

Q1 ISSUE

MPI D/FW

Newsletter

2026

A NOTE FROM ZHANNA:

“EVERY STORY MATTER”



—“— Each of you brings unique experiences, ideas, challenges, and victories, and our chapter is stronger because of those differences —”—

As I step into my role as your **2026 Chapter President**, I do so with immense gratitude and excitement. Like many of you, my journey with MPI D/FW began by walking into an event unsure of what to expect, and leaving with far more than I imagined. This chapter became a place of connection, growth, mentorship, and friendship, and it continues to shape both my professional and personal journey.

This past year brought big changes for my family and me, including a move to Nashville and a new role as Director of Sales at The Bankers Alley Hotel. Through it all, my commitment to MPI D/FW has only grown stronger. This community has supported me through every chapter, and I remain fully committed to being present and engaged with our board and members throughout the year.

Our 2026 theme, **Every Story Matters**, truly comes from the heart. Each of you brings unique experiences, ideas, challenges, and victories, and our chapter is stronger because of those differences. As we approach our 50th anniversary, we have a meaningful opportunity to honor our legacy by ensuring every member feels welcomed, heard, and empowered.

My vision for the year ahead is grounded in three priorities: **connection, growth, and collaboration**. Together, we'll continue building relationships, creating opportunities to learn and lead, and working as one team to achieve more than any of us could alone.

Whether you're new to MPI or have been part of this chapter for decades, please know this: your voice matters, your story belongs here, and what you bring to this community is both valuable and needed. I'm excited for the year ahead and for all the stories we'll write together. Happy New Year MPI!

With gratitude,

Zhanna Atherton

President, MPI DFW Chapter

Director of Sales at The Bankers Alley Hotel

INTRODUCING THE 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



Tim Altbaum, CMP, CMM
Immediate Past President



Zhanna Atherton
President



Shakara Shelton
President Elect



Jessica Rodgers, CMP
VP Membership



Cindy Maso
VP Education Events



Lauryn Brown, MOL
VP MarComm



Cheryl Batzing, CMP
VP Special Events



Joshua Rios, HMCC
VP Leadership



Eric Hutchins, CMP
VP Strategic Partnerships



Alstin Spence
Director Membership



Kimberly Zoulek
Director Education Events



Marieke Franz, CIS
Director MarComm



Andre Campbell
Director Special Events



Keith Shaw, MSML, DISC
Director Leadership



Julian Huerta, SEPC
Director Sponsorship

MPI D/FW

A Very Merry
Holiday Prom

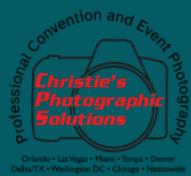
THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT SPONSORS



ANDRE CAMPBELL

Access

ANNUAL SPONSORS



A Warm Welcome To Our Newest Members (Oct - Dec 2025)

We're excited to have these professionals join our chapter and look forward to the energy, ideas, and expertise they bring to our network. Be sure to say hello at an upcoming event.

Kristi Benear
Rick Bondoc
Andrea Cook
Jennifer Fenimore
Casey Flores
Yanyan Foreman
Matt Glasgow
Dana Grodt
Felisha Hill
Kimberly Jones
Kaylee Krist
Emily McCarthy

Katie McRoberts
Diana Olivas
Terri Ornelas
Wendy Purvis
Bruce Rhoton
Bedford Rice
Matthew Rose
Jodi Salas
Jordan Schwieg
Coleen Scott
Brandon Sloan
Samantha Smith

Peter Sparrow
Alex Standish
Cheryl Vara-Sebany
Aria Vasquez
Lindsay Velasquez
Jordan Warren
Vicki Watry
Susan West
Kelly Yates

We're so glad
you're here—
welcome to the
MPI DFW Chapter



For more photos, visit our partner's gallery:
Christie's Photographic Solutions

MPI D/FW
A Very Merry
Holiday Prom





BEYOND THE REARVIEW MIRROR

A Look at the 2026 Horizon

Michael Dominguez | President & CEO, ALHI



DATE
January 22, 2026



TIME
10:30 AM - 2:00 PM



LOCATION
ASTORIA
3216 Royalty Row, Irving, TX
75062



REGISTER NOW

UPCOMING EVENTS

SAVE
the
DATE

FEBRUARY 19, 2026

BRAND NEW YOU EXPERIENCE

MARCH 11, 2026

24TH ANNUAL
CMP & CMM BREAKFAST





**DALLAS/
FORT WORTH**
CHAPTER

24TH ANNUAL
CMP & CMM
BREAKFAST

Save the Date
MARCH 11, 2026

Hotel Crescent Court Dallas



400 Crescent Court
Dallas, Texas 75201



SAVE *the* DATE

March 11, 2027



**DALLAS/
FORT WORTH**
CHAPTER

25TH ANNUAL
CMP & CMM
BREAKFAST

Hotel Crescent Court Dallas
400 Crescent Court
Dallas, Texas 75201





24TH ANNUAL
CMP & CMM
BREAKFAST



DALLAS/
FORT WORTH
CHAPTER

MARCH 11, 2026

Save the Date

HOTEL CRESCENT COURT
DALLAS

 400 CRESCENT COURT
DALLAS, TEXAS 75201



March 11th 2026



**DALLAS/
FORT WORTH**
CHAPTER

24TH ANNUAL CMP
& CMM BREAKFAST

Hotel Crescent Court Dallas

 400 Crescent Court
Dallas, Texas 75201

Brand New You

Refresh. Reconnect. Reignite.



 **MPI**
**DALLAS/
FORT WORTH**
CHAPTER

Start the year strong at Membership Mixer—

Brand New You

Refresh. Reconnect. Reignite.

February 19th 2026

6:00pm - 8:00pm

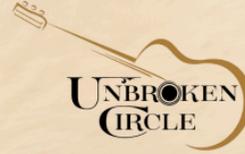


MPI D/FW NOVEMBER CHAPTER EXPERIENCE

We appreciate our sponsors for our Chapter Experience, Fall in Fort Worth, at the Beautiful Crescent Hotel, Fort Worth on November 13, 2025.



THE CRESCENT
HOTEL



MPI D/FW NOVEMBER CHAPTER EXPERIENCE



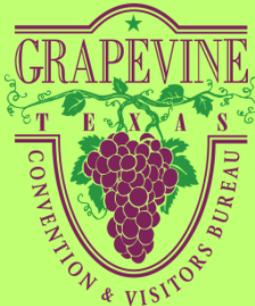
For more photos, visit our
partner's gallery:
Christie's Photographic Solutions





D/FW CHAPTER
FUNDRAISER

We appreciate our sponsors for our Chapter Pickle Ball Chapter Fundraiser at Chicken and Pickle in Grapevine, TX on October 23, 2025.





DALLAS/
FORT WORTH
CHAPTER

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CHAPTER CSR

2026 CSR Spotlight: MPI DFW Partners with Special Abilities of North Texas

The MPI DFW Chapter is proud to announce Special Abilities of North Texas as our 2026 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) partner. Special Abilities is a nonprofit organization dedicated to enriching the lives of adults with developmental disabilities through high-quality day programs, life-skills training, community engagement, and compassionate support services.

Throughout 2026, our chapter will collaborate with Special Abilities to raise awareness, provide volunteer support, and help advance their mission of empowering individuals to achieve greater independence and belonging. We look forward to making a meaningful impact together and strengthening our community through purposeful partnership.

Learn more about their incredible work at specialabilities.net.

For more information or to get involved, contact the VP of Leadership - vpleadership@mpidfw.org.



Special Abilities
of North Texas

MENTOR/MENTEE SPOTLIGHT: MARIA LOPEZ & MARIEKE FRANZ

As part of our ongoing **MPI D/FW Mentor/Mentee Program**, we are proud to highlight the inspiring partnership between **Mentee, Maria Lopez**, and **Mentor, Marieke Franz**. Their pairing, which began in **November**, is already demonstrating the strength and impact of meaningful mentorship within our chapter.

Maria shared how valuable her experience has been so far, especially having a mentor who brings both industry knowledge and authentic support: “Working with Marieke has been such a wonderful experience. She is patient, encouraging, and genuinely invested in helping me grow. Every conversation leaves me more confident and motivated, and I’m grateful to have her guidance as I navigate my professional goals.”

— **Maria Lopez, Mentee**

Marieke has brought insight, perspective, and thoughtful leadership to their conversations, creating a space where Maria feels empowered to ask questions, tackle challenges, and explore new opportunities. Their connection highlights what makes the Mentor/Mentee Program so impactful—real relationships that foster growth, confidence, and community.

We’re excited to see how **Maria** and **Marieke** continue to develop together and look forward to showcasing more mentor/mentee pairs throughout the year.



Maria



Marieke

YOUNG LEADERS & STUDENT ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Our **Young Leaders and Student Engagement** efforts are gearing up for an exciting season of college outreach and connection with the next generation of meetings and events professionals. As we expand our presence on local campuses, we're looking for passionate chapter members who want to help inspire, educate, and support emerging talent.

Whether you enjoy speaking to student groups, participating in career panels, or simply sharing your industry journey, your involvement can make a meaningful impact. This initiative is a great way to give back, grow your network, and help strengthen the future of our industry.

If you're interested in volunteering or learning more about how you can support this effort, please reach out to vpleadership@mpidfw.org.



CELEBRATING OUR MPI D/FW MEMBERSHIP

Membership Snapshot

Our chapter continues to grow and thrive, and we're proud to share the current makeup of MPI

Total Active Members: 445

Member Breakdown

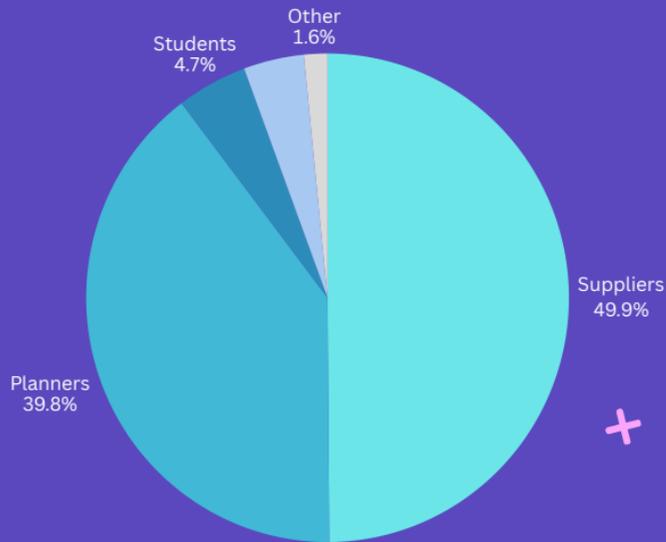
Suppliers: 222 (~50%)

Planners: 177 (~40%)

Students: 21

Lifetime Members: 18

Other (Honorary, Faculty, Retired): 7



This strong balance of planners and suppliers reflects the collaborative spirit that makes MPI DFW such a dynamic and valuable professional community.

Shoutout to Our Milestone Members

(October–December 2025)

We are honored to recognize members celebrating significant MPI membership anniversaries this past quarter. Your continued commitment, leadership, and engagement help shape the success of our chapter.

40-Year Anniversary

Lisa Brannum (Joined December 3, 1985)

35-Year Anniversary

Edwin Griffin (Joined November 7, 1990)

20-Year Anniversary

Carrie Huff (Joined October 25, 2005)

10-Year Anniversary

Kristin Kenny (Joined November 2, 2015)

5-Year Anniversary

Kara Adams (Joined October 5, 2020)
Janessa Fields (Joined November 30, 2020)
Nann Philips (Joined December 8, 2020)



Thank you for your loyalty, passion, and dedication to MPI DFW. We are grateful to have you as part of our community!

Support your MPI D/FW Chapter and
Become a Strategic Partner Today!
[Click Here](#) to Learn How.



Sponsorship Opportunities

VOLUNTEER

Build relationships. Get the most out of your membership. Give back.
Make it happen.

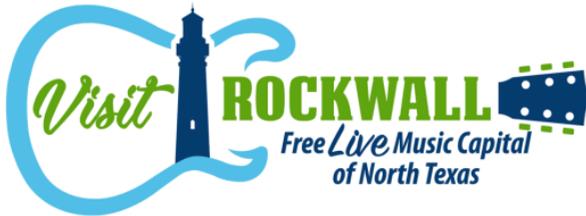
What does volunteering entail?

What does volunteering entail? It can mean anything you want it to mean. 1 hour a week, 1 hour a month, chairing a committee, just being on a committee, sending a few emails, making a few phone calls.

[Click here to learn more!](#)

2026

ANNUAL STRATEGIC PARTNERS

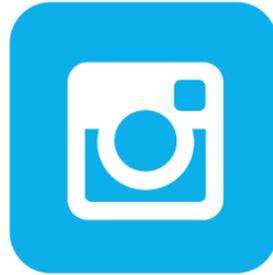


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