



[MPI Heartland Chapter](#) Newsletter: Q1 2026 Newsletter



Game on, Heartland!

Four leaders. Four perspectives. One high-impact conversation.

In this fast-paced, TED-style session, MPI Heartland brings together powerhouse voices from sports-centric destinations and the meetings industry to explore how championship thinking fuels innovation, leadership, and results. Inspired by the excitement of March's Final Four, this dynamic conversation will challenge you to raise your game, rethink strategy, and lead with a winning mindset.

Join us at Hotel Rewind in West Des Moines for an energizing industry conversation designed to spark ideas and drive momentum.

You won't want to sit this one out.

Register Now!



New Beginnings and Building on Momentum

I am very excited to lead this small but mighty chapter of meetings and events professionals in 2026. Hard to believe I just completed 10 years as a member of MPI. I am also approaching 30 years in the hospitality business, most of it with Hyatt Hotels. With that experience, I plan to help to build on the tremendous momentum our immediate past President Bel Hanson and this Board of Directors has created.

There is nothing more paramount to our success, in our work and personal lives, than the knowledge and connections we gain from meeting with each other in person. That is at the forefront of what the Heartland Chapter and MPI as an organization is here to provide for you. What makes the Heartland Chapter great is the people, and the unique perspectives we can all share, coming together from our different roles in the industry and different parts of Nebraska and Iowa.

This chapter only has 4-6 in-person events a year. What an incredible opportunity to get out of our silos, and check out a new venue, hotel, location, and meet new people. I have met so many incredible people in my 10 years with MPI. I am so happy I took the time to leave my desk and see what it was all about. Here I am, a decade later, with lifelong friends, and great memories of some incredible events I was lucky enough to be a part of. You truly do get back what you put into it. I have certainly done that. Most important, it's the friendships I have developed both personally and professionally. I challenge you to do the same.

Have you considered offering your expertise as part of a committee? Our board of directors is always looking for new ideas and perspectives to make our events and content even better. If you are looking for a resume-builder or just feel a pull to get more involved, please connect with me or one of our board members by

email or in-person at our next event. We would love to have you actively participate with us, in whatever capacity you feel you can make an impact.

Thank you for being a part of this exceptional and very fun group of people. I look forward to seeing you at one or several of our upcoming events this year. Our next chapter education event is at Hotel Rewind in Des Moines on March 26th. I highly encourage you to make the drive, no matter how short or long it may be. I am very confident you will find it every bit worth the time away from home and the office. Bring a friend or colleague with you. If you enjoy being a part of MPI, I am sure others you know and work with would feel the same way.

Yours in Hospitality,

Cory Carlson

President

MPI Heartland Chapter





We love celebrating the amazing members of the MPI Heartland Chapter! This form helps us highlight your story, experiences, and contributions to our community. Your responses will be used to create a member spotlight feature for our social media, website, or newsletter, giving others a chance to get to know you and see the impact of our organization through your journey.

Please take a few moments to share about yourself, your connection to the Heartland Chapter, and what being a member means to you. We appreciate you

being part of our community and can't wait to share your story!

Member Spotlight

Mark Your Calendars Now!



Our 3rd Chapter Meeting of 2026 is set for
September 15th, 2026, Lied Lodge at Arbor Day Farm, Nebraska City, NE

The Power of Questions

Speaker, Jeff Peters, Supportworks

This interactive presentation will explore how asking better questions can strengthen leadership, improve collaboration, and create more productive partnerships with teams, clients, and suppliers. Attendees will gain practical tools to spark meaningful conversations and elevate the impact of the meetings they lead.



We're excited to share that Dubuque has been selected as the host destination for the 2026 MPI Heartland Chapter Annual Meeting!

Taking it back to where Iowa began, you'll discover a vibrant blend of old and new, quirky and quaint. This marks the first time our longtime partner, Travel Dubuque, will host the Annual Meeting, and we look forward to celebrating together in a destination proudly known as "Where Iowa Started!"

MPI Heartland Chapter Annual Meeting

November 2–4, 2026

- Heartland Connection: Monday, November 2 — Field of Dreams Movie Site (more surprises to come!)
- Annual Meeting: Tuesday, November 3 — Reflections Event Center
- Host Hotel: The Key Hotel by Hilton

More details to come, we can't wait to bring the chapter together in Dubuque!



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New Member has \$50 Application Fee **WAIVED**

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Referring Member gets \$50 CASH

With hundreds of hours of free education for MPI members, the MPI Academy is your one-stop shop for meeting planning and event industry skills training, CE credits and certificate courses. Featuring online and in-person classes and webinars, it's the perfect resource for the job you have - or the job you want.



A special offer for our members! The Kansas City, Chicago Area, Indiana, St. Louis, Heartland (Nebraska/Iowa) and Oklahoma Chapters of MPI are partnering on a promotion to offer Affiliate memberships at our chapters for a discount!

This gives you access to each chapters' education events, social events, and member databases to name a few!

We're always looking for ways to provide the support and resources

you need to advance your career.

With the new [MPI Career Center](#), you can move forward stronger than ever with a more intuitive job search, salary and job growth insights, resume evaluations and real-time alerts when jobs become available.

Research and Plan Your Career with New Features and Enhancements on the MPI CAREER CENTER.

Now you can gain insights on:

- Salary Ranges
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- Knowledge and skills required
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- "Day in the life" videos and more!



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Thank you to our 2026 Annual Sponsors



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Contact [Michelle Russell](#) or [Shelly McElroy](#).



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Sincerely,

MPI Heartland

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