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Chatter

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We Are
**Better
Together**



BETTER

Together

PCMA Capital Chapter's very own **Kirsten Olean**, PCMA Board Chair and Director of Meetings for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation summed up the convention perfectly. "It was an incredible feeling to be back together face-to-face with industry colleagues. As I said in my opening remarks, our industry is like family, so being together again felt like a joyous reunion. The meeting reflected the hope and optimism we feel as we watch business events come back, and it was filled with content to prepare us for the new reality in which we are planning and selling business events. I am always so proud to be a part of this special community, and it was so energizing to be surrounded by those who love our community as much as I do."

Lynn Whitehead, National Sales Director, Eastern Region
San Diego Tourism Authority

Last week Phoenix and the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa welcomed PCMA Educon 2021! A hybrid event that captured 700+ attendees, almost 500 of them in person. While the content provided was consistent with years past, high level, in-depth education, with unique delivery platforms, the biggest take away from this year's program was a better understanding of what we have missed since our meetings and conventions were put on hold over 15 months ago.

"You could feel the energy in the air" exclaimed Visit Phoenix's Regional Director of Sales, Maribel Velazquez. "There was an overwhelming excitement to see each other" that of course has always been there in the past, but this year it was deeper. Melissa Stoddard, Director of Meetings & Expo Services at Edison Electric agreed. This was her first live meeting since the pandemic and while she felt a bit hesitant at first with joining in on the usual hugs and handshakes that PCMA organically creates, the distanced room sets along with The SafeExpo health guidelines, helped Melissa and all the attendees move past those fears and focus on the content and networking Educon had to offer.

While content was strong, it was secondary to face to face interaction. "Talking to people and seeing people is what made this meeting great for me" explained Stoddard. "The conversations I had getting coffee and sitting at tables outside were phenomenal. You can have the same conversations over the phone or on zoom, but in person you connect at a deeper level...deeper conversations take relationships to the next level and that is what makes a live meeting successful...engagement." The conversation starters and solution meetups were a tremendous success and although attendees were supposed to sign up in advance, individuals were able to jump into the conversation naturally.

"Hats off to PCMA Executive Staff for executing a fantastic 2021 EduCon. From the moment we walked in the Front Door of the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort, to the PCMA Registration Hub, The SafeExpo health guidelines-- it truly was an awesome experience. The Opening Session with Seth Mattison was excellent with the emphasis on our resilience during the pandemic.

"WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER"....looking forward to our next InPerson, Face to Face!"

- Jayne Carmona, Global Account Executive, Marriott



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**MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD**

As the world begins to reopen and face to face meetings begin to rebound it has become clear that we're all learning how to readjust. Gone are the days of the default quick hug or handshake in greeting at a meeting, replaced by the awkward dance to quickly size up both your and the other person's comfort level with any touch. As the National Social Anxiety Center noted, "every single one of us is now socially awkward to a certain extent. While we've been in shut down mode, we've let our social "muscles" deteriorate." In fact, Tim Simpson, one of the speakers at EduCon, coined the phrase "Social Hangover" as he noted we all might be feeling tired or out of sorts after the binge of socialization of our first face to face conference. With this in mind, how do we plan our conferences and events to help our attendees and guests readjust?

First, be aware of what some of your attendees might be experiencing. Studies done on astronauts who are isolated in the space station for six-month periods show that behavioral issues are common for those in social isolation. Upon returning to civilization, they can be more impulsive, less tolerant, and feel more socially awkward. Daniela Rivera, a biologist at the Universidad Mayor in Santiago, predicts changes that could emerge in some vulnerable people during the re-socializing period could include hyperactivity, intolerance, irritability, and anxiety, among others. To help attendees who might be experiencing some of these feelings, consider creating a quiet space for them to step away from the crowds, a room with soft seating and ambient lighting or employ sound and light therapy creating a relaxing environment devoid of any social requirements. Giving them this quiet meditative space allows them the opportunity to step away and calm their nerves or anxieties and get back into their desired headspace to continue their conference experience.

Note that you also may want to adjust how you market your meetings. The research of Richard Slatcher, a psychologist at the University of Georgia, and his colleagues suggests part of the social readjustment may be about learning how to reallocate time and energy away from family and back to friends, colleagues, and acquaintances, without losing the closeness built up with loved ones during the pandemic. Therefore, playing up companion and family activities in the destination city or offering companion passes for social activities might play into their decision in attending in person because they can bring those loved ones along with them.

Remember that we all are navigating these dramatic life changes together. It will take time but with gradual exposure to social activities we'll all strengthen our social muscles once again to avoid the "Social Hangover."

Sara Haywood, CMP
Board of Directors

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THE CHATTER | pcma.capital.comm@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.



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Welcome back to Boston! No other city offers two industry-leading convention facilities – the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center and the Hynes Convention Center. Each is committed to following safety guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, while offering flexible, world-class exhibit and meeting space, award-winning services and state-of-the-art technology, including free building-wide Wi-Fi. **Boston wants to help you get back to business!**

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WELLNESS

The Wellness Series

Is Your Body Ready to Be Back Onsite?

Many PCMA Capital Chapter members have executed or are preparing for an in-person event! The excitement leading up to packing your suitcase can provide enough adrenaline to get you through the entire event but is your body ready to endure the physical impact that being onsite takes? Due to the pandemic, many of us worked from home sitting in front of our computer screens to run an event. But let's not forget that a perk of working from home included eliminating the need to get dressed up or even put shoes on! So, we asked chapter members what they've been doing, or wish they had done, to prepare their bodies for being on their feet and working longer hours.

Set your alarm gradually to get to the time that you will need to wake up onsite. Doing this over a week will help kickstart your body's preparedness to wake up naturally when you arrive at your event. Further, by giving your body time to adjust, this practice will also help reduce the panic of missing your alarm onsite.

Get your steps in wearing the shoes you'll be in at the event. Even if you have had those pairs of shoes for years, you will likely need to get used to them again. You may want to consider investing in a blister blocker or other remedies to prevent any discomfort. In addition, stand as much as

you can during your workday in those shoes so you can adjust your body to the pressure you may feel in your back.

Dress for success! Working from home allowed us a more relaxed wardrobe and many of us are not used to dressing as we would at an event. Therefore, it is encouraged to take at least one day out of your work week to be in full attire. You may even find that what was once comfortable, or your go-to outfit, may no longer be.

Track your water intake. Staying hydrated will not only keep you energized but can reduce bloating and swelling. In addition, creating this habit will help you stay on track while traveling.

If you make these efforts before leaving, you will be setting your body up for success by the time you arrive!

Christina Pino, CMP, DES, Conference Logistics and Design Manager
Stellato Meeting Solutions

What's the DEI Taskforce Up To?

Hopefully, you have seen the poignant letter emailed to chapter members on May 4 regarding the Stop Asian Hate initiative. **Marcus Eng**, PCMA Capital Chapter President-Elect, reminded us that while the racial and social unrest issues we face these days can be overwhelming, WE – as a group - can raise awareness of hateful discrimination and contribute to solutions.

In this letter, Marcus noted: "As a longtime member of PCMA and the PCMA Capital Chapter, I know we are incredibly supportive of one another as a community. It's time we let everyone else see that. Please know that your leadership, especially through our dedicated Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Taskforce, is working hard each and every day to make our community as inclusive as possible. I am grateful our Board of Directors has chosen to raise awareness of discrimination towards people of Asian descent... I hope you will join me in supporting our Asian colleagues and friends."

The Thoughtful Thursdays social media campaign will run every Thursday through September 2 (#ThoughtfulThursday!). Tune in to engage on diversity, equity, and inclusion topics that will educate, inform, bring awareness, and hopefully spark conversation. If you are not currently following the [@PCMAcapitalchapter](#) on social media, start today and share your input!

INCLUSION: SUPPORTING SPEAKERS WITH BARRIERS TO ACCESS

When it comes to event design and accessibility, planners often immediately consider the needs of attendees while adhering to ADA compliance. But are we considering the accessibility needs of our speakers? According to www.mobilityresource.com, more than 18 million people in the U.S. and Canada have limited mobility caused by anything from accidents to disease to the aging process.

The Americans with Disabilities Act outlines mobility issues to include wheelchair (power-driven or manually operated), cart or scooter users, and persons with ambulatory mobility disabilities, making walking difficult or affecting gait or balance.

THE FOLLOWING CHECKLIST CAN KEEP PLANNERS ON THE RIGHT PATH TO OFFERING FULL ACCESS TO THEIR SPEAKERS AND PRESENTERS:

- Is the stage set designed with ease of navigation from a speaker's perspective?
- If using a lectern, is the speaker able to stand and present from it?
- If using a talk show format, is the speaker able to easily get in and out of a chair and navigate the path to get to the chair?
- Ramps, custom furniture, or other accessories might be needed in the stage build; it is critical to know these things in advance for a smooth and accessible event experience.

- If speakers are driving in, have reserved parking available and carefully plot out the route from access to the building and to the meeting room.
- If providing ground transportation from the airport or train station, make sure the vehicle is equipped to accommodate accessibility

BARRIERS TO ACCESS: DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

How are you addressing the needs of attendees with dietary restrictions? It is important to act with an inclusive mind when planning for food allergies (and in the process to note the difference between an allergy versus a dietary preference). Though food allergies can present genuine dangers, often, participants with food allergies are left feeling they are not a part of the experience. To meet this need and ensure that our attendees are all included, we must apply best practices. These practices involve capturing dietary restrictions in the registration process and working with catering to develop menus that broadly accommodate our attendees as a whole while offering flexibility to meet the needs of our attendees equally.

INCLUSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Though we always hope for the best, meeting professionals also know to plan for the worst. But how do we best accommodate attendees who may have special needs during an emergency? The Chatter spoke with a few industry pros for their advice. "When possible, assembly stations can be established and communicated to attendees with barriers to accessibility in advance," says **Kristin Ray**, CMP of NCARB. "In an emergency (and when possible), those attendees can report to a pre-determined safe space where they can be assisted according to the situation at hand." Venue staff preparation is also vital. "In addition to audio, print, and innovative technology communications, a diverse and well-trained staff will always be critical in emergency response during an event," says **Avery Burgess** with Stellar Event Consulting. "For example, an individual with hearing loss will not be able to hear evacuation announcements. In an active shooter scenario, they may be unaware of a need to evacuate or shelter in place or encounter communication barriers at a reunification site."

RESOURCE:

[A Planning Guide for Making Temporary Events Accessible to People With Disabilities | ADA National Network \(adata.org\)](#)

Amanda Clark, CMP, DES

Mark Harvey, CMP, CMM, Principal
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Global Meetings...Are We There Yet??

I'm confident we all have friends, personal and professional, on both sides of the travel spectrum, from those chomping at the bit to meet in person and others not yet ready to leave the safety of their homes. As an industry, we're excited to see things in the U.S. opening up and, for those comfortable, returning to face-to-face meetings. However, for those who are uneasy about gathering in person, hybrid meetings will be your ticket. We discovered a benefit of greater global exposure with virtual and hybrid meetings this past year, so the hybrid strategy will most likely stay with us, at least for the short term.

What about international meetings? As our kids on a trip would ask, "are we there yet?" When I wrote this article in mid-May, the quick answer was "not yet," and now, a month later, the response is "soon." Many countries are opening by late June to either vaccinated Americans, those with a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours, those with proof of recovery from COVID, or children under 12. The U.K. was set to re-open but then pushed back to July 19 due to an uptick in cases. The borders between the U.S. and Canada are expected to open in the next few weeks, and already vaccinated Americans can fly to our neighbors to the south. The trend is leisure travelers first, then small meetings leading to larger meetings.

HOWEVER, THERE ARE SEVERAL CHALLENGES:

- First, the CDC and the U.S. State Department are not aligned in their message, confusing travelers. The CDC has eased restrictions, but the State Department hasn't.
- Second, there is the issue of reciprocity. Countries want the U.S. to ease restrictions before they ease theirs. It looks like that, too, will soon go away.
- Europe is rolling out its Digital COVID Certificate (a.k.a. 'Digital Green Pass') app. It's expected to be fully rolled out and running smoothly for the summer season. The question is can Americans get it, and will we agree to use it?
- Lastly, labor shortages are a big problem. Many displaced workers found employment in other industries or are reluctant to return due to fear of variant strains of the virus, causing service concerns.

Countries experiencing surges include India, South Africa, Brazil, Thailand, Malaysia, China, Colombia, and Chile. The overriding variable is vaccinations. Countries with high percentages of vaccinated people are progressing. Countries with low vaccination rates and countries using less effective vaccines are struggling. Fortunately, the U.S. State Department and the CDC frequently

update and publish the lists of open and closed countries on their websites. Also, travelers should check the country's website before rushing out to book a meeting as territorial restrictions within countries may vary. So, the best advice is to look before you book.

Like a lava lamp, the outlook is fluid but moving in the right direction. As doors open, safety protocols will stay with us, and some of the positive habits that we've established from the pandemic will endure. Airports, airlines, ground transportation, hotels, etc., are all doing their parts to keep travelers healthy and safe. The same will be expected of travelers, so continue to wash hands frequently, take advantage of touchless technology, and continue to sport those cute little masks if and where required. The freedom of smiles, handshakes and hugs will soon be upon us.

Marilyn Atchue-Zuill, Global Account Director
HPN Global



STAR OF THE QUARTER!

Congratulations goes to **Danielle Foisy, FASAE, CASE** from the Professional Development Committee who is the winner of our Capital Chapter Q2 Star Award! Thanks to Danielle for tirelessly leading the Mix n' Trivia virtual event project in a time of great need for the chapter. The monthly events were hugely beneficial to the chapter's finances which suffered greatly from the loss of face-to-face events and loss of membership.

THE OTHER WELL-DESERVING NOMINEES WERE:

JENNIFER SULLIVAN, Professional Development Committee

REBECCA KANE, Communications Committee

SANDY YI-DAVIS, Government Relations and Advocacy Committee

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

Welcoming Back International Inbound Travelers

As our industry reopens, recovery is impacting all regions. However, overseas, things are not so positive. The limitations of entry for international in-bound travelers are still affecting our economy at home.

In the U.S., international inbound travel is considered an export and has generated a large surplus for the economy.

ACCORDING TO THE U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION:

- In 2019, travel exports totaled \$233 billion and delivered a \$51 billion surplus.
- The pandemic caused U.S. travel exports to plummet 64% to just \$83 billion—a loss of \$150 billion—and the U.S. travel trade surplus to fall 31% to merely \$35 billion.
- In 2020, overseas travel to the U.S. declined 81%, while travel from Mexico was down 62% and Canada 77%—causing a loss of \$146 billion to the U.S. economy.

These statistics are why we need to continue assisting foreign countries in fighting COVID-19, not only for the well-being of other countries but also for the U.S. economy and travel industry.

Now that we are more versed in hybrid meetings, virtual experiences are included in live events and have become a resource for international attendees to participate and remain engaged as we slowly return to large in-person events. But the goal is for everyone to be able to attend in person.

As the U.S. Travel Association statistics reveal, the U.S. economy must work towards welcoming international inbound travel back. The value of this market is essential for our programming and our economy. It is up to all of us to remain engaged on this topic and, when necessary, to reach out to industry organizations and elected officials to keep the discussion moving forward.

Alex Hurd, CMP, HMCC, Destination Expert
Discover Newport, RI

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PCMA Capital Chapter Cookbook

Contest Winner

Have you opened your PCMA Capital Chapter Cookbook yet and prepared one of the many scrumptious recipes that were submitted? Someone who certainly has benefited from purchasing the book is our winner of the PCMA Capital Chapter ROI Cookbook contest.

Yes, Caryn is excited about winning a fully catered dinner prepared and served by none other than Sherrif Karamat, John Rubsamen and Vicki Johnson! Caryn and her friends and family will enjoy menu items selected from the ROI Cookbook, along with select wines from Vicki's expansive wine cellar.

You too can enjoy the many recipes submitted by our chapter members. With over 120 recipes and countless cooking tips and tricks, this 200-page book has recipes ranging from specialty items from hotels and destinations to treasured family favorites. There are even craft cocktails and treats for your four-legged friends!

Although the contest winner has been announced, it's not too late to own your own copy of the Recovery, Opportunity and Innovation ROI Cookbook and support the Capital Chapter. With your purchase, you will help our industry **RECOVER**, grab this wonderful **OPPORTUNITY** to rebound and support the chapter with our **INNOVATIVE** approach to fundraising!

WE HAVE A WINNER!



CARYN PEPPER, CMP, DES,
Conference Manager
National Council of Teachers of
Mathematics

Caryn shared with us that John was her very first supervisor in the events industry back in 2005. Since then, she has continued to sharpen her skills within the industry. As the Conference Manager at the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, she leads all aspects of planning and production to support the association's Annual Conference.

During the pandemic and quarantine, Caryn kept busy by continuing her professional development and completing an Events Management certificate program through Florida Atlantic University as well as passing the PCMA DES course and exam.

When she wasn't working, she watched a lot of Netflix, crafted on her Cricut machine, and kept up with her two crazy but adorable kids... not to mention drank a lot of wine.

Vicki Johnson, CMP, Principal
Vicki Johnson & Associates, LLC



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Silver Linings

A lot of us have taken this past year to learn something new or make a lifestyle change. As the recovery process is on the rise people have been looking to the future to find their silver lining or "pandemic positive."

HERE ARE SOME OF THE GREAT POSITIVES OUR FELLOW CHAPTER MEMBERS EXPERIENCED.



Leslie Zeck, CMP, CMM, HMCC,
Director, Meetings, International & American Associations for Dental Research

"While I had no in-person meetings, no travel, and worked a normal schedule for the first time in over 25 years, my youngest sister, a certified nurse-midwife in a hospital, barely had any time off. Babies were being born at all hours of the day and night - lots of babies. We planned a family ski trip over the holiday so we could all see each other safely outdoors. On the last run of the day, she was hit by an inexperienced snowboarder, and her leg and knee were broken, ACL torn. It took over an hour for an EMT crew to arrive to the mountain due to the volume of injuries that day.

If I had not been teleworking this past year, I would not have been able to take extra time to help her as she could not drive, could not walk, and could not work for over 11 weeks due to the damage to her leg. To keep her spirits up (and ourselves busy), we bought a wood-burning pizza oven and worked hard to perfect recipes for dough and toppings. It was not easy with three vegan family members, gluten-free neighbors, and a super-hot fire! After many smokey experiments and breaking at least three pizza stones, we all gained a great appreciation for the apps allowing us to have delicious pizza delivered!

My sister eventually had surgery, is rehabbing her leg daily, and is now back to work delivering even more pandemic babies than ever! And I will forever cherish the extra time I had together with my sister, one of the true pandemic heroes, this past year!"

Rebecca Kane, CMP, DES, Meetings Manager
U.S. Grains Council



Mary Gallagher, CMP
Director, Eastern Region, Convention Sales,
Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board

"Jim and I have been walking pretty much every morning on the GW Parkway path along the Potomac and have experienced some pretty fantastic sunrises, wildlife, and nature moments. The connection with nature and conversations we've shared have been refreshing and truly enjoyable!"



Danielle Foisy, FASAE, CASE,
Director, Business Development & Industry Relations, TMS

"I quit smoking last year on my birthday (September), started a workout regimen 4-5 days per week through an app, and I feel better than I have in years! I also picked up a new hobby: I started abstract painting."

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Member Makers Showcase

Show Us Your DIY Skills!

The lack of commute to the office this past year found Manager, Convention Operations at The Infectious Diseases Society of America, **Dana Johnston**, CMP with two extra hours each day. She used some of this time to indulge her sweet tooth without the worry of buying baked goods prepared outside of her home.

Dana's new hobby did more than solve her need for safe sweets. She found so much more, shared here in her own words:

"I enjoy the initial research into the cake, crumble, cookie, or brownie I will bake. Buying the ingredients is simple. It is something I can control while so much of the rest of the world seems to be spinning uncontrollably. Baking the goodies involves precise measurements. Following the step-by-step directions is mindless. This exact science and mental escape proved to be a relaxing and therapeutic way to unwind. Decorating my concoctions allows for expressive creativity and engages a Zen-like patience I struggle to maintain in other areas of my life.

Sharing a beautiful, scrumptious cake baked with homemade ingredients, decorated with imagination, and served with love is one of the new joys I am grateful to have found thanks to this quarantine. I'm excited to return to the office and to share goodies with my teammates."

Here are some photos of Dana's tasty treats! >>

Tanna Pearman, Meeting Broker
Meetings Made Easy



Chocolate Peanut Butter Cake >



< Tres Leches Cake

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Undaunted Amidst Uncertainties

On Thursday, June 3, the PCMA Capital Chapter held its first Spark event for the year. Using this year's chapter theme of Recovery, Opportunity, and Innovation the event was designed to boost the attendees' arsenal of skills and tools, re-center and fortify their wellbeing while embracing the fearless mindset needed to lead through any storm.

Opening Keynote **Carly Fiorina** spoke on "**Unlocking Potential: Leaders Exist Everywhere.**" It was incredible. Everyone was interested in what she was going to say and excited to hear her message. Carly is the former Chairman and CEO of Hewlett Packard and the first woman to lead a Fortune 50 Company. When she started with HP in 1999, she led HP through a period when their industry faced 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 keynote told her story of realization that in the corporate world leaders are not necessarily the ones with the corner offices; they are sometimes not even high on the organizational chart. Carly defined what real leadership is in her own words, "Managers do the best with the way things are. Leaders change things for the better." When our industry has been challenged this past year, and many of our colleagues and friends feel they are starting over, Carly provided a much needed perspective that leaders survive and continue to advance change. Carly mentioned when hiring someone she "picks someone who sees possibilities".

Following a Q&A opportunity with Carly, attendees participated in a roundtable discussion on "What We CAN Do Today & How We Should PLAN For Tomorrow." This generated great networking and inspired dialogue around a subject, allowing us to hear insights from others in the industry, not just in-house meeting professionals and brought forward discussion around where each of us sees recovery, and what is keeping us up at night.

[To read through some of the thoughts and ideas, click here.](#)

We were also entertained by the Hamilton Hotel's fun production of Hamilton, having a separate section of networking and finishing out with a sip and sketch, where attendees sipped on what is closest to them while drawing.

Closing Keynote **Michael Dominguez** highlighted "**The Need to Be Decisively Indecisive: Understanding Behavioral Changes for The Meetings & Event Industry.**" Michael is, in my opinion, one of the events industry's leading economists. Michael did a great job highlighting where hotels are with capacity and meetings; he then went into where the world is with the pandemic. It is hard to hear the world is not as open as the United States, reminding us this pandemic is not over for those who work on international meetings. He always brings the silver lining to the table and leaves everyone hopeful. Paraphrasing Field of Dreams, Michael stated, "if you have a meeting, people will come." Michael brought his enthusiasm for recovery of the events industry with a passion many people needed to hear.

The next Spark will be the Capital Chapter's first hybrid event and will lead the way back to face-to-face events. On August 11, Spark is focusing on the theme of event design and following Michael's advice to plan meetings and expect attendees. The question on everyone's mind? How. If you have not signed up, there is still time!

[REGISTER HERE!](#)

Rebecca Kane, CMP, DES, Meetings Manager
U.S. Grains Council

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Featured Favorites

Welcome to our new "Featured Favorites" section! This has been on my mind for a while and I wanted to ask fellow chapter members the age-old question, **"What's your favorite event location and why?"**



From the Talented **Shameka Jennings**, Award - Winning Event and Meetings Professional

"There are so many event locations I love. They all have the same things in common; in the middle of a fun city, near tons of dining outlets and things to do. I always feel like being in an active event location enhances the event experience, outside of event hours, with minimal effort from me as the planner, but high impact on the attendee experience."

Check out this section in future Chatter issues to discover other chapter members' favorite meals, movies, songs and more!

Chandra M. Champion, MSSA, CNM, Senior Manager of Conferences and Events National WIC Association

Follow me on [LinkedIn](#) or [Instagram](#) at **Chandra M. Champion** (LinkedIn) or [@TheRemix03](#) (Instagram) to weigh in with YOUR favorites.



From the Illustrious **Kevin Branch**, Seasoned Event and Meeting Professional

"My favorite event location is Las Vegas, NV—because after you've produced your event, there's still time to enjoy the night life! I also LOVE to get inspiration from the shows and exhibits."

Of course, I had to jump in and provide my two cents. My favorite event destination is New Orleans, a destination that sells itself. With great music, great food, amazing, cool, and creative outside venues and most of all, the people.

It's just a wonderful and fun place to plan any kind of event. My favorite quote comes from this city, "Laissez les bon temps rouler", which means "Let the good times roll!" And a good time you will have!

Aha moment.



Ahhh moment.



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In-Person Resources from your Peers

It brought great joy to my heart to see our hotel and our industry start to return to hosting consistent in-person meetings and events. From weddings to conferences to in-person site visits and planning visits, it is starting to feel like we are getting back on track and moving full steam ahead to a very busy rest of the year.

As we dive back into meeting face to face, I'm sure safety is the number one priority for all of us.

Here are some links to help ensure we are meeting together safely:

TEMPERATURE CHECK OPTIONS

- **Faith Technologies** offers a thermal body temperature scanner for use at events that scans up to 16 people at once.
- **CrowdRX** utilizes both passive and active screening systems for temperature checks.
- **Athena** scans individuals one by one on the hottest point of the face and can understand to exclude things like hot beverages that could alter results.

COVID TEST OPTIONS (PRE-EVENT)

- **CrowdPass** is a platform designed to register all attendees requiring them to fill out a waiver form and upload documentation of a negative COVID test or proof of vaccinations.
- **InspireDiagnostics** provides fast, accurate and convenient COVID-19 testing.

CONTACT TRACING

- **Volan** offers both virus mitigation and contact tracing technologies utilizing their positioning system that enables automatic live and historical tracking of individuals with elevated temperatures, with privacy.

TIME SAVING INNOVATIVE EVENT PLATFORMS

Here are some “cool tools” to streamline time during the planning process:

- **EventMobi** is an end-to-end management platform that lets meeting planners engage attendees before, during and after the event with streamlined consistent communication.
- **Hubb** is a platform that offers easy access to event content and allows presenters to access and upload their own information saving much needed time.

SUSTAINABLE MEETINGS RESOURCES

Protecting our environment during our in-person meetings:

- **Green Meetings Industry Council** is a global community dedicated to sustainability in the meetings and events industry
- Visit the **EPA** site to find tips, tools and resources to make environmentally responsible choices for meetings and events.

I hope this information is helpful and I am very much looking forward to seeing my PCMA Capital Chapter friends in person soon!

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

Star for a Day

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



RAY GALLOWAY

Operations and Events Manager
The Education Trust

MOVIE: *International Men in Black* and *Jupiter Ascending* because “Remember, there are 24 hours in a day, and I would do 8-10 hours in each film. :)”

ROLES: Agent H (Men in Black) and Caine (Juniper Ascending)

WHY: I love sci-fi, the cool gadgets, weapons and floating boots, the different aliens, space travel, the action in both films, and I look good in a black suit.



JOCELYN ARGARIN, CMP

Director of Education & Events
Nonprofit Federation & Email Experience Council
Association of National Advertisers

MOVIE: *Harry Potter*

ROLES: Hermione – she’s smart, sassy, and brave, plus always fights for what is right!

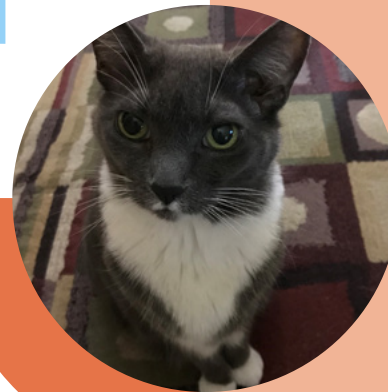
WHY: What could be better than finding out you have secret magical powers, a majestic castle to live and learn in, and discovering cool creatures you never knew existed? Add to that an invisibility cloak, a potion to turn you into someone else, and the ability to transport yourself from one place to another at the snap of finger! Why wouldn’t you want to be at Hogwarts?

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

Comfort Companions

For this issue, we focus on the pets of long-time Capital Chapter members Joan Eisenstodt, who has two nurturing cats, and Pam Lackland, who has a long-haired German shepherd. All are rescues.

Joan and her husband, Joel Levy, acquired their cats from a shelter when Joan was diagnosed with cancer. Joel thought they would be loving companions for her and ease her discomfort. He was right! "Cats are just such intuitive animals, in tune with their guardians' moods and wishes," Joan says. Mandy, 14, is a dark gray and white tabby who is "the most intelligent animal I've ever known," observes Joan. "She understood Yiddish from the very beginning, even though she was adopted as a kitten. Maybe in one of her last eight lives she was a 'Fiddler on the Roof.'" She also enjoys looking at herself in mirrors and picture frames, to which Joan sings, "Who's the pretty girl in that mirror there?" Lina, eight, a brown and gray striped tabby, is a very picky eater, and it's taken a lot of patience to find what she'll eat. One of her favorite morning rituals: licking a bit of butter off of Joan's toast. Lina always checks on what her humans are eating – sitting at Joan's chair and sniffing her plate before meals. Lina, still very kitten-like, is also fastidious, wanting her litter box clean after each use and letting her guardians know if it's not to her satisfaction. Mandy learned to tolerate Lina, and now sometimes, they even nuzzle each other to the joy of Joan and Joel.



Pam's dog, Sasha, 10, was adopted from Virginia German Shepherd Rescue as an emotional support dog for her son Dennis after he was severely injured in a motorcycle accident in 2007. Before his passing, Pam's husband Bob promised Dennis that he and Pam would take care of Sasha forever, relieving his mind of that worry. Pam and her husband live on Timberline Mountain Ski Resort in Canaan Valley, WV, where Sasha loves to swim in the lake and roll in the snow! However, since Sasha is long-haired and has a stocky build, she could be mistaken for a bear. So, they tie a bandana around her neck to identify her as a domesticated dog! Sasha is a very sweet dog and wants to mother all the other dogs around her when Pam and Bob leave her in a kennel or take her on walks. "She can't understand why they bark at her," Pam says. Also, she will follow Pam and Bob everywhere -- just another example of how loving pets can be.

Sara Torrence, CMP Emeritus
Sara Torrence and Associates



2021 Committee Volunteer Information

COMMUNICATIONS

CHAIR: Kristen Parker (kparker@visitaustin.org)

CO-CHAIR: Rosa Mendoza-Friedheim
(rosa.mendoza@conferencedirect.com)

The goal of the Communication Committee is to tell the story of our chapter members, activities and events as well as provide resources on relevant industry topics through The Chatter newsletter.

What We Do:

- Create and curate content and manage production schedule for 6 Chatter issues per year
- Interview chapter members for feature articles
- Collaborate with all chapter committees to communicate activities and accomplishments

How You Can Volunteer:

- Contribute topic ideas
- Write an article for The Chatter
- Assist with editing an issue of The Chatter
- Volunteer to be interviewed for a feature

COMMUNITY SERVICES

CHAIR: Cheri Fairchild (cfairchild@caesars.com)

CO-CHAIR: Emily Parsons (eparsons@naag.org)

The Community Services Committee is responsible for creating a culture of giving back to the community through volunteerism, charitable contributions, education, and community involvement.

What We Do:

- Create and organize volunteer opportunities for members throughout the year,
- Provide education and networking opportunities while giving back to the community

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Connie Samuels (csamuels@isri.org)

The DEI Task Force is responsible for the ongoing support and implementation of chapter DEI initiatives.

What We Do:

- Educate and inform the chapter on topics that help us to be more intentional contributors to the events industry through both activities and our social media platforms.
- Maintain 'best practices' for the chapter as they are applied in how we plan our meetings, vendors we select, and speakers we contract.
- Collaborate and support other committees with DEI efforts

How You Can Volunteer:

- Join us during our monthly meetings
- Share your ideas!
- Be an advocate! Our work goes beyond the task force group; it is a chapter-wide effort to ensure all voices are heard and are in the room.

EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

Chair: Eric Kincaid (eric@washington.org)

Co-Chair: Tyra Dyson (tdyson@apic.org)

Co-Chair: Dana Johnston (djohnston@idsociety.org)

The Emerging Professionals Committee is responsible for engaging emerging professionals and hospitality students to develop future leaders of the chapter.

What We Do:

- Classroom visits
- Emerging professionals educational programming
- Mentor + Mentee opportunities

How You Can Volunteer:

- Become a classroom visit panelist
- Become a mentor
- Plan student centered educational programming and events

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & ADVOCACY

Chair: Christine Frye (christine.m.frye@gmail.com)

Co-Chair: Robin Troutman (robinsheryl@gmail.com)

The Government Relations & Advocacy Committee is responsible for setting the legislative and advocacy priorities for the chapter.

What We Do:

- Plan and execute the education and Hill Day event
Global Meetings Industry Day
- Promote the importance of voting each fall with #PCMACCVOTES campaign along with the National GOTV campaign
- Set the advocacy priorities for the chapter and work alongside coalitions to promote issues that affect the meetings/events industry

How You Can Volunteer:

- Participate in monthly meetings
- Share posts on social media related to GOTV and our advocacy priorities
- Help to provide content for GMID

MARKETING

Chair: Carson Edwards (carson.edwards@marriott.com)

Co-Chair: Shameka Jennings (shamekajenningscmp@gmail.com)

The Marketing Committee is responsible for being the digital voice of the chapter for messaging, activities, and all appropriate communications as well as a source of industry information

What We Do:

- Digital Marketing
- Measure analytics
- Social selling

How You Can Volunteer:

- Partner with other chapter committees and board members to cultivate and amplify PCMA related messaging and activities via social media platforms
- Help to measure the social media analytics of the campaigns
- Serve as potential committee liaisons to strengthen cross-committee objectives

CONTINUED

2021 Committee Volunteer Information

MEMBERSHIP**Chair: Christine Faiman** (christine.faiman@marriott.com)**Co-Chair: Marilyn Atchue-Zuill** (matchue-zuill@hpnglobal.com)

The Membership Committee takes the lead on planning the Convening Leaders Capital Chapter Reception, the Fall Networking Event, the Annual Awards Event and Member Orientation at the June, August, and October Spark events.

What We Do:

- We recognize members with an e-card on their birthday, special membership anniversaries (5/10/15/20/etc.) and becoming a new member. Quarterly recognition is given to all nominees and the winner of the Star of the Quarter award.
- We reach out to all members by phone or email when they join and again at 6 months to ensure they have what they need from the chapter.

How You Can Volunteer:

- Become a champion or part of the co-committee for one of the yearly events
- Join the member recognition team to send out e-cards to all members on their special occasions
- Assist the outreach champions in contacting new members and checking in on members at their 6-month anniversary.

SPONSORSHIP**Chair: Regina Rink** (rrink@destinationtoronto.com)**Co-Chair: Anissa Ladd** (aladd@goprovidence.com)

The Sponsorship Committee is responsible for financially supporting the education mission of the chapter by recruiting and retaining venue and program sponsors.

What We Do:

- Create sponsorship opportunities for organizations interested in reaching the Capital Chapter membership

How You Can Volunteer:

- Solicit cash and venue sponsors for our Spark Programs and Networking Events
- Find companies who want to advertise in The Chatter and E-newsletter
- Connect with confirmed sponsors before, during and after a chapter event

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**Chair: Leah Lewis** (lewis@agma.org)**Co-Chair: Melissa Peticolas** (MPeticolas@Vistacs.com)

As the committee responsible for coordinating the chapter's education events, we get to think outside the box and experiment with different learning styles, technologies, and engagement experiences to bring our community together and inspire our members when planning their own events.

What We Do:

- Oversee planning and execution of chapter education events. This includes coordination of the quarterly half day Spark programs and monthly Virtual Lunch and Learns with tasks such as content and theme development, speaker management, coordination of chapter content, script and slide development, promotional and marketing efforts, supporting operations and logistics including the virtual platform, supporting sponsorship deliverables, and facilitating networking functions.
- Support other chapter committees with event programming and content development for events such as GMID, Student Insight Series, other chapter and PCMA HQ events.

How You Can Volunteer:

- Serve as a micro-volunteer on-site at a chapter event. Roles include working the registration desk, monitoring Q&A or chat for virtual events, greeting or directional support, etc.
- Serve as a Champion for a Spark event. There are many roles available including overseeing the platform logistics for virtual or hybrid events, coordinating speakers and content, or serving as the Event Champion and overseeing the event alongside the Chair and Co-Chair.
- Serve as a Lunch and Learn Champion and take the lead as an individual or team to coordinate the content for the interactive monthly series of virtual programs

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