

MPI-WISCONSIN CHAPTER

Agenda

JULY
AUG
VOL 44/NUM 4
2022


Top Performing
CHAPTER AWARD



"A light we'll never forget"
PAGE 22



MPI

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CHAPTER

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MPI-WISCONSIN CHAPTER Agenda

JULY/AUGUST 2022

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6 Different Ways



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Editor's Note



Happy New (MPI) Year to all!

The first day of July marks the first day of our new MPI year.

This brings a new Board of Directors and volunteers, while

some volunteers are leaving their posts. To all our volunteers -- new, continuing, and moving on -- thank you for your service to our chapter. Because of your hard work, our chapter is respected throughout the global MPI community and used as an example for other chapters to follow.

There is no more fun and festive way to celebrate our chapter and volunteers than our annual [Awards Gala](#). This year's "**Golden Gala**" will be on Thursday, August 11th, at the Hilton Paper Valley Hotel in Appleton. Join us to honor the volunteers and members that make our chapter great... which is all of you, not just the award honorees. Be sure to check out the profiles for all the nominees in the pages that follow. And while it feels odd, it would be odder not to mention that I'm the lucky soul inducted into our chapter's Hall of Fame this year. I'd love for all of you to be there to celebrate our chapter and all our members!

For those who didn't attend [MPI's World Education Congress \(WEC\)](#) July 21-23 in San Francisco, we captured special moments and recaps from member attendees. If you've never been to WEC, I highly encourage you to find a way to attend in the future. It's like a chapter event on mega-steroids! WEC is where (1) I learned that there is business value to attending "parties," (2) where I took my first photo of a room set (yep, I'm a dork), and (3) where I've accrued many uniquely entertaining stories for MPI members. There are also loads of education sessions for planners, suppliers, newbies, veterans, and more!

Here's where it gets REALLY exciting ... **WEC 2023 is going to be in the Mexican Riviera Maya!** This will be the first time the event will take place outside of the US or Canada, so mark your calendars NOW for June 12-15, 2023.

Continued on page 5





EVERY STEP HAS A STORY

On a more personal note, I ask each of you to pay special attention to the story accompanying Amanda's article. My friend Maria Peot, CMP, has decided to participate in the [Susan G. Komen 3 Day Walk](#).

**Twenty miles walking
for three consecutive days
= 60 miles total
is quite a feat!**

(When I participated in 2007, it was undoubtedly the most exhausting experience I've ever had between the miles of walking, a middle-of-the-night evacuation, and sweltering heat that led to heat stroke. But it was also one of the most inspiring weekends of my life. And I knew the challenges I went through were nothing compared to what my cancer-fighting Aunt had gone through the year before.)

Along with her substantial physical commitment, Maria is boosting fundraising to find **a cure that is within our reach**. While she's reached her initial goal, breast cancer research **needs more funding**, especially for challenging strains like Amanda's triple-negative cancer. If you feel so inclined, please donate to Maria's walk, offer encouraging words or tips for marathon walks, suggest a walking partner, or gather a few together September 16-18 at a Cheering Station and shout out encouragement to all those trekking through the streets. I'm crossing my fingers for beautiful weather and strong legs for our Maria and can't wait to hear her story of this incredible experience.



Editor's Note
Continued from page 4

At the end of May, our chapter lost a beloved member, **Amanda Ridout**, after a two-year battle with triple-negative breast cancer. Amanda was an exceptional person, a spectacular event professional, and loved by so many in our MPI chapter and community. A beautifully written article on page 22 shares her story. Amanda was determined to remain as positive as possible during her cancer journey, including friend-sourcing her "Juicy Jams" musical playlists for treatment days. So, when you're done reading this issue of the *Agenda*, I challenge you to pick your favorite upbeat song and play it at full blast and enjoy your own "Juicy Jam" in her honor!



In closing, as we start a new year within MPI, consider what you'd like to get out of your membership this year.

- If you seek education and networking, then prioritize attending every MPI-WI event.
- If you're looking to gain new skills, then volunteer in an area completely different from your day job (MPI is a great place to try new things!)
- If you're barely hanging on as a member because of budget constraints, short-staffing, or work overload, then email the membership team or me, and we'll see how we can help!

Cheers to a new year MPI Wisconsin!



Imagine your meeting in the wide-open spaces of our Exhibition Hall and its adjacent Lakeside Commons — with immersive, engaging presentations experienced in-person or remotely. Yes, times have changed. But they've only fortified our attention to every last detail.

So go ahead, keep dreaming big.

Let us orchestrate *your* incredible.
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President's Message



***MPI-WI Chapter President
Rebecca Staats***

Hello MPI Wisconsin Members,

I hope everyone's summer is off to a great start and the rest of 2022 is looking bright. I am very excited to be taking on the role of your Chapter President and am happy for what the 2022-2023 year holds ahead of us.

First and foremost, I would like to take a moment to thank out-going Immediate Past President, **Alison Hutchinson** and our new Immediate Past President **Shannon Timmerman** for being great leaders of our Chapter and mentors to me. They have led our Chapter through extremely difficult times with grace and poise. I'd also like to thank past and current Board Members for their dedication & service; volunteering alongside each and every one of you is a pleasure. Leadership is a privilege and I am honored to have been elected into this role and am filled with gratitude.

From the moment I attended my first MPI Wisconsin event, I knew this chapter was something special. And from the moment I joined the Board of Directors, I was interested in growing & developing my leadership skill set and it has been a dream of mine to become President of this wonderful chapter. In my current role as Director of Sales for two select service hotel properties in a small market, I am a department of one person. Volunteering with MPI Wisconsin helps me expand on leadership skills that I don't get to develop in my day job and allows me to be part of something bigger.

In the upcoming year, I want to help MPI Wisconsin Recover & Grow. It is particularly important to me to grow our membership and attendance at chapter events, which is down approximately 35% from pre-pandemic levels.

MPI Wisconsin has helped lead, and will continue to lead the charge back to in-person meetings led by the philosophy that we will continue to offer top-notch education and networking opportunities at our events.

Behind the scenes our teams are working diligently to secure locations for all of our events for 2023, along with a great lineup of interesting and informative speakers. Our members are telling us that they crave more time to network & socialize with one another—especially after lock-downs and long stretches of isolation. Let's all remember that meeting face-to-face holds so much importance, more now than ever. And as MPI Global would say, when we meet, we change the world!

I am here to serve you, our members; so if there is anything I can ever do, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. My personal cell # is (612) 327-1293 and the email I use for all things MPI related is rebecca.l.staats@gmail.com.

I look forward to seeing you at the Golden Gala in August where we will celebrate 50 years of MPI along with the volunteer efforts of our chapter members this past year. Let's make it a Great Year!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Staats', written in a cursive, flowing style.



Please join us in welcoming our 2022–2023 Board of Directors!

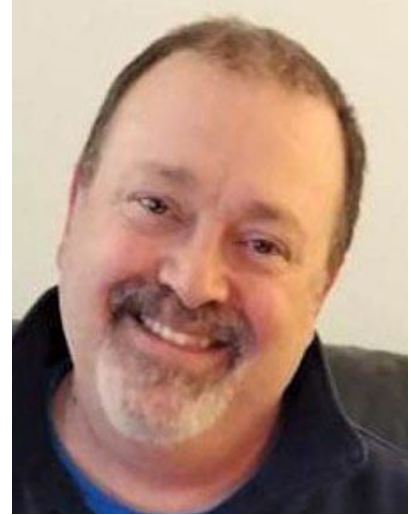


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MPI-WI CHAPTER

Golden Gala

August 11, 2022
Hilton Paper Valley
Appleton, WI

DATE: August 11, 2022

TIME: 5pm - Midnight

LOCATION: Hilton Appleton Paper Valley Hotel

333 W College Avenue, Appleton

ROOM BLOCK RATE: \$99 (book by July 28, 2022)

RESERVATIONS: 920.733.8000

Continued on page 11

Don't Miss Out!

Golden Gala in Northeast Wisconsin Thursday, August 11, 2022

Mark MPI's 50th Anniversary by celebrating all day!

Start the day by touring the new Round Lake Farms and Stone Prairie in Brillion at 1:00 pm and enjoy a complimentary light lunch, hosted by AriensCo Hospitality. Before you head to Appleton, let Katie and her team will show you the venues available for your next event.

Next, the Fox Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau is excited to partner with the newly renovated and re-branded Hilton Appleton Paper Valley hotel to be the MPI Wisconsin

Gala hosts and showcase our flexible and professional onsite conference center in the heart of vibrant downtown Appleton.

Get out your evening wear and golden accents for our theme this year is the Golden Gala. Celebrate and recognize MPI Wisconsin members, volunteers and chapter accomplishments. Enjoy live music and sample fabulous cuisine all while bidding on our silent auction. We'll close out the evening with an afterglow party in Blaze.

Register today!



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Hilton
APPLETON PAPER VALLEY

BLAZE
BOURBON & WHISKEY BAR



2021 – 2022 AWARD NOMINEES

By: MPI-WI Membership Team

It's that time of year where we acknowledge and honor our volunteer members! Join us in congratulating the nominees for this year's chapter Awards. Below is a list of the nominees along with an excerpt from their nomination. Good luck to all, our chapter is really the winner to have all of you working so hard to do great things for MPI!

NOMINATIONS FOR **RIISING STAR**



KORTNEE CARROLL **KALAHARI RESORTS & CONVENTIONS**

Kortnee is new to our MPI-WI chapter but she dove in headfirst to help out and be a volunteer. I have seen her in action at the meetings and know that she has stepped up whenever asked to be on a team. She was a key member to our 2022 April Trivia Night to that we could have a successful auction. Kortnee always has a smile on her face to greet you and she has even recently joined the MPI-WI Board. It that doesn't tell you how well she is doing and moving up in our chapter. She definitely deserves the Rising Star award.



KATIE MULHANEY **ARIENSCO HOSPITALITY**

Katie is on the committee for the Gala and is working hard on showcasing her place. This little boost might make her volunteer for more!



ELIZABETH POH **LA CROSSE CENTER**

Elizabeth took the initiative to be an active volunteer right from the start and graciously gave her time, energy, and talent to the chapter as a volunteer on both the Spring Education Day Team and Trivia Team. She took on added responsibilities on the teams without hesitation to ensure the event was successful, while also doing the heavy lifting of execution as the event host property. Elizabeth will be joining the WI Chapter Board of Directors starting July 1 as the Director of Special Education Projects where she will be lifting our chapter up even further through the gift of her time and talent. Elizabeth is the very definition of a Rising Star and look forward to seeing where she takes our chapter to next.



NOMINATIONS FOR **PLANNER OF THE YEAR**



MELISSA FALENDYSZ, CMP
BCD MEETINGS & EVENTS

Melissa has been a great resource for the chapter and other planners. She has been involved in the chapter and it is great to see her grow in her own job.



LINDSEY HESS, CMP
WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

She is dedicated to the chapter, she does an amazing job planning and executing in her daily job as well as within different volunteer teams in our chapter and will begin serving on our Board of Directors in July.



DANIELLE ZIEGLER, CMP, CVT, CNAP
RED DOG RESOURCES, LLC

Danielle has done a wonderful job as the lead of our Speaker team. She is very organized with her committee meetings and thorough with all her communication for team. Danielle has been a huge asset to the Education team. Our survey scores reflect on the great job Danielle has done.

NOMINATIONS FOR **SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR**



DENISE HUMPHREY
DISCOVER GREEN BAY

Denise has always been a great asset to other planners and suppliers. She is great to work with and is always willing to help out.



MARIN MEDEMA
THE OSTHOFF RESORT

Marin has been a long-time Supplier chapter member and consistently year after year regularly attends events and volunteers for the chapter. She is currently serving on the RFP team helping MPI-WI secure host venues for 2023. Marin has been a great member of MPI WI. Every year, she is on some type of committee. Marin has a lot of industry experience that she shares with our newer members. Her feedback is always welcomed, and she contributes great ideas.

Supplier of the Year
Continued on page 14



NOMINATIONS FOR **SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR** (CONT.)



KATHY READING
THE SCAN GROUP, INC.

Kathy is a master Supplier! Printing needs, mass mailings, registration tools and more. More importantly, she is the supplier of all things MPI, volunteering continuously after her time on the BOD, championing fellow MPI members with best wishes, and dedicated to all things that help the chapter. She is the epitome of an excellent supplier of goodness to everyone in her presence.



SHERRY WOLFF
KOHLER HOSPITALITY

Sherry has eagerly volunteered on several committees this past year. She always has great ideas to contribute to the teams. Sherry is very detailed and organized!

NOMINATIONS FOR **INDUSTRY ADVOCATE**



DAVID HELGESON, CMP
BEST WESTERN PREMIER WATERFRONT HOTEL AND CONVENTION CENTER

David not only does a lot for MPI as a Strategic Partner, volunteer, and regular attendee, he also has a strong industry presence. When you think of Oshkosh, you think of David first and foremost. He is always eager to host MPI events and is involved in other industry organizations.



ANN MARIE HESS
VISIT BROOKFIELD

She has been a great asset to the Gala team and has always been an advocate for Brookfield and the industry as a whole.

Industry Advocate
Continued on page 15



CELEBRATE THIS YEAR'S HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

JENNIFER MELL, CMP will be honored as the 2022 Hall of Fame Recipient at this year's MPI-WI Awards Gala. In Jen's 12+ years as an MPI Wisconsin member, she has grown professionally and made contributions to our chapter all along the way. She's worked in hotels, as a corporate meeting planner, for an event production company, and as a Third-Party Planner. This makes her enviably well-rounded in her knowledge of the events industry. She makes use of her years of experience by serving on MATC's Advisory Committee for their Event Management program, as well as in her volunteer work for MPI. Jen is currently co-editor for the AGENDA Magazine and has served in many roles for MPI-WI, including Chapter President in 2016-2017, and she used her extra time at home during the pandemic, by serving a year on a MPI International Committee. Please join us on August 11th and help us thank Jennifer Mell, CMP for her consistent leadership and congratulate her on her Hall of Fame induction!

NOMINATIONS FOR **INDUSTRY ADVOCATE** (CONT.)



TAMARA P. JESSWEIN, CMP, VEMM
HID GLOBAL

Tamara is a former MPI-WI president and remains a very active volunteer and member in our chapter. She took on the very challenging role of leading efforts for GLES and continues to attend events and support the success of our chapter. On a more personal level, she is a mentor, guiding newer members of our chapter and industry in ways that only someone with her experience and passion for the meetings industry can.



MARIN MEDEMA
THE OSTHOFF RESORT

Marin has been a long-time Supplier chapter member and consistently year after year regularly attends events and volunteers for the chapter. She is currently serving on the RFP team helping MPI-WI secure host venues for 2023. Marin has been a great member of MPI WI. Every year, she is on some type of committee. Marin has a lot of industry experience that she shares with our newer members. Her feedback is always welcomed, and she contributes great ideas.



KEOLA SHIMOOKA
DESTINATION MADISON

Keola has been wonderful throughout the years as a team player, a resource for other Planners and Suppliers and always a willing volunteer.

NOMINATIONS FOR **TEAM OF THE YEAR**

AGENDA TEAM

The Agenda Newsletter team worked together to create a digital newsletter through the pandemic, and faced many struggles of getting content, and getting it in a timely manner. They have brought some great ideas for future Agendas to the Board, and consistently produce a quality piece. We have received a great deal of feedback on how great our Agenda is with every issue.

GALA TEAM

The Gala Team did an amazing job at getting our Gala off the ground and making it a successful event. Jody Simon led this team and had never even been to one of our MPI-WI Galas in the past! She still made it a great success with the team she had, working to get silent auction items in and working with our dear friend Amanda Ridout to showcase the new location that Amanda represented. Jennifer Mell, CMP was also an essential part of the Gala Team as she worked on the production part of the event and also helped us with the social media. She brought in her MadeYaLook team on-site so we had amazing photos taken at the event and made everything perfect for the evening.

SEPTEMBER TEAM

The event in Green Bay was unique, everyone loved the headshots and speaker.

SPEAKER TEAM

The entire Speaker Team has been crucial to our chapter's regrowth & success in hosting in person events this past year and has helped MPI-WI secure quality education speakers. They have also helped the chapter maintain a very high education satisfaction score, not including May this was 4.84 on a 5.00 scale!



WEC 2022 RECAP

By: Kathy Reading



Nearly 2,000 in-person and 300 online attendees gathered at WEC 2022 in San Francisco. Participants appreciated the new three-day format, with expanded networking opportunities. In addition, San Francisco's ideal weather, inspiring keynotes, and offsite events were a delight.

Wisconsin attendees included:

- **Sara Beuthien**, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
- **Tracey Bockhop**, CMP, Meet Meetings
- **Ed Buchner**, Majic Productions
- **Mikayla Dhein**, CPCE, CWP, Milwaukee Bucks, Inc.
- **Reggie Driscoll**, CMP, State Bar of WI
- **Nicole Ellickson**, CMP, Credit Union National Association
- **Tamara Jesswein**, CMP, VEMM, HID Global
- **Cheryl Oswald**, MBA, CMP, CMM, Kohl's Department Stores
- **Kathy Reading**, The Scan Group, Inc.
- **Keola Shimooka**, Destination Madison
- **Rebecca Staats**, Director of Sales at Residence Inn by Marriott Eau Claire and Fairfield by Marriott Eau Claire Chippewa Falls
- **Shannon Timmerman**, CMP, Wilderness Resort Wisconsin Dells
- **Sherry Wolff**, Kohler Co.

We've spoken to some of these Wisconsin attendees to hear feedback from their unique perspectives.

For **FIRST-TIME ATTENDEES**, WEC 2022 delivered valuable experiences and connections. As always, our chapter members provided a Wisconsin welcome to all "newbies," with camaraderie and suggestions when asked. Sara Beuthien appreciated the friendliness and networking amongst members. Ed Buchner said he was "impressed with how much of a family this is, and how willing people are to talk to each other and share ideas." This community wants everyone to succeed!



Participants in the **WEC HOSTED BUYER PROGRAM** reported positive impressions of the connections, networking, and overall experience. Cheryl Oswald liked the enhanced networking and thought her thirteen matching appointments were vastly good. Keola Shimooka was a first-time participant as a Supplier in the Hosted Buyer program. Keola felt it was a worthwhile investment in time and budget, "My appointments presented solid opportunities for Destination Madison. I also liked the networking, which allowed us to meet or reconnect with more people outside our matched appointments." On the flip side, some participants mentioned communication hiccups, and not everyone felt as happy with their matched appointments. There's always room for improvement, and we trust our members to report their concerns and issues to the WEC team.

Board members enjoyed the **CHAPTER LEADERSHIP TRAINING** offered in conjunction with WEC 2022. Sherry Wolff welcomed the opportunity to share ideas with other chapter leaders. "I've got a new perspective on



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partnerships, including working with other chapters and members.” We’ll all benefit, as Sherry has stepped up as our chapter’s Director Strategic Partners & Sponsorships. Sara, (VP of Membership), Ed, (Director of Special Events), and our entire office of the president: Shannon Timmerman, (Immediate Past President), Rebecca Staats (President), and Reggie Driscoll, (President-Elect), all reported being further inspired and energized by the chapter networking and Chapter Leadership Training.

SUPPLIER ATTENDEES universally appreciated the additional networking options. From this writer’s supplier perspective, my company’s offering (displays, print, kitting, and custom development) isn’t something that Planners seek at WEC, but they all need. WEC allows us to support the MPI community and build honest, professional relationships. Our other Suppliers also appreciated networking and offsite events, which allowed for more in-depth discussions. Members value mutually beneficial connections from committed industry professionals.



Continued on page 18






RETURNING ATTENDEES enjoyed the energy and value of reconnecting at this premier industry event. As stated by Tamara Jesswein, “Most of my events are outside of the US, so at IMEX, I’m focused on global venues and connections. At WEC, I concentrate more on speaker content and the experience. Uniting with other planners and trusted suppliers at WEC is always re-energizing.” Other returning attendees shared Tamara’s joy in gathering with other professionals. However, we did hear some disappointment in breaking up lodging across several locations, which can limit organic conversations and introductions. Our MPI members love every chance to meet!

We’re already looking forward to WEC 2023 at Riviera Maya, México! ▲



A photograph of a bar scene with people socializing. In the background, a bartender in a vest serves drinks at a bar. Several people are seated at the bar and at tables in the foreground. The bar has a well-stocked backshelf with various bottles and glasses. The lighting is warm and ambient, with pendant lights hanging over the bar and tables. The overall atmosphere is sophisticated and social.

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Hit the hotel

Conference check in

7:15 pm | Cocktails with colleagues

Dinner on Capitol Square

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September Event Preview

BE A COMMUNICATION ROCKSTAR!

September MPI WI
Chapter Event

Thursday, September 22

Ingleside Hotel

Pewaukee

Join us September 22 at the Ingleside Hotel in Pewaukee with Mimi Brown. Mimi is from Michigan and presented two sessions at the 2018 GLES. She will be providing one of her most popular sessions, which is highly interactive discussing different personality types and trainings. She will relate the session to leadership, teams, customer service and sales so everyone will be able to have some takeaways no matter your profession.

Motivational Keynote Speaker, Mimi Brown works with individuals and organizations to amplify their communication, connection and confidence so they can make an influential impact on the world.

She mentors with passion, guiding her clients to effectively strengthen and elevate their leadership vision to new heights.

With over ten years of corporate training experience, a knack for making meaningful connections with audiences and an insatiable appetite for helping others maximize their potential, Mimi knows how to rock a platform, connect with a crowd and provide training so that others can effectively do the same.

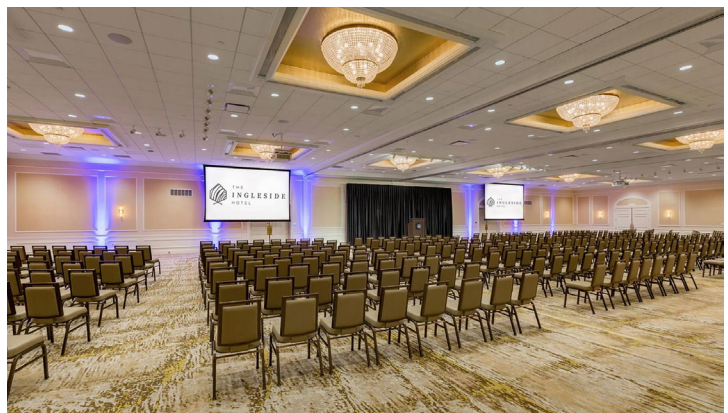
Mimi's down-to-earth humor compels audiences to laugh while they learn. She engages groups from the moment she steps in front of them and leaves them with empowering tools and focused mindsets that they will use long after the lights have gone out on the event. Mimi is passionate about people, leadership and successful businesses. She is especially inspired to help people take their careers – and themselves – to unprecedented levels.

Mimi's honors include being recognized as one of Michigan Oakland County Executive's Elite 40 Under 40, Ms. Michigan Plus America 2015 and a proud contestant on NBC's The Biggest Loser.

When not speaking or training, Mimi can be found creating delicious meals with chef and hubby Mr. Brown and bribing her snobby cat Kitty Brown with treats in exchange for snuggles. ▴



Motivational Keynote Speaker, Mimi Brown





It's Good to Do Business at *Your place on the lake!*™

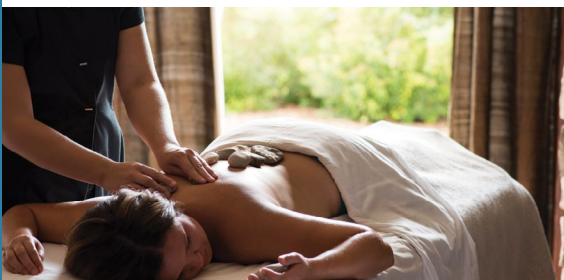
Voted 2022 Best Lakeshore Resort by *Wisconsin Meetings* magazine,
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For more information on The Osthoff Resort, visit osthoffmeetings.com or call 888.748.1136.



Elkhart Lake, WI





A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO AMANDA RIDOUT

By: Maria Peot, CMP and Kathy Reading

The MPI-WI family is heartbroken by losing one of our sweetest and brightest members, Amanda Ridout. Most recently, the Director of Sales for Resonance Food Co. at the Bradley Symphony Center, Amanda lost her battle with stage four triple-negative breast cancer on April 30th. While her pain is over, we will never forget our Angel Amanda.

It is difficult to find the “right” way to honor Amanda, as she was such a light, shining happiness and positivity on everything and everyone she encountered. Even if you were not close with Amanda, nearly everyone in MPI knew her because she was so friendly and welcoming. She spent her time on the Board of Directors in the Membership Department, implementing programs like the Red Carpet Welcome and MPI 101 for new members.



Throughout Amanda’s career, she held various roles in hospitality, meetings, and events, beginning near her hometown in Rice Lake at the Microtel. At the time, she worked for Chuck Langland (now our very own President

Rebecca Staats’ boss!), who got to know both Amanda and her husband Brad personally. Chuck admired Amanda most for her strength and the ability to persevere through life’s challenges. She was such a positive person and always saw the good in people in any situation, dating all the way back to her days in Rice Lake.

For those of you who attended Amanda’s celebration of life in Hillsdale, you heard the story of how she helped owner Lorin Humphrey open the Enchanted Barn. The venue held a special place in Amanda’s heart, which is why she chose to have her celebration there. The beautiful setting was precisely the right place to celebrate Amanda and share love with her family and friends. The gathering seemed perfect, with drinks to share, delicious pizza made on-site, and karaoke – one of Amanda’s favorite pastimes!

After moving to Madison, Amanda followed with another venue opening, working at HotelRED as it opened in 2011. Former MPI-WI member and colleague of Amanda’s at HotelRED Heather Stetzer had this to share about her:

“Amanda loved the hospitality industry! Working with people, taking care of people, and making people happy is what Amanda enjoyed, and that’s what made Amanda so successful in sales and meeting planning. Her attention to detail and understanding of people’s vision came naturally to her. Amanda was on the opening sales team at HotelRED in Madison. She helped develop the culture and the foundation of a successful boutique hotel. Her smile and positive attitude at work and beyond brightened people’s day! Her success at HotelRED took her to a General Manager position at the Plaza Hotel in Milwaukee, where she loved working with the team.”

[Continued on page 23](#)





She then worked for IDM Hospitality Management in regional sales for all their properties. Amanda was always everyone's cheerleader and a hard worker. Those who had the opportunity to work alongside and with her are very fortunate to have known Amanda."

Amanda and her husband ended up in the Milwaukee area, where they bought a house and made their home. She started working for Levy at the Harley Davidson Museum. She was the most welcoming event host, including MPI's Spring Education. Amanda eventually moved to her dream job at the Bradley Symphony Center, where she recently hosted the 2021 Awards Gala. When she first heard of the project to renovate the historic theater, Amanda immediately asked for the role, as she had a long history in theater, drama, and the arts. (She remained close to a group of women she grew up performing with in shows including "Escanaba in Love," "Anything Goes," and many, many more!). She was awarded this dream job because of her passion for theater, professional drive, and past success. We are all so grateful that Amanda was able to host our 2021 Awards Gala and showcase this venue as one of her final contributions to the industry and our chapter. Amanda's colleague, Annie Champeau, Director of Sales at Levy has this to share:

"Amanda was a bright shining light in my workday. We sat at arms-length with each other, and every day Amanda showed real heart-felt compassion for the people we were serving (event clients), me (the team leader) and the rest of our team (operations and culinary). People always came first for Amanda, and this endeared her to many. I miss Amanda, and the compassion she possessed every day."

Other Amanda qualities we cherish are her infectious smile, cup-stacking skills, inclination to break out into song

(and dance!) whenever given the opportunity, desire to make every event better than the last, welcoming attitude, and sincere encouragement of others.

Amanda's loss is difficult, especially for those of us who were close with her. Here are a few lessons that we can all take from this beautiful light:

- **Be kind.** The world is filled with so much negativity these days. Amanda was the kindest of people. Be inspired by Amanda's positive outlook when faced with the tough stuff.
- **Remind yourself that everyone has "something."** We don't always know the battles others are facing. Losing Amanda was a shock to many of us because she never let her "something" -- cancer -- stop her from spreading joy, being strong, smiling, and lighting up the people around her.
- **Take care of yourself and take nothing for granted.** Amanda did everything she could to fight the disease that took over her body. Feed and move your body and brain. Sleep. Be present. Find opportunities for joy. Enjoy nature. Life is short!
- **Love each other.** Losing Amanda is so painful, senseless, and heartbreaking. During times of loss, we must show each other kindness and love more than ever.

When we previously profiled Amanda in the AGENDA Magazine years ago, she shared this as her "words to live by":

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." – Maya Angelou

These words are so fitting, and none of us will forget how Amanda made us feel. We know she is still smiling and sharing our joys from above. ▴



Continued on page 24





A SUPER TANGIBLE, POWERFUL WAY TO HONOR AMANDA!

By: Kathy Reading

Our own Maria Peot has decided to honor Amanda's memory and fight by taking on a meaningful challenge for good. She has committed to The Susan G. Komen 3-Day: 60-mile walk over three days.

Many of you may have heard of this walk. What you may not know is that Maria herself was given a second chance at life in December of 2020. Since then, she's wanted to do something to make an impact. While grieving our Angel Amanda, Maria has jumped on this opportunity to help prevent future losses of other angels.

The only way to beat breast cancer for good
is with a cure.

Cures happen through research.
Research happens through funding.
Let's fund this cure!

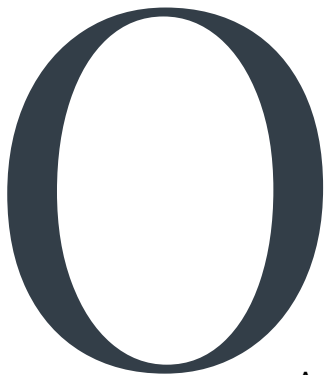
tinyurl.com/60miles4amanda

Susan G Komen's mission is to save lives by meeting the most critical needs in our communities and investing in breakthrough research to prevent and cure breast cancer.



MAY RECAP

By: Jody Roos Photos by: Tom Graybill



n May 12, the Hyatt Regency Green Bay hosted the education event. Our hosts from the Hyatt were **Tracy Hillsesheim**, **Leslie Rotter**, and **Pamela Draves**. Also welcoming the group from Discover Green Bay were **Brad Toll**, **Denise Humphrey**, and **Patti Drabes**.

As the 60+ attendees arrived to register, there was lots of smiling faces of peers being able to once again network in person, nothing beats being able to meet face-to-face.

Tours were given of the Hyatt and the KI Center to showcase their beautiful venue.

Northcoast Media Group had a video crew on-site shooting “man on the street” type video asking attendees about the importance of being an MPI member and what it means to them.

Shannon Timmerman, CMP welcomed the group with announcements to kick off our luncheon, thanking our generous sponsors. She welcomed **Tracy Hillsesheim**, from the Hyatt and **Brad Toll**, from Discover Green Bay



Continued on page 26





to the podium to say a few words. They certainly made us all feel welcome to the Green Bay area.

We then enjoyed a wonderful networking lunch. The lunch buffet offered so many wonderful culinary choices, it was delicious.

After lunch, we moved into the ballroom for the education portion of the event. Our President-Elect, **Rebecca Staats** welcomed us, and thanked the generous partners and sponsors. We had three new members and 11 guests in attendance at today's meeting.



We all shared a moment of silence for a beloved long-time active member of our chapter, **Amanda Ridout**. We will all miss her dearly.

Alison Hutchinson introduced our speaker **Bonnie Carlson, CDME**. Bonnie is highly accredited with holding the position of President and CEO of Bloomington, Minnesota Convention and Visitors Bureau for the last 35 years. Her career covers 45 years in the travel industry. Her topic was Trends and Predictions in the Meetings & Events Industry.



She shared survey results pre-pandemic, pandemic, post-pandemic, future forecasts, and occupancy trends. In Person attendance is growing however virtual options are still expected by some attendees. "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, not the most intelligent, it is the most adaptable to change."

Pat Cavanaugh introduced our next speaker of the day **Jeff Hahn**, Real World Strategies. He spoke Collaborating in Our Communities: A Strategic Approach to Building Connections and Relationships.

Continued on page 27



With 30+ years of Fortune 500 financial services and membership/volunteer-based organizational executive leadership experience, Jeff Hahn thrives on helping people and organizations take that next step forward toward their larger potential.

It's all about engagement, leadership, strategic planning/ thinking, and relationship connections. He talked about the importance of volunteering. More Wisconsin residents volunteer than residents in 46 other states.

The ABCD model of trust:

Able
Believable
Connected
Dependable

A model for building relationships:

Trusted
Liked
Known

He recommended *The Speed of Trust* by Stephen M.R. Covey.

"Greatness is not a matter of circumstances. Greatness it turns out, is largely a matter of consciousness choice, and discipline" by James C. Collins

Dessert/afternoon break was a Salty Sweet theme with warm soft Bavarian Pretzels with of course beer cheese dip, sea sale house-made chips/dip, and chocolate chip cookies. It was a real treat!

Immediately following the program, Hyatt Green Bay's Executive Chef, Jennifer Jones showcased her culinary talents by offering customer hors d'oeuvres stations. It included a wine and cheese pairing, featuring Canvas wines which were developed exclusively for Hyatt by Michael Mondavi Family. Charcuterie boards, truffle from Seroogeys', along with an assortment of other choices.

We had the Chairman's Challenge and volunteer signup.

The group enjoyed The Dinner Detective murder mystery event! It was fun solving clues together and found out who did it!

And that's a wrap for the May education event, a good time was had by all!

Continued on page 28





MPI WISCONSIN

ANNIVERSARIES

CELEBRATE!

**Congratulations to those members celebrating a milestone anniversary
in July & August!**

Congratulations!

—— **10 YEAR** ——

ALISON HUTCHINSON

NEW MEMBERS



Welcome to our new members!

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Visit Beloit

MICHELLE DOWL

Ashworth College

VERONICA GOODSTEIN

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TAYLOR GREENHECK

Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

BRANDIN HELMERS

Sentry Insurance

JESSICA JACOBS

SARAH MAHONEY

Sentry World Sports Center

EMILY RAUBER

Brewhouse Inn & Suites





Following a surge in investments, Milwaukee ushers in a modern era of expansion and innovation. Marty Brooks, president and CEO of Wisconsin Center District, shares an insider perspective on the abundance that Milwaukee offers business professionals.

A CITY WHERE UNIQUE UNITES

"As a transplant to Milwaukee, I can confirm that there's something special about the city. It's a people-powered center with vibrant energy," Brooks said.

With over 191 distinctly diverse neighborhoods, MKE is a community that simultaneously cherishes its roots and actively works to cultivate innovation.

"The Wisconsin Center expansion is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to all the things Milwaukee has to offer," Brooks said.

This dynamic city invites visitors to linger longer and explore miles of trails, hundreds of world-renowned restaurants, and only-in-Milwaukee attractions.

BUILDING MORE IN 2024

With accolades like "The 22 Best Places to Go in 2022 – Conde Nast Traveler" and "52 Places for a Changed World – New York Times" Milwaukee continues to keep the pace as the "Midwest's Coolest City."

"It's no secret that Milwaukee is known for its world-class facilities and venues," Brooks said. "But in 2024, the Brew City will raise the bar even higher."

The Wisconsin Center—a perennial favorite among meeting planners—will unveil its newly expanded and renovated campus in 2024.



"The expanded center will offer more space, greater accessibility, unmatched functionality, and style," Brooks said. "By doubling in size, new additions will include gender-neutral bathrooms, a solar roof, and a renewed focus on sustainability."



For more information and to start planning your meeting in Milwaukee, check out
visitmilwaukee.org/meet



Board Member Profile: Elizabeth Poh



Elizabeth Poh

Special Education Projects Director

I joined MPI in: September 2019

My birthdate is: December 30th

I consider these people to be my family/I love (including pets): Husband-William, Daughter-Evelyn, Baby Girl-Due July 2022

My hometown is: La Crosse, WI

Food that I can NOT live without: Mexican or pizza

Drink that I can NOT live without: Iced coffee and water

Favorite candy/chocolate/snack: Peanut butter M&M's or Reese's

My favorite song/band is: Anything country

When I was 5, I wanted to grow up to be a: Professional waterskier or doctor

Hobby / Favorite pastime: Waterskiing and spending time on the river/lake

Pet Peeve(s): People who drive slow in the left lane!!!!





WISCONSIN DELLS, WI

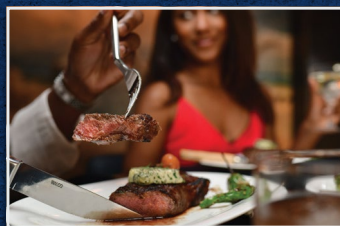


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Supplier Profile: Greta McCue



GRETA MCCUE

Director of Sales
Aloft Milwaukee Downtown

How many years have you been in the industry? 16

What is your favorite thing about being an MPI-WI member? Having the opportunity to go beyond typical networking - developing great relationships and friendships with an incredible group of industry colleagues!

What is your favorite team or project you've worked on as an MPI-WI member? I was very involved in the planning for 2020's Spring Education Day and Trivia Night – and we all know what happened that year. I'm so excited to get back involved in the planning for these events as we look ahead to next year!

3-7 Things Unique to Your Company: Aloft is a genuinely fun, unique and eclectic brand! It breaks the mold of a typical hotel with its contemporary design and vibrant colors. We have a huge focus on featuring all types of art – including Live @ Aloft (where we invite an up-and-coming musician to perform in our lobby at least once a month) and displaying local art throughout our common spaces. Staff is encouraged to be more casual and unscripted, and to let their personalities shine! My property is also incredibly special due to its amazing proximity to the Fiserv Forum, Milwaukee Riverwalk, and historic Old World Third Street!

Tell us about your family: I moved to Milwaukee about six years ago with my husband, Shane, after we met in my home town of Rockford, IL, about 10 years ago. We have a 5(ish) year old Cairn Terrier rescue named Maggie – she is our world, and we are definitely hers. We enjoy taking long trips a few times a year to his family's cabin near Ely, Minnesota, where we get to spend quality time with our niece (Becca) and nephew (Jack). My parents are retired and still live in Illinois, so we get to visit them often. My brother (Ben) is an incredible artist and is in the process of moving to Los Angeles, so we're definitely looking forward to planning a trip to visit him there soon!

What are your hobbies and interests? I am a HGTV and Food Network addict – so I love getting ambitious and adventurous with my cooking. Shane and I purchased our home in late 2019, and a lot of our free time revolves around doing projects around the house - keep us in your thoughts, as we are replacing all of our own windows this summer! I love working in the yard, though I haven't quite developed my mom's green thumb. If I'm not working on the house, on summer weekends I love to wander through the West Allis Farmer's Market or go to a Milwaukee Brewer's game!

Tell us about who you admire most and why: My mom – she's so kind, patient, and beautiful – she's a wonderful mom, wife, and daughter to her own mother (whom she helps ensure gets the best care possible while she battles dementia). I'm lucky to have her as a mom, and as a friend.

Favorite song/band/artist/movie/book: Back to the Future – the whole series – but if I had to choose my favorite, I'd say #2!

What is something that is still on your bucket list? A European adventure – I'm hoping for a Mediterranean cruise in the next few years!

Tell us your words to live by or a favorite quote: Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.



WHO'S **IN THE** NEWS

Compiled by Kortnee Carroll & Jennifer Mell, CMP

1

JENNIFER MELL, CMP is on the move! Not only has she returned to Travel Leaders Corporate as a Project Manager for meetings & events, she and fellow member **DAVID HELGESON, CMP** just purchased their first house together.



Congrats to Jen and David!

4

SHANNON TIMMERMAN was featured in the Hotels & Resorts Who's Who segment in the 50th Anniversary Edition of *The Meeting Professional* magazine.

Way to represent, Shannon!



2

KYRA POPP sold her house "Emma" and bought her Grandparents home "Century Oaks."



Emma

We are excited to watch your wildlife videos and see what projects you do at your new home!

5

JESSICA RIEFLIN had a beach wedding and was a gorgeous bride!

Congratulations, Jessica!



3

MARIA PEOT, CMP is taking on a challenge by participating in the Susan G. Komen 3-Day walk in September in honor of fellow MPI-WI member, Amanda Ridout. Read more about this adventure on [page 24](#).



*One step at a time Maria,
we know you'll have a great experience!*

6

PAT CAVANAUGH was on the 920 Show Podcast for Discover Green Bay. He talked with Nick Meisner about education, events at Lambeau, leadership, and even Kringles!



Continued on page 35



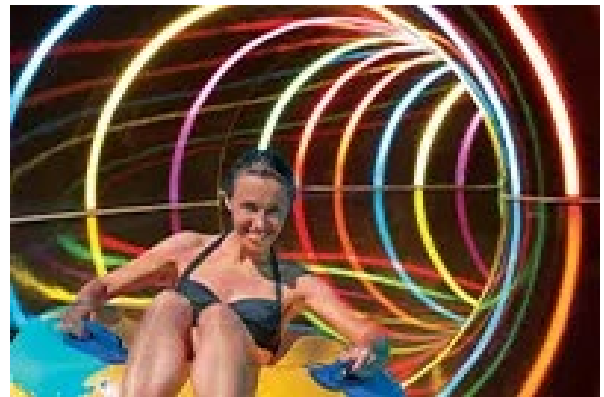
WHO'S **IN THE** NEWS

Compiled by Kortnee Carroll & Jennifer Mell, CMP

7

CHULA VISTA RESORT opened their new water slide, Rainbow Rapids! The slide takes you through a thrilling journey through a kaleidoscope of colors, with surprises around every drop, twist, and turn.

NOTE: if you have any news to share in this column, please contact Kortnee Carroll, Director - Publications & Community Outreach, kocarroll@kalahariresorts.com.



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Back to table of contents



Planner Profile: Melissa Falendysz



MELISSA FALENDYSZ, CMP
BCD Meetings & Events (BCD M&E)
Program Manager

Tell us about your company and/or position: I joined BCD Meetings & Events in April as a Program Manager. BCD M&E is a global meeting and event management agency that does anything from operating a single meeting to designing full SMMPs for various clients. In my role, I work one-on-one with the meeting owner from the early planning stages all the way through onsite execution. I enjoy being a part of a great team and creating a vast array of events every day.

How long have you been in the meetings industry?:
11 years

What drew you to become a planner?: Organization and color coordination makes me giddy. On a serious note, I've always wanted to create, and be a part of, memorable experiences for people. It's very gratifying to get positive feedback from something you created and know that the group had an amazing time.

What do you like most about being a member of MPI? I'm very grateful for all of the friendships that I have gained through the chapter. It's nice to be surrounded by like-minded people that can help you through problems and be your cheerleaders for achievements.

What was your favorite team or project you have worked on for MPI? I served on the MPI-WI BOD for 2 terms as the Director of Strategic Partners & Sponsorships. It was a fun group to be a part of!

Tell us about your family: My husband John and I have been married for 14 years and we have a 6 year old son, Nolan.

What are your hobbies and interests? Anything outdoors: hiking, boating, 4 wheeling, camping.

Favorite song//band/artist/movie/book: I listen to everything from 80's rock, 90's rap, country to pop.

Tell us about the person you admire most and why: My husband, John. He's the most laid back, logical person that I know and definitely keeps me sane when life is chaotic. He's a great husband and awesome role model for our son. He's always willing to lend a helping hand. There's honestly nothing he can't do.

What is something that is still on your bucket list? Learn how to paint with watercolors, go to a rodeo, vacation in Tahiti, meet Usher...etc.

Tell us the words you live by or share a favorite quote: "Event Planner": Someone who does precision guesswork, based on unreliable data by those who can't make up their mind. (See also wizard, magician)





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CERTIFICATE COURSES: <https://www.mpi.org/education>

SAVE THE DATE

2022 CHAPTER EVENTS

Time to get excited for 2022 and all of our MPI-WI Chapter events!

2022 is in full swing! This year's in-person events are bound to be great experiences.

AUGUST 11

AWARDS GALA — Hilton Appleton Paper Valley

SEPTEMBER 22

EDUCATION EVENT — The Ingleside Hotel, Waukesha

OCTOBER 20

BREAKFAST EVENT — DoubleTree by Hilton Milwaukee-Brookfield

NOVEMBER 13 – 15

GREAT LAKES EDUCATION SUMMIT — Grand Geneva Resort & Spa

