

Annual Conference Recap



VIRGINIA
CHAPTER

2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

AUGUST 6-8, 2025

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.

[Stay Up-To-Date and View All Our Events](#)

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](#)

Congratulations to our MPI VA Annual Award Winners

THE
MAIN



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