

Annual Conference Recap



We're still buzzing with excitement and gratitude after gathering with so many of you at this year's **MPI Virginia Annual Conference**. From thought-provoking keynotes to hands-on labs, this event truly had something for everyone.

Our lineup of **13 speakers** brought such diverse expertise and perspectives to the stage, sparking conversations and new ideas that we'll carry back into our daily work.



AI can simplify the everyday

Trevor Sookraj showed us how artificial intelligence can turn daily event tasks into smarter workflows in *AI on the Ground*.

Inclusion isn't Optional

Joe Jamison highlighted practical ways to design accessible, welcoming meetings in *Introduction to Disability Inclusion*.

Partnership is Power

Lisa Meriwether, Jamie Rawls, & Ann Hayes gave us insider insights on maximizing DMO and CVB collaborations.

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Stories Connect Us

Rob Haislip reminded us of the Incredible *Power of Story* to move and inspire.

Leadership Starts Within

Sam Bean shared high-impact habits for becoming stronger leaders in *Learning to Lead Yourself*.

The Future is hands-on

Dr. Ling Ally Ling closed with the importance of building future-ready meeting talent through real-world experience.

Each presentation gave us new tools, fresh perspectives, and plenty of inspiration to bring back to our communities and careers.



Of course, the conference was also a time to network and celebrate one another. At our **Annual Awards Dinner**, we had the privilege of recognizing outstanding members who continue to raise the bar for our industry. A heartfelt congratulations to all of our award winners for your leadership, passion, and commitment.

We are deeply thankful to our speakers for sharing your expertise, to our sponsors for helping make this event possible, and to every single person who attended. Your energy, curiosity, and support made this year's conference unforgettable. Here's to continuing the conversations, building connections, and bringing all that we learned into the year ahead.

- Rachael Holt, CMP, **VP of Education**



Event Photos

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Congratulations to our MPI VA Annual Award Winners



**Most Creative Host
Facility of the Year
(Tie):**

Hilton Norfolk The
Main



**Most Creative Host
Facility of the Year
(Tie):**

Hotel Madison &
Shenandoah Valley
Conference Center



**Howard Feiertag
Impact Member of
the Year Award:**
Martina James



**The Cecil H. Bailey,
CMP, Mentor
Award:**
Ariel Cole, CMP



**The J.B. Bostic
Torchlight Award:**
Steve Tewksbury,
CMP



**Young Professional
Award:**
Rachael Holt, CMP



**Meeting Industry
Leadership Award:**
Megan Hazzard



**Education Program of
the Year:**
"Unmasking Success:
Using Emotional
Intelligence to Conquer
Imposter Syndrome" –
Letitia Bates



President's Award:
Martina James