event strategy goes beyond ADA compliance and asking for dietary restrictions on your registration form.

We all are aware that step one is knowing your audience. Most events right now are virtual and many will become hybrid. When deciding which virtual platform to use, ask yourself if accessing the platform is free and easy to download. Are the virtual functions such as volume controls, chat function, etc., accessible with a screen reader? Does the platform include a closed captioning feature, and if so, do the options cover your audience's needs?

Visual impairment can often be overlooked when it comes to events. According to the National Institutes of Health, 14 million Americans (6%) are visually impaired. Here are some valuable tips to ensure that your event is a welcoming and productive environment for all your attendees.


WHEN DESIGNING PRINTED MATERIALS, WEB SITES, AND POWERPOINTS:

- Use text with sans serif or simple serif large type text at least size 14 and avoid decorative fonts (examples of popular sans serif fonts are Arial, Calibri, Tahoma, Verdana).
- Use bold type when separating headlines and differentiating between sections.
- Avoid using italics or all capital letters.
- The use of different colored lettering for headings is difficult to read for many attendees with low vision.
- Check color contrast; avoid dark backgrounds with a dark print.
- If creating videos, ensure all videos are captioned and check the accuracy of captioning.
- Align all text on the left.
- Offer alternative formats (braille, large print, black and white, e-text version of the document).

TIPS FOR POSTING ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

- If you live-tweet during your events, consider making a document that includes those tweets for participants who may not have access to Twitter.
- Include image descriptions (alt-text) for any photos.
- Caption all videos and ensure that your captioning service is reliable and accurate (at times, free resources are not sufficient to respect attendees who need to see accurate content in the form of captioning).
- Reference the [Federal Social Media Accessibility Toolkit](#), a shared service lead by teams including the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. It is helpful to consider the topic of access through the lens of attendees who may have barriers to fully experiencing content. With education, focus, and planning, we can create and produce high-quality programs that respect all attendees and bring them seamlessly into the event's action. We hope this article has sparked ideas for you to craft equitable event experiences. To view a comprehensive best practices guide for DEI event design, visit our [Chapter's website](#).

 Amanda Clark, CMP, DES

 Mark Harvey, CMP, CMM, Principal
Ethos Meetings and Events



STAR OF THE QUARTER

Congratulations goes to **LYNN WHITEHEAD** from the Communications Committee who is the winner of our Capital Chapter Q1 Star Award! Thank you to Lynn for expanding her volunteer hours to include a serving on a second committee in order to enhance cross-committee efficiency and collaboration.

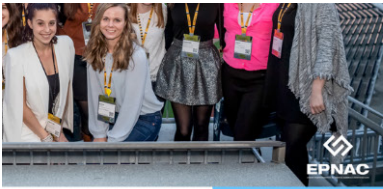
THE OTHER WELL-DESERVING NOMINEES WERE:

GREG MORRIS, Professional Development Committee

MATT KEIM, Marketing Committee

LISA FRENCH, Government Relations and Advocacy Committee

A huge thank you to each of you for your time, dedication and commitment to the Capital Chapter!



EPNAC

TeamEPNAC is ready to help you make your upcoming events a success!

Hybrid, virtual or in person, our team is prepared to provide outstanding customer service to make you look like a super star! Check out our list of services below - at least one of these is bound to fit your needs!

- Virtual Platforms
- Photography
- Videography
- The Headshot Cafe
- SSIT (Selfie Stick iPad)
- Photo booths
- Headshots

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Can I Steal Your Wheel?

This year as we get back in tune and in sync, let's harness some new skills, innovations, and hacks to make our lives a little less stressful and hopefully a bit more fun.

One of the activities I started doing over the past year is catching up on some of the latest and greatest tech tools and applications. Not that I was going to employ many of them myself, as I'm not the most super tech-savvy (though I'm trying to get better!); however, I thought I might be able to help some of my customers and friends by sharing a few of these new tools. We are all in this together, and if I could make someone's day a little brighter by sharing some new information, I considered that a small victory. I'm sure many of you have a lot you could add to the list below, but for starters, here are some of the ones I learned about that I thought were pretty cool:

Anchor: If you have been enjoying Podcasts and have ever thought about starting one of your own, Anchor has made it easy with built-in uploading, recording, and editing. Download the application or learn more at <https://anchor.fm>.

Grammarly: Many of us are writing more often, and this is a great app to keep all your written communication looking professional and polished even when writing from your cell phone. It can also check your writing on all your favorite websites. You can read more about its features at <https://grammarly.com>.

Hootsuite: A great platform for getting your social content messaging out in a streamlined and easy-to-plan way. You can send your content to Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube all from one place! Find out more at <https://www.hootsuite.com>.

Loom: This is a super cool video messaging tool that can simultaneously record your camera, microphone, and desktop. You can use it to automate Powerpoint presentations to add video overlay and make them more engaging. More information at <https://www.loom.com>.

Pixabay: If you need stock photos that are cost-free and copyright-free—this is your jam. You can learn more at <https://pixabay.com>.

Let's keep sharing ideas and information as we continue to get our industry back on track and moving forward.

Christine Cecil, CMP, Senior Sales Executive
Gaylord Palms Hotel & Convention Center

Community Service: Martha's Table

Martha's Table has supported strong children, families, and communities by increasing access to quality education, health and wellness, and family resources. The pandemic has only increased this community need in DC. So alongside amazing partners like Halo Branded Solutions, J Shea Events, Josie's Fun Kitchen and Vickie Johnson & Associates, PCMA Capital Chapter declared May as Martha's Table Month.

The month started with an event to learn all about Martha's Table's Mission. Week 1, we celebrated Taco Tuesday learning how to make Fish Tacos with Martha's Table's Chef Jeff, Margaritas with a Cheers in a Box Mixologist. Guacamole with Ashley Eubanks and refining our knife skills with Vicki Johnson. Week 2 found chapter members rolling up their sleeves to pack groceries at Martha's Table. Week 3, we participated in a virtual Yoga Class before ending the month strong with another in-person volunteer day at Martha's Table.

During the month of May, our chapter's efforts supported more than 1,000 families and raised \$1,030. The outpouring of support was so inspiring that the Capital Chapter Board agreed to match the donations.

You can still **donate** or **volunteer** with Martha's Table. For information on other opportunities, watch the Capital Chapter **Community Services** page and our social media.

Cheri Fairchild, CMP, Associate Director of Sales In-Market East
Caesars Entertainment National Meetings and Events



GMID Hill Week

We have been through a historic year and the impact on our industry has been profound. As we begin to see the light of a recovery, we have been empowered through our advocacy and demonstration of our industry's value.

Last month the Government Relations and Advocacy Committee coordinated Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID) Hill Week as part of the PCMA Capital Chapter's GMID celebration. The effort brought together 45 meeting professionals from the Capital Chapter and partner organizations including the PCMA Greater Midwest Chapter and the Mid-Atlantic CHAMPS coalition (AMPs, IAEE DC, MPI Potomac, RHMP, & SGMP NATCAP).

Participants were grouped into ten teams and assigned key lawmakers with whom to schedule virtual meetings. Our advocacy focused on raising awareness of the economic, labor, and human impact of the pandemic and asking for swift passage of legislation to speed recovery.

Specifically, we asked for support for The Hospitality and Commerce Job Recovery Act of 2021 (H.R. 1346 & S. 477). If signed into law this bill will create new tax relief and recovery incentives for the hospitality and

trade show industries, extend the employee retention tax credit to reduce layoffs and keep individuals employed, and provides a tax credit for middle class families to help revitalize the travel economy.

The Clean Start: Back to Work Tax Credit (H.R. 883) would assist in offsetting costs for sterilization and safety precautions required to gather in-person. New cleaning requirements are a massive financial investment for event venues, restaurants, and gathering places. This tax credit will help alleviate those costs and support improved public health safety measures.

After 23 meetings were held with legislators, we highlighted the work done throughout Hill Week and celebrated GMID with a virtual education event on April 8. Attendees were engaged and energized to hear from distinguished speakers addressing the state of our industry and leading the way forward.

WE WILL BLOSSOM AGAIN!

Mark Decker, Executive Director, Client Relations
MB4 Productions



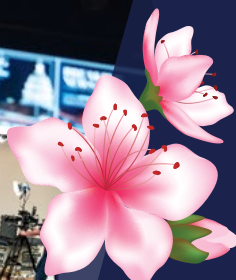
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We Will Blossom Again.



Nominations & Applications for 2022 Capital Chapter Board Positions

The PCMA Capital Chapter Nominating Committee is now accepting nominations and applications for officer and director positions for the 2022 Board of Directors.

The **deadline for nominations is Friday, July 2nd**, and completed applications are due **Friday, July 23rd**.

The benefits of becoming a chapter leader include, but are certainly not limited to:

- Advanced personal and professional growth
- An opportunity to give back to the Chapter, PCMA, and the industry at an elevated level
- Becoming a mentor for future leaders and be mentored by current leaders.

THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS ARE OPEN FOR 2022:

OFFICER POSITIONS:

- > President-Elect (1-year term/3-year commitment)
- > Treasurer (1-year term)
- > Secretary (1-year term)

DIRECTOR POSITIONS:

- > 2 Professional (Planner) Directors (2-year term)
- > 1 Supplier Partner Director (2-year term)

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Remain well informed about the work of the Board and its specific goals.
- Understand the role of PCMA and the Capital Chapter: its members, mission, and services.
- Be thoughtful and objective in all deliberations.
- Review all Board materials in advance of meetings; make every effort to attend monthly Board meetings.
- Make every effort to attend the Annual and Mid-year Leadership Retreats.
- Represent the good of the profession versus any special interest, geographic or personal constituency.
- Demonstrate support for programs and activities of the Chapter by attending them regularly.

Volunteerism is a crucial component and at the core of the continued success of the Capital Chapter and PCMA. This is your Chapter, and taking on a volunteer leadership role is an incredible opportunity to make a lasting and meaningful impact that will last for years.

For more information about the nominations and elections process, please contact Nominating Committee Chair **Jim Kelley** at jkelly@fernexpo.com or capital@pcma.org.

DEADLINES FOR NOMINATIONS:

Friday, July 2nd

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS:

Friday, July 23rd

Where There's A Will There's a Way...to The Hill!

Each year leaders of associations from across the country have an opportunity to connect directly with decision makers in the nation's capital. Known as Hill Day, the event gives representatives a chance to speak with members of Congress to advocate for legislation that positively impacts their respective organizations. Here we highlight two associations' virtual Hill Day activities.

The National Association of Councils on Development Disabilities partners with eight other disability organizations to conduct the Annual Disability Policy Seminar and Hill Day. "The seminar annually attracts 900+ advocates from around the US and its territories to Washington, DC to learn about legislation affecting the disability population," said Deputy Director Robin Troutman. "Speakers at the conference included members of the Administration, Senators and Representatives or their staff and professionals in the subject matter." For the virtual Hill Day, volunteer state captains were utilized to arrange appointments with members of Congress as well as distributing information to the registrants from their state. Representatives participating were from all 50 states, Guam, and American Samoa who talked about issues most important to the disability community. More information can be accessed at www.disabilitypolicyseminar.org.

RESOLVE, The National Infertility Association, partnered with the American Society for Reproductive Medicine for their virtual 2020 Hill Day with 385 participants from all 50 states attending 262 Congressional Meetings. Pre-event training (live and recorded) was provided to participants in addition to social meet ups as well as a cram session the night before to answer last minute questions. "There was a letter campaign to help amplify our message with 5,700 emails sent to lawmakers, and post-event we added 119 new co-sponsors to bills," said Tracie Sullivan, Senior Manager of Grassroots Outreach with RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association. "We also had a volunteer committee of 60+ advocates help us with recruitment, training, engagement/social aspects and a letter campaign." Every state had a designated "State Captain Leader" to organize and assist advocates with their elevator pitches and stories.

Both events are examples of safely and successfully continuing associations' critical advocacy work.

Ann D. Hayes, CTA, Director of Sales
Visit Loudon

Star for a Day

If you could pick a motion picture/film to drop into for a bit, which would you choose and why?



MEMBER: Eric Commodore, CMP,
Director, Meetings & Events, NRECA

MOVIE: 1939 "The Women" - an all-female casted film that's all about men

WHY? My name would replace the 1939 main character's (Mary) husband (John). I would not be seen, no men are, but my name would be used throughout the film. And though John's character was unfaithful, true love was returned in the end!



MEMBER: Dianna Waldroup,
Director of Convention Services,
Destination DC

MOVIE: Ferris Bueller's Day Off

WHY? To quote Ferris Bueller: "The question isn't what we are going to do; the question is what aren't we going to do?" We've all had the urge to take a sick day and do something fun. His was the epitome of that. We could all take a page out of Ferris' book every now and then and just enjoy the day. Have a YES day!

Member Makers Showcase

Show Us Your DIY Skills!

What do you do when you learn your neighbor will chop down four trees near the edge of your property line? Germaine Schaefer, Associate VP Meetings & Events with the Heart Rhythm Society, asked if she could have the wood!

Germaine explained "as someone who cares about the environment, I decided to take action and apply principles from an article about someone who milled urban lumber. I researched portable mill companies and two months later had a huge pile of milled lumber."

The lumber was milled six years ago and has found many uses for Germaine and others. She even had a mushroom farmer who requested sawdust and shavings as compost. Germaine especially enjoys the stories about where "her trees" (two walnut and two maple) have been used, including someone who had a dining room table made and moved to England, another commissioned a coffee table that went to California. Germaine has remnants of the trees in her own home, an island and dining room table created by a local furniture maker.

Now, back to the DIY portion of this article. Germaine explained the trees helped fill the home-bound time during the pandemic. It has given her time to create wood cheese boards she plans to sell at a local one-day art show in October (assuming live events are allowed by Fall 2021). "Staying busy has been key to me getting through the last year and this project has helped to fill the weekend hours."

Check out these pictures and consider where your next DIY project will come from, it might be as close as your own back yard!

Tanna Pearman, Meeting Broker
Meetings Made Easy



Student Apprentice Program Opportunity



**TOURISM
DIVERSITY
MATTERS**

A New Collective Impact Approach Offers Inclusive Entry-Level Opportunities for the Meetings and Events Industry

Our industry is committed to providing more job opportunities for all individuals. For those interested in pursuing a career in event planning or tradeshow management, an apprenticeship program may be your best first step to gain hands-on experience working with an industry event association, event company, a facility, and perhaps a University.

I know this firsthand because I was one of the inaugural participants in the Apprenticeship program developed by SearchWide Global, in partnership with Destinations International, International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) and SportsETA.

Being afforded the opportunity to be a participant in the Visit Baltimore Education & Training Foundation's Diversity Apprenticeship, paved a way to tremendous professional and developmental opportunities that was able to take advantage of to propel my career in the events industry.

Upon completing the Apprenticeship Program, I was temporarily placed with SearchWide Global (the leading executive search and recruiting firm in the hospitality industry), until I was able to secure a full-time opportunity. With the collaborative efforts of Visit Baltimore and SearchWide Global, I landed a full-time role with the Baltimore Convention Center as a Sales and Services Coordinator. With the professional relationships I had developed while working with SearchWide Global, I received the opportunity to work as a Guest Services Agent at the Lord Baltimore Hotel part-time, while working full-time with the Baltimore Convention Center.

Through my passion to be a fierce leader in the events space; within less than a year of being a Guest Services Agent, I was promoted to a Guest Services Supervisor and then ultimately a Conference Services Manager. This was a dream come true thanks to the tremendous network of leaders in my life who supported and believed in my abilities to be a great asset to the events industry.

Fast forward four years and I am honored to lead the Apprenticeship program for **Tourism Diversity Matters** (TDM) which launched February 1, 2021. TDM has a specific purpose, to inspire and create change for the tourism and events industry by collaborating with industry leaders to eliminate disparities through advocacy and education.

One of TDM's four guiding pillars is the **Apprenticeship program**, designed to provide hands-on working experience to ethnically diverse apprentices interested in pursuing a career in the tourism and hospitality industry. The Tourism Apprentice Career Track (TACT) is comprised of three distinctive tracks, including meetings and events.

It is wonderful to witness our industry stepping up for diversity, equity, and inclusion. We are working collectively to advocate for our industry to be a leader in establishing an inclusive environment – one where everyone is welcome, there is equitable access for all, and everyone can be heard.

Our friends at **Visit Baltimore** recently revamped their Education & Training Foundation's Diversity Apprenticeship Program and partnered with Baltimore-based Guinness Open Gate Brewery. The program allows the apprentice to gain valuable work experience by working in various departments of Visit Baltimore, Guinness Open Gate Brewery, and other local partners. The 600 hour, three-part paid internship will provide minority Baltimore community members a taste of what it's like to work in the tourism and events industry. What's equally exciting is that participants are guaranteed a position with a partner organization upon completion of the program, with the support of **Searchwide Global** and TDM.

If you would like to learn more about the Apprenticeship program as a candidate or potential partner, please visit <https://tourismdiversitymatters.org/apprenticeship/>.

PROGRAM DETAILS:

Managed by: Search Wide Global / Tourism Diversity Matters

Partners include: Destinations International, International Association of Venue Managers and SportsETA

Duration: Ongoing

Benefit: The candidates will receive 600 hours in hospitality industry experience with guaranteed employment! 400 hours with Lead Destination and 200 shared between Partners in the tourism sector ranging from hotels to associations.

Commitment: 25-30 hours/week

Pay: starting at \$15/hour

Questions: Contact **Dana Johnston**, Capital Chapter

Deedra Mills, Student Member
PCMA



A Sneak Peek Into Spark 2021:

Leadership, Event Design, and Innovation

One of the greatest strengths of the Capital Chapter's Professional Development Committee is our ability to brainstorm. We're starting to become experts using new tools like Jamboard, organizing and channeling our thoughts to select themes for the 2021 Spark Half Day education events.

Spark will start with Leadership in June, followed by Event Design in August, and round out the year with Innovation in October. These themes align with PCMA HQ's education initiatives and will help push us to increase our ROI, this year's Chapter theme of Recovery, Opportunity, and Innovation.

Our virtual June Spark event, "Undaunted Amidst Uncertainties," is coming up tomorrow, **June 3rd**. There is still time to register [HERE](#), as this is not one to be missed. Our Keynote Speaker is Carly Fiorina, Former Chairman and CEO of Hewlett-Packard and the first woman to lead a Fortune 50 Company. When Carly started with HP in 1999, she led HP through an industry facing the worst technology recession in 25 years. Under Carly's leadership, revenue grew, innovation tripled, growth quadrupled, and HP became the 11th largest company in the U.S. Her experience and advice will be fitting for the events industry as we **recover** from the COVID-19 pandemic. We will also have an **innovative** women in leadership panel ready to discuss everything from continuing to work remotely, work-life balance, and empowering our future workforce. This panel will set us up nicely to welcome back Michael Dominguez, President & CEO of Associated Luxury Hotels International, our closing keynote. Michael will help identify questions we should be asking about industry trends as we set the course for the next 18 months. He will discuss how permanent behavioral changes will create greater **opportunities** in the meetings & events industry.

With increased vaccinations and decreased capacity limits, the **Q3 Spark** on **August 11th** is going to be the chapter's very first hybrid experience. Focusing on event design; this event will highlight the ever-evolving landscape of the events industry and how to apply what we learned through COVID-19 to improve event strategy and engagement. There are multiple ways to have a hybrid event, which is why we're previewing them at July's Lunch & Learn and expanding on the details at Spark. The best part of the day will be case studies of event professionals' recent experiences with hybrid events, including the do's and don'ts they have learned along the way.

Innovation is best defined as the "creation, development and implementation of a new product, process or service, with the aim of improving efficiency, effectiveness or competitive advantage." We have learned even more in the last 15 months that event professionals and their supplier partners are fantastic at innovating, using their skills and knowledge to get our industry through this pandemic.

"INNOVATION IS BEST DEFINED AS THE 'CREATION, DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW PRODUCT, PROCESS OR SERVICE, WITH AIM OF IMPROVING EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS OR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.'"

Our **final Spark program** on **October 13th** will discuss those innovations such as new technologies, partnering with competitors, reimagining how to network, and looking outside of our industry to see how others are adapting to future norms.

We are super excited for these events and can't wait to see attendees in person as we continue to transition to the next normal.

Melissa Peticolas, CEM, Account Executive
Vista Convention Services

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Members and Their Pets

Pets come in all shapes, sizes, and varieties. This issue proves the point, as we get to know two reptiles and two dogs – all four of whom give spice to the lives of PCMA Capital Chapter members, Rosa Mendoza-Friedheim, Vice President, Global Accounts with ConferenceDirect and Marguerite Leishman, Senior Manager, Meetings and Events with National Alliance on Mental Illness.

The reptiles technically belong to Rosa's son, Hunter Friedheim, but Rosa often takes care of Reggie, the ball python and Gahri, the leopard gecko, who require special care and feeding.

Reggie, a Christmas gift to Hunter, was a rescue. She is about 2 ½ feet long and lives in a very spacious tank. She gets fed once every two weeks with special food purchased at the pet store. It takes some time to prepare, including defrosting, and you need to place the food in a separate box and put the snake in there for about 20 minutes so it can eat and digest.

DID YOU KNOW?

The ball python is the most popular pet snake in the world, and is nonvenomous. The name "ball python" refers to its tendency to curl into a ball when stressed or frightened.



Rosa lovingly refers to Gahri the gecko as "my little alien pet" because he looks like one, and finds it cute that he's always waiting by his bowl to be served his specially prepared meals.



DID YOU KNOW?

Unlike other geckos, leopard geckos don't have "sticky" fingers and toes, so they can't climb walls and other vertical surfaces. The leopard gecko is one of only a few gecko species that has distinct outer ears and eyelids.



Marguerite's pets are two dogs – a 16-year-old poodle named Cozy, and a 13-year-old Bichon Frise named Weebee. Both dogs are rescues and have been with Marguerite for over ten years. Cozy is blind and sometimes bumps into furniture and her other dog, but Weebee doesn't mind. "They get along fine," says Marguerite. Cozy was raised among cats, so he often acts like one – sleeping on the back of the sofa or jumping up on things. Mostly, he likes to sleep. Not Weebee! He would take walks all the time if Marguerite would take him. He loves greeting all the people who want to pet him. "He's very social," Marguerite observes. The dogs have loved every minute of her working from home during the pandemic. "Cozy won't miss me so much when the time comes to go back to work, but Weebee will have a hard time adjusting," Marguerite says.

Pets are a great way for us to get to know our members better. If you have a pet, you'd like to introduce to the chapter in a future Chatter issue, please email storrance0117@icloud.com.

Sara Torrence, CMP, President Emeritus
Sara Torrence and Associates

“Click Here”

Industry Resources From Your Peers

Our success hinges on keeping up with the ever-changing regulations, safety guidelines, and practices in our industry. Below is a sampling of links your colleagues submitted to help streamline their day. Enjoy!

The Events Industry Council - EIC APEX (Accepted Practices Exchange) Commission:

- [Resources and Research](#)
- [COVID-19 Task Force and Guidance](#)
- [Curated COVID-19 Resource Repository](#)

SUSTAINABILITY:

- [EIC Centre for Sustainability & Social Impact](#)
- [DC Ecowomen](#)
- [UN Climate Change](#)
- [U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#): A great source of topics – everything from events to HR returning to the workplace to businesses, to equity.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

- [MeetSAFE™](#): Encore Global (formerly PSAV)
- PCMA's [Code of Ethical Conduct](#)
- [GBAC STAR](#) – Global Biorisk Advisory Council – accreditation program that distinguishes venues implementing the highest safety standards.
- [U.S. Travel Association \(COVID Research\)](#)

DESTINATION RESEARCH:

- [CVBreps \(DC Area Convention Bureau Satellite Offices\)](#)
- **VACCINE DISTRIBUTION:**
Vaccine Rollout by State: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/covid-19-vaccine-doses.html>
Vaccine Distribution: The CDC offers the [COVID Data Tracker](#). While this lists cases, it also provides vaccine distribution internationally, in the US, and per county.
- [NORTHSTAR meetings group](#) offers State-by-State status updates on gathering restrictions.

TRAVEL

- A listing of airports around the world and their websites can be found via [airports-list.com](#).
- [HN hospitalitynet](#) provides a detailed list of all hotel chains and their websites.
- Lyft adheres to new [personal health certification program](#) and offers a sustainable choice for rides.

DAILY NEWS SUBSCRIPTIONS:

- [Skift](#) offers original reporting and analysis for the travel industry.
- [Travel Smart News](#) delivers concise, accurate, top-line information for the busy travel and tourism executive.
- [HIP Network](#)
- [Diversity Inc.'s](#) mission is to bring education and clarity to the business of diversity.

OTHER RESOURCES:

- [Rate Escalator Tool](#)
- The [National Meeting Planners Group's](#) Facebook page is a private “group created for Meeting planners ONLY to discuss timely issues in a confidential environment”.
- [Meetings Mean Business](#) is an industry-wide advocacy coalition to showcase the undeniable value that meetings bring to people, businesses, and communities.
- Don't forget to use your Google Alerts to receive up-to-the-minute internet postings on air travel, COVID-19, or important issues to your daily objectives. Here is a great article to get you started [How to Use Google Alerts Plus \(12 Powerful Alternatives\) - 2021](#)

Lynn R. Whitehead, National Sales Director, Citywide Conventions
San Diego Tourism Authority

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