



Emerging Professional

Caroline Gennello

Title: Event Manager

Organization: Events DC - Walter E. Washington
Convention Center

Email address: cgennello@eventsdc.com

College/University: James Madison University

Major: Hospitality Management

Graduation Year: 2022

Meet a
NextGEN
Member!

WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED AND PASSIONATE ABOUT WORKING IN THE EVENTS INDUSTRY?

It's a joy to see people connect! Events give people the opportunity to network and meet people whom they would likely otherwise not get to connect with. Events also typically foster some sort of celebration and to see those involved get so excited to celebrate amongst each other is so inspiring and heartwarming. Gathering is an essential part of being human – and to be able to be a part of that connection is exactly what I'm passionate about. Not to mention, to see the hard work of the planners come to fruition & to be able to be a part of that experience is extraordinarily rewarding.

AS BUSINESS OF EVENTS PROGRESS, WHAT IS ONE EXCITING THING YOU ARE SEEING (WOULD LIKE TO SEE) IN THE EVENTS INDUSTRY?

I love when companies use the city! Working at a convention center we see lots of events that only utilize the convention center itself. I truly think it is most beneficial to the attendees when companies work with their DMCs and really get the attendees involved in the host city. What's the fun of traveling if you stay within one building? This isn't a new concept – but after the pandemic stopped conferences from traveling for a while, it's great to see groups utilizing the entire city again.

IF YOU COULD ONLY ASK ONE QUESTION TO A LEADER THAT YOU ADMIRE, WHAT QUESTION WOULD THAT BE AND WHY?

I would ask them what the best advice they've ever received was. Everyone has different motivations and ways of going about their life, but they likely admired many leaders who gave them all their different advice – which one really stuck with them? If it was that influential and got them to where they are today, it could help me along my path as well.

WHAT'S THE BEST ADVICE YOU'VE GOTTEN FROM SOMEONE IN THE INDUSTRY?

Try it all. The hospitality industry has a lot to offer and each sector works with each other. You can't have one without the other and it pays to understand how each sector operates. Take a second and learn how each other work to better understand the bigger picture. We all have the same common goal, but to actually understand how everyone does their part goes a long way.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

The people are amazing. I thoroughly enjoy walking into work every day because there is always a smiling face saying Good Morning. It's a very welcoming place to be. Our team is also so supportive of one another, and we build off of each other's strengths. It is a very uplifting and positive environment.

WHAT SKILLS HAVE BEEN KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS DURING THESE UNCERTAIN TIMES?

Adaptability has been key. Over the past few years, we all had to throw what we know out the window and start fresh. Others have come up with great new ideas of how to operate and it is not all so cookie-cutter anymore. To be adaptable and try out new strategies has been super rewarding and has proven to be effective and efficient as well! What you have always done isn't always the best way, and it's best to keep an open mind to that.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS?

I know I'll still be in the events world; I don't see myself doing anything else. My heart lies in the event industry and it comes easy when it feels like you're born to do it, and I definitely think I am. On the other hand, let me check my Google Calendar and see what it says for 2028.

Are you looking for a way to give back and share your expertise with students or individuals new to the industry? Or are you looking to connect with an experienced professional for guidance or insight on your career?

Visit the Generation: Meet website for more details on the PCMA Trust Partners Mentorship Program or complete the mentor or protégé self-assessment form now to get started.