

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL

# DEFINE



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL OHIO CHAPTER

APR — JUN 2019



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Festival Meetings, and Wise Words from Upcoming Speakers

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## The Official Newsletter of MPI Ohio Chapter

Define is the official publication of the Ohio Chapter of Meeting Professionals International. It is published every other month as a benefit of membership and circulated free of charge to MPIOH members.

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Quinn McMurtry  
Marketing & Sales  
MAC Productions  
242 Pike Street  
Covington, KY 41011  
Phone: 859-655-3080  
[qmcumrtry@mac-av.com](mailto:qmcumrtry@mac-av.com)

### President-Elect

Abbey Border  
Sales Manager  
Kalahari Resort & Convention Center  
7000 Kalahari Drive  
Sandusky, OH 44870  
Phone: 419-433-5914  
[aborder@kalahariresorts.com](mailto:aborder@kalahariresorts.com)

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Amanda Stredney  
Account Executive  
Marriott International  
50 North Third Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Phone: 614-203-9248  
[Amanda.stredney@marriott.com](mailto:Amanda.stredney@marriott.com)

### Vice-President – Communications

Pete Honsberger  
Director of Client Services  
CultureShoc  
18013 Cleveland Parkway, Suite 170  
Cleveland, OH 44135  
Phone: 844-336-7462  
[pete@cultureshock.com](mailto:pete@cultureshock.com)

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Amanda Smith Rasnick CMP  
Group Sales Manager  
Lake Erie Shores and Islands  
4424 Milan Road, Suite A  
Sandusky, OH 44870  
Phone: 419-625-2984  
[amanda@shoresandislands.com](mailto:amanda@shoresandislands.com)

### Vice-President - Finance

Adam Kowaleski CTA  
Corporate Sales Manager  
Hyatt  
350 North High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Phone: 419-515-4377  
[adam.kowaleski@hyatt.com](mailto:adam.kowaleski@hyatt.com)

### Vice-President - Membership

Shannon Sprau CMP  
Planner, Meetings & Events  
Cardinal Health, Inc.  
7000 Cardinal Place  
Dublin, OH 43017  
Phone: 614-757-1451  
[shannon.sprau@cardinalhealth.com](mailto:shannon.sprau@cardinalhealth.com)

### Director of Monthly Programs

Kelsey Reckless CMP  
Meetings & Events Planner  
Cardinal Health  
7000 Cardinal Place  
Dublin, OH 43017  
Phone: 614-553-4411  
[kelsey.reckless@cardinalhealth.com](mailto:kelsey.reckless@cardinalhealth.com)

### Director of Education

Adriane Cesa CMP  
Meeting & Sourcing Manager  
American Express Meetings & Events  
7000 Cardinal Place  
Dublin, OH 43017  
Phone: 614-652-1401  
[adriane.cesa@cardinalhealth.com](mailto:adriane.cesa@cardinalhealth.com)

### Director of Special Projects

Peter Barton CTA  
Sales Manager  
Duke Energy Convention Center  
525 Elm Street  
Cincinnati, OH 45202  
Phone: 513-419-7308  
[Peter\\_Barton@comcastspectacor.com](mailto:Peter_Barton@comcastspectacor.com)

### Director of Strategic Partnerships

Heather Gortz CMP, CTA  
Senior Sales Manager  
IHG - Crowne Plaza Hotels and Resorts  
33 E Nationwide Blvd.  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Phone: 614-461-2613  
[heather.gortz@ihg.com](mailto:heather.gortz@ihg.com)

### Director of Marketing

Ashley Lawson  
Account Executive  
Achieve Incentives & Meetings.  
28011 Clemens Road  
Westlake, OH 44145  
Phone: 440-242-1615  
[alawson@achieveincentives.com](mailto:alawson@achieveincentives.com)

### Director of Member Care

Ashlee Dickson CTA  
Sales Manager  
Crowne Plaza Columbus-Downtown  
33 East Nationwide Boulevard  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Phone: 614-461-2677  
[ashlee.dickson@ihg.com](mailto:ashlee.dickson@ihg.com)

### Director of MidAmerica

OPEN

### Chapter Administrator

Jessi Konnagan  
Association Connection  
4010 Executive Park Drive, Suite 100  
Cincinnati, OH 45241  
Phone: 513-563-8674  
[admin@mpioh.org](mailto:admin@mpioh.org)

### MPIOH Mission Statement:

To enhance the overall quality and awareness of the meetings industry by ensuring the professional development and growth of its membership through targeted educational programs and networking opportunities.

### MPIOH Executive Office

Jessi Konnagan  
4010 Executive Park Dr.  
Suite 100  
Cincinnati, OH 45241  
Phone: 513-563-8674  
Fax: 513-563-9743  
Email: [admin@mpioh.org](mailto:admin@mpioh.org)

# President's Column

Quinn McMurtry  
Sales & Marketing Director for MAC Productions



## Dear MPI Ohio...

Dear MPI Ohio Members,

This is the last time that I will address my fellow members as your chapter president. However, before I move into the position of Past President, I want to thank everyone for your trust and support. It's been an honor to serve our community and I look forward to continued service.

My journey with MPI began over five years ago and I continue to be humbled and inspired to do more. It seems like only yesterday that I started out as a writer for Define and then volunteered to serve on the Communications Committee. Eventually, vacancies on the board opened, and I was able to contribute further as a board member for the MPI Ohio community.

During my time of service, I have learned a great deal. But most importantly, I learned what it means to have a strong system in place that helps a volunteer organization adhere to a set of rules and procedures that are structured to keep the organization viable for years to come. If there is one thing that I am sure of – it is that MPI Ohio will be strong and viable for many years to come. From our global MPI leadership, to chapter leadership, to Jessi Konnagan, our Chapter Administrator, the state of our association is strong and ready for the future.

I would also like to thank everyone from my MPI past, especially Julie Kowalewski and Jason Linscott for reaching out and accepting me into the MPI Ohio community and encouraging me to serve. It was truly their leadership and personal style that inspired me to want to do more and dedicate my time to the MPI community. Moving forward, I hope to continue to help and be an example to help others and inspire them to serve.

Looking forward, I am eager to help Abbey Border and Shannon Sprau as they continue to lead and inspire the chapter. I expect great things from both of them. No matter what, I will always be ready to advise and assist for years to come and I welcome all questions and thoughts from anyone considering volunteering.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Quinn McMurtry".

Sincerely,

Quinn McMurtry, MPI Ohio Chapter President



# Embracing the Gig Economy IN MEETINGS & EVENTS



By Tracy Judge  
(September 2019 Joint Industry Event Speaker)

**During my 13+ years working for meeting planning agencies, what I have found most inspiring is the challenge of designing and delivering solutions to achieve customers' goals. With a focus on**

corporate meetings and events, I began to notice a change in what customers actually needed.

What I found in many cases was that they didn't need an agency. They were not looking for new procedures or interested in working in the structured manner an agency required. Their processes were on point, and their people were, too. They just needed help—immediately and in a specific capacity. They wanted someone else in their corner who could jump in and serve as an extension of their team.

For this reason, many industries have started to turn to the gig economy for talent, elevating the entrepreneurial spirit to an all-time high. Rather than working for a steady paycheck, skilled professionals are working for a specific purpose: to excel with their unique skillsets and live freely as solopreneurs. They're more inspired. More motivated. More dedicated.

**Does this sound like the type of person you want on your team?**

Many positions in the meetings and events industry are headed in the direction of the gig economy—and that's a good thing for everyone involved, from planners and corporate leaders to the talent they hire.

## Who is the Gig Worker?

Intuit estimates that gig workers now represent 34 percent of the American workforce, a number CNN Money expects to rise to 43 percent by 2020. “Gigs” are contract, temporary, freelance, remote and positions with similar labels that have become common among recruiters and coveted among candidates. The McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) identifies gig workers in four categories:

- Free agents, who choose independent work as their primary source of income
- Casual earners seeking supplemental income
- Reluctants, who rely on independent work as their primary source of income but would rather have a full-time job
- The financially strapped, who accept independent work simply because they need the money

The persona of the gig worker is not as confined to millennials as you may be inclined to think. Professionals of all ages, backgrounds and skill levels are pursuing gigs. And, according to MGI, those who are doing so by choice (free agents and casual earners) are reporting higher levels of satisfaction with their careers. For a deeper dive into the mindset and lifestyle of a successful gig worker, read [this article from Harvard Business Review](#).

## Think Beyond Uber

Ridesharing apps such as Uber and Lyft are the most prevalent examples of the gig economy (and the oft-overlapping on-demand economy) at play. Drivers are able to make a living contracted by these companies to pick up passengers and take them to their destinations. Driving is the gig. Transportation is the economy.

As large and noteworthy as they have become, Uber, Lyft and ridesharing as a whole only represent a small corner of the gig economy. Independent contractors are thriving—and helping their clients thrive, of course—in other industries such as tech, advertising, creative services, finance, and yes, meetings and events. Websites like Upwork and Toptal, designed to connect companies with contractors, are filled with countless listings daily. Meanwhile, these platforms themselves also appear to be growing and hiring considerably in order to keep up with the demand.



## Industry of Opportunity

Let's make clear that contractors have always been present, particularly in meetings, events, hospitality and tourism. However, their value in the gig economy has evolved dramatically from mere cost-effectiveness to all-around business success.

For example, rather than hire an entire marketing agency, a corporate meeting planner can now hire their own graphic designer, content writer and event strategist directly. Not only do they forego the rigidity of working with another sizable entity, they can build a more cohesive team that truly lives and breathes the brand. They can also turn to contractors for traditional event needs such as hotel sourcing, meeting planning, registration management, operations and production.

Gig workers can and will embrace your culture and immerse themselves in your brand—especially if there is the potential for ongoing work, aka your next events that follow. And being flexible in their workstyle, they are able to adapt to your workflows, tools and protocols with relative ease. Take care of your contractors, and they will take care of you.

## Where to Start

Even for a single independent contractor position, it's undeniably challenging to find the best talent, conduct the interview(s), identify the right fit and manage the relationship (all in the midst of planning your event, of course). That's why Soundings Connect was formed—to do the legwork and handle the admin for you.

We screen beyond work experience and other surface credentials to connect the right professionals with the right companies in the right situations. It's more than a job match; it's a skills match, personality match, needs match, wants match and team match. Through our attention to detail and the connections we build, we're also empowering entrepreneurs and creating an ecosystem for our industry.

Tracy Judge, MS, CMP  
Founder & Chief Connector  
Soundings Connect

*Learn more about Tracy and her work at [www.soundingsconnect.com](http://www.soundingsconnect.com)*

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# ***Mahalo To Our MPIOH Family!***

## **A RECAP OF THE JUNE 5TH RECOGNITION EVENT**

On June 5, 2019 MPI Ohio gathered at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Columbus Dublin to celebrate our annual Chapter Recognition & Appreciation Event. In a Hawaiian-themed event featuring extraordinarily talented Hula Dancers, attendees were treated to an evening of fun, fellowship, learning and philanthropy. Outgoing Chapter President Quinn McMurtry helped donate more than \$950 to the Children's Hunger Alliance through auction proceeds.

In addition to the excitement and the giving spirit, the audience was delighted by Speaker, Charles Ryan Minton, and his engaging message of Creating a Culture Where Employees Thrive and Customer Service Is Alive.

Among other highlights of the event were the unique outfits worn by the very professional and friendly Embassy Staff, the theme, decorations, and the food at the networking reception.

Some of the comments from attendees included:

"The hotel knocked it out of the park with the luau theme with decorations, signature cocktail, wonderful appetizers and those dancers!!"

"They did an amazing job! Such a fun theme!"

On behalf of the entire MPIOH Chapter, please give your congratulations to our Award Winners in the following categories:

**Planner of the Year**  
**ANN LUKETIC**

**Supplier of the Year**  
**ANDREA CULLINAN**

**Rising Star Award**  
**ALEX MECHLER**

**Leadership Award**  
**ANITA WASHBURN**

**Committee of the Year**  
**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**Venue of the Year**  
**HILTON COLUMBUS AT EASTON**

**Lifetime Achievement Award**  
**PAT KING**

In addition to the above shout-out to Embassy Suites by Hilton Columbus Dublin, who were outstanding and gracious hosts, we'd like to extend a sincere Thank You to our sponsors:

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Another year, another successful MPIOH Recognition event! We hope you enjoy the photos from the event, and if you have a minute, send a note of congrats to the award winners. It's a small gesture that just might make someone's day!





# *Ohio's Summer Festivals:*

## **AN INCOMPLETE AND TOTALLY FUN LIST OF FESTIVALS IN THE BUCKEYE STATE**

By Pete Honsberger, Lead Facilitator, CultureShoc LLC.

Summer in Ohio means warm weather, outdoor living, trips to the nearest bodies of water, and of course, FESTIVALS. Each one is a meeting/conference in its own right, so we took the opportunity to pick out 20 unique festivals around the Buckeye State to consider stopping by this summer.

As meeting professionals, these are great opportunities to observe new, re-designed, or charmingly unique inspirations for future meetings. And yes, you'll also have free reign to either congratulate or criticize their operations with your family and friends!

If we left out any MUST-SEE Festivals, please let us know on our @MPIOH Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook pages so your fellow members can benefit.

1. **Blame My Roots Country Music Festival (Belmont) – July 18-21**
2. **Island Fest (Kelleys Island) – July 19-21**
3. **Whiskey Island Paddlefest (Cleveland) – July 20th**
4. **The Last Call Street Festival (Athens) – July 20**
5. **Taste of Tremont (Cleveland) – July 21st**
6. **Cincy Soul: The Black Taste (Cincinnati) – July 26-28**
7. **Johnny Appleseed Festival (Apple Creek) – July 26-27**
8. **Wine and Walleye Festival (Ashtabula) – July 26-28**
9. **Ohio River Paddlefest (Cincinnati) – August 3rd**
10. **Twins Day Festival (Twinsburg) – August 2-4**
11. **The Sunflower Festival (New Lebanon) – August 3rd**
12. **All Ohio Balloon Fest (Marysville) – August 8-10**
13. **Summer in the 614 Festival (Worthington) – August 10th**
14. **Brewfest Waterfront District (Lorain) – August 10th**
15. **Dayton Funk Festival (Dayton) – August 11th**
16. **D-Day Conneaut (Conneaut) – August 15-17**
17. **Coshocton Sunflower Festival (Coshocton) – August 16-18**
18. **FareFest (Versailles) – August 17th**
19. **Perch, Peach, Pierogi and Polka Festival (Port Clinton) – August 8/30-September 1**
20. **Great Trail Festival (Malvern) – August 31-September 2**

We all have the occasional free weekend in the summer. Consider this a challenge to pick out one of these, or perhaps another festival you've never attended.

Give it a try, and who knows? You might start a new tradition, be driven to volunteer, or perhaps unlock a love for festivals you never knew you possessed!

For more information on any of these festivals, Google makes it pretty easy!





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# PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER WHO USES A WHEELCHAIR SHARES TIPS TO ACCOMMODATE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AT MEETINGS AND EVENTS



By: Rosemarie Rossetti, Ph.D.  
(August Chapter Meeting Speaker)

**Since June 1998 I have used a wheelchair because of a spinal cord injury. This injury occurred when I was crushed by a 7,000 pound falling tree while riding my bicycle.**

Returning to the stage as a professional speaker three months later, I had a new perspective from a 4'2" seated height. I have attended many meetings and am keenly aware of the problems that people using wheelchairs experience.

Meeting professionals need to know what I have learned in order to make venues and events more accommodating for the speakers and the participants with disabilities.

Through my experiences I have felt honored and treated as a VIP as well as excluded and ignored. Being ignored is frustrating.

What can you do to help people with disabilities feel welcomed?

## **Collect Information during Registration**

Start by creating a way for people who are registering to communicate that they have a disability which could impact their experience. Ask what accommodations you can provide them.

For example does the person...

- use a mobility aid and need an accessible hotel room? What accessible features are preferred?
- need a wheelchair accessible vehicle to transport them from the airport to the venue and to off-site locations?
- need a sign language interpreter?
- need printed materials in braille?

Once you are aware that some of the registrants will need to have certain accommodations, it is a good practice to call each person. Encourage the person to share what they need and reassure them that you plan to provide top-notch service to accommodate them.

The information you receive from this interview will give the planning team direction. Start communicating with all the people who will be providing these accommodations.

## **Accessible Transportation and Parking**

People who use wheelchairs may need accessible transportation to get from the airport to the meeting or event as well as any off site locations. Make arrangements with transportation companies that can provide wheelchair accessible vans.

The parking lots at all the locations where you are holding meetings and events need to be evaluated to ensure there are ample parking spaces for guests with disability placards. Be aware that wheelchair accessible vans often have ramps or platform lifts that deploy from the side. Van accessible spaces need to be clearly marked. If you realize there are not enough accessible parking places, make plans to have temporary signs made. Use them to direct your guests to additional parking spaces close to the building entrance that are reserved for them.

## **Dining Accommodations**

Tips to help in your dining room set up planning.

- Set the dining room with adequate space for people in wheelchairs to navigate through. When all the guests are seated, provide room to travel between the tables. Guests in wheelchairs should not be told that there is a designated table in the back of the room where they should sit. Inclusion is important. Give them a choice of tables and seats.
- Guests in wheelchairs may have difficulty seeing empty chairs at the tables and will need a person to help them identify a place to eat. That person can lead the guest to the identified spot at the table. Look for a place that does not have a table leg so there is room for the person's legs and wheelchair.
- Ask the person in the wheelchair if they want the chair removed so they can stay seated in their wheelchair at the dining table. Remove the chair if requested.
- Once the person is positioned at the table ask if they have enough room. Ask if they need any help during the meal. Make adjustments at the table to provide the space that is needed.

Rosemarie Rossetti, Ph.D. is a powerful, internationally known speaker, trainer, author, consultant, and president of Rossetti Enterprises Inc. [www.RosemarieSpeaks.com](http://www.RosemarieSpeaks.com)





# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

*Let's all give an #MPIOH welcome to a few of our newest MPI Ohio members. We are excited that you have become a part of our organization and look forward to helping you grow and reach your goals.*

*Here's some information about each of them – and if you get a chance introduce yourself the next time you see them!*

## ELIZABETH FRICKE HYATT REGENCY CINCINNATI

Elizabeth.fricke@hyatt.com  
513-354-4206

**WHO ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE?** My family; More specifically, my husband John, my two kids, Jack and Caroline, and our little one on the way!

**WHO DO YOU WORK FOR AND WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?** Hyatt Regency Cincinnati. Currently I am a Sales Manager for the hotel, but have spent time in Events as well in my almost 10 years with the company.

**WHAT IS THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?** Meeting and building relationships with people from all over the world.

**WHAT ARE THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS YOU USE AT WORK?**  
Communication, Creative Thinking and Empathy

**WHAT ONE PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE BEGINNING THEIR CAREER IN THE MEETING INDUSTRY?** Get your hands dirty. Start from the ground up and learn as much as you can about all facets of the industry. You will be more valuable the more you know and the more experience you have.

**WHAT SUPER-POWER WOULD YOU LOVE TO HAVE TO HELP YOU DO YOUR JOB BETTER?** Mind Reader; I would love to be able to know what my clients are thinking/feeling during their interactions with myself and our team.



## JESSIE JAMES BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Phone: 419-436-2349  
Email: jessiejames2916@gmail.com  
LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/jessiejames2916

**WHO ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE?** My parents and grandmother. They have always supported and encouraged me to be the best version of myself that I can possibly be.

**WHO DO YOU WORK FOR AND WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?** I am a student employee at Bowling Green State University Information Technology Services (ITS) & an event planner for the BGSU Library (UL). I have worked for ITS for three years and I help with hardware support, maintain labs, fix printers and WiFi issues. As a practicum this semester I am an event planner in the UL, as well as, working for ITS. I have planned and executed events, worked on a search committee, and planned social media marketing strategies.

**WHAT IS THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?** What I enjoy most about both of my jobs is interacting with people. I love learning about other's stories and, if given

the opportunity, making their day a little bit brighter.

**WHAT ARE THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS YOU USE AT WORK?** Creativity, open communication, and out of the box thinking

**WHAT ONE PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE BEGINNING THEIR CAREER IN THE MEETING INDUSTRY?** Just be yourself and be true to who you are. Bloom where you are planted. And never be scared to try something different from your norm. I'm just beginning my career in this industry myself! So I would love to hear any advice from those reading this.

**WHAT SUPER-POWER WOULD YOU LOVE TO HAVE TO HELP YOU DO YOUR JOB BETTER?** Telekinesis, so I would be able to move objects with my mind and give me the power to do multiple projects at once.





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Connect with me at [www.linkedin.com/in/amberpaxson](http://www.linkedin.com/in/amberpaxson)

OR Email me at [amber.paxson@concordhotels.com](mailto:amber.paxson@concordhotels.com)

**WHO ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE?** My family. They are my support system and my cheerleaders!

**WHO DO YOU WORK FOR AND WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?** I am a Sales Manager with Concord Hospitality at the Renaissance Westerville Hotel

**WHAT IS THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?** The people I work with. The culture at this hotel is nothing short of amazing. Our team is upbeat, hardworking, and fun!

**WHAT ARE THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS YOU USE AT WORK?** Multi-tasking, Listening, and Flexibility the way I work

**WHAT ONE PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE BEGINNING THEIR CAREER IN THE MEETING INDUSTRY?**

Get an internship! Experience will not only help you decide on your path, but it will help you gain mentors in the field. You can always draw on your experiences to help direct you when facing new challenges.

**WHAT SUPER-POWER WOULD YOU LOVE TO HAVE TO HELP YOU DO YOUR JOB BETTER?**

I think the power of influence would be incredibly helpful. Being able to sway people in a certain direction would solve a multitude of issues.

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**WHO ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE?** My family and friends.

**WHO DO YOU WORK FOR AND WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?** I work for National Automotive Experts/NWAN and am the Executive Assistant to the CEO- Kelly Price, and the President- David Neuenschwander.

**WHAT IS THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?** Every day is different, my tasks keep me on my toes, and I learn something new every single day!

**WHAT ARE THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS YOU USE AT WORK?** People skills- being able to read others well and adapt easily. Managing Calendars- juggling calendars for two busy Executives as well as my own. Anticipating Needs- knowing what people want before they ask you for it.

**WHAT ONE PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE BEGINNING THEIR CAREER IN THE MEETING INDUSTRY?**

It's okay to be overwhelmed! Ask questions! Network! I am new to meeting planning myself and I make sure I take time to ask questions, as well as research/educate myself.

**WHAT SUPER-POWER WOULD YOU LOVE TO HAVE TO HELP YOU DO YOUR JOB BETTER?** The power to read minds, without a doubt!



# Mark Your Calendar!

## AUGUST 21, 2019 CHAPTER MEETING

Accommodating People with Disabilities at Meetings and Events

Buffalo Creek Retreat - Seville, OH

## SEPTEMBER 10-12, 2019 IMEX

Las Vegas, NV

## SEPTEMBER 30, 2019 JOINT INDUSTRY MEETING WITH OSAE & PCMA

Hilton Columbus at Easton - Columbus, OH

## OCTOBER 16, 2019 CHAPTER MEETING

21c Museum Hotel – Cincinnati, OH

## DECEMBER 11, 2019 INDEPTH EDUCATION DAY & 32ND ANNUAL EDUCATION & SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER

LIVE Technologies - Columbus, OH

**MEETING ATTENDANCE POLICY:** All Essential Level members or non-members are limited to no more than two events in one fiscal year and must pay the Essential Level/Non-member rate. MPI Preferred or Premier Level members are welcome to attend all chapter events at the Member Price.

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Call or email Heather Gortz, Director of Strategic Partnerships, to secure your date at [heather.gortz@ihg.com](mailto:heather.gortz@ihg.com) or 614-461-2613



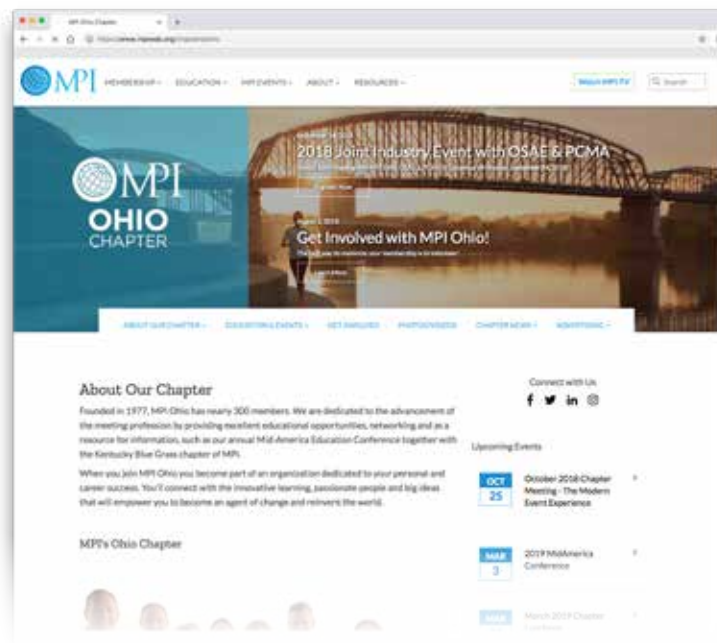
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American College of Emergency Physicians

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Check out our website at:  
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# Welcome to Our New Members!

Ignatius Alam  
Dayton/Montgomery County Con-  
vention & Visitors Bureau  
937-226-8273  
ialam@daytoncvb.net

Victoria Bermudez  
513-412-2118  
vbermudez@gaig.com

Mandy Berryman  
Sheraton Columbus Hotel at Capitol  
Square  
419-307-1707  
mberryman@sheratoncolumbus-  
capitolsquare.com

Teresa Bonica  
Great Wolf Lodge, Sandusky  
419-609-6000  
tbonica@greatwolf.com

Corey Cook  
Inntelligence, Inc.  
740-214-6835  
corey@inntelligence.com

Markel Davis  
614-537-0957  
kd673617@ohio.edu

Lauren Elliot  
937-901-9557  
le349414@ohio.edu

James Ervin  
740-591-5009  
je322212@ohio.edu

Alli Gamad  
ag907114@ohio.edu

Payton Groene  
513-259-6211  
pngroene@gmail.com

Taylor Helton  
513-604-1610  
th195215@ohio.edu

Ann Hollins (Netzley)  
Events Outlined, LLC  
614-403-3892  
ann@eventsoutlined.com

Jude Holston  
614-593-0249  
jh888614@ohio.edu

Karen Johnston CASE  
Visit Seattle  
630-778-6025  
kjohnston@visitseattle.org

Brittany Koza  
Prevention Action Alliance  
614-540-9985  
brittanykoza@gmail.com

Ian Lemonds  
218-256-2791  
il801814@ohio.edu

Jeremy Lin  
224-855-0650  
jlin1847@gmail.com

DeAna Morgan CMP  
Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland  
216-579-2178  
dmorgan1922@yahoo.com

Xavior Motley  
937-336-1212  
xm767516@ohio.edu

Erin Murphy  
614-880-4202  
emurphy@nationwidehcc.com

Peggy Murray Hagaman  
Discover the Palm Beaches  
847-236-0200  
phagaman@thepalmbeaches.com

Helen OShea  
440-666-2359  
hs798015@ohio.edu

Emily Pennington  
440-773-8877  
ep430315@ohio.edu

Angela Reagan  
Roberts Centre  
937-283-3276  
angela.reagan@robertscentre.com

Ben Roberts  
513-238-9014  
benjaminwaltzerroberts@gmail.com

Ryan Sargent  
224-221-3302  
rs048014@ohio.edu

Halle Siegel  
216-905-5956  
hs406814@ohio.edu

Destini Smith  
ProMedica Foundation  
419-603-6289  
destinismith1@aol.com

Tiffany Smith  
National Automotive Experts/NWAN  
330-861-2027  
tsmith@naenwan.com

Brooke Tokar  
bt276814@ohio.edu

Dave Willacker CMP, CMM  
Events Dayton  
937-475-6234  
info@cincinnati-circus.com

Haley Wilson  
330-442-5916  
hw767714@ohio.edu

Sheila Wright  
Luxottica Retail  
513-340-5790  
swright@luxotticaretail.com



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