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MPI-WISCONSIN CHAPTER **Agenda**

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5 Different Ways



WISCONSIN
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Editor's Note



Happy Summer, MPI-WI!

For those of you that are connected with me on LinkedIn, (or read “Who’s in the News” in this publication), you may know of my promotion at Zywave. Although I am proud of the fact that I got this promotion, it was far more significant to me than the new title or the new salary – it marked a pivotal point in my career post-pandemic.

2020 was a tumultuous year for all of us – the world was turned upside down in more ways than one. One thing we all have in common is that

our jobs changed. This looked different for everyone – some were pivoting from live to virtual events, others were brainstorming creative ways to engage event attendees through their computer screens, and some were even looking for new careers altogether.

Here’s where I am going to get really vulnerable....

When the pandemic hit in March of 2020, I actually was not working. I had been let go in January after missing goals set out by my manager and HR as part of a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). For those of you who know me well, you know this was very out of character for me. I wasn’t one to be lazy, slack off, or do any of the things that typically prompt a PIP. I was a bit embarrassed, but also felt burnt out, tired, and thought maybe it was time for me to pursue a different career. Fast forward to mid-March and BOOM, the world changed for everyone. Like many people, I felt totally lost. Unlike a lot of people, I had already been unemployed for a while and thus in the midst of a pretty bad depression. The pandemic took things from bad to worse for me. I spent the rest of 2020 being treated for depression, sleeping A LOT, and getting further and further from being myself.

Skipping over many details, I’ll fast forward again to December of 2020. I went to the eye doctor for my annual check up and within 24 hours was being wheeled into the ER for emergency brain surgery to remove a tumor the size of a lemon from my frontal lobe.

Phew. Yes, phew. A big, grateful PHEW.

This was a HUGE relief for all of those close to me, especially my immediate family. I was lucky. So, so lucky. I had the BEST care from world-renowned doctors and my tumor was benign...which made it easier to joke about when I had my tumor and the bizarre behaviors that came with it. Thankfully, my recovery progressed well and quickly.

Continued on page 5



Just shy of a year after surgery, I started at Zywave. I was hired as an event coordinator and had no idea what to expect.

I'm happy to say that less than three years later, I am confident that this was the job for me. I'm not burnt out, I'm not tired (well, other than the normal tiredness that comes with working in this industry!), and I no longer doubt that I am following the career path meant for me. I've been promoted twice, am working with the best events team in the business (ya, I'm a little bit biased, but we mesh really well), and am living my best #lifeofaplanner!

I hope y'all take this story of hope to heart. It's not something that I run around talking about, but I think my MPI-WI family deserved to hear the story directly from me. What I'm hoping

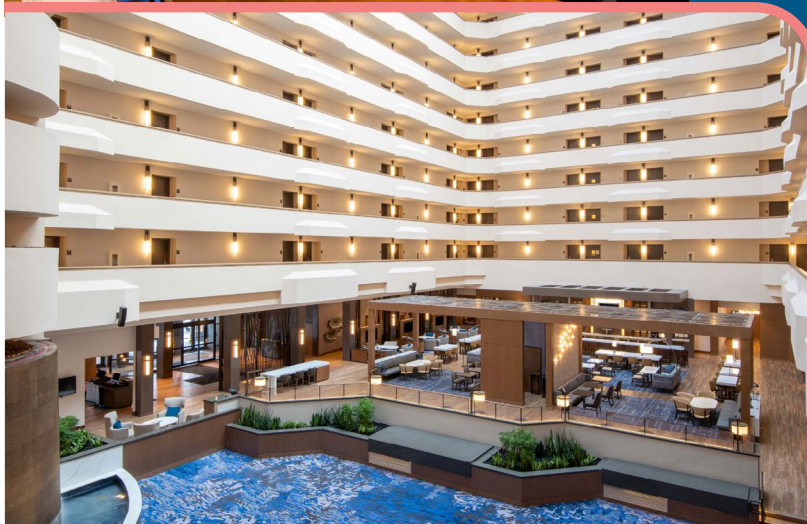
you can take from this is not just a (super scary!) health scare, but a story of overcoming something totally unexpected, during possibly the worst time ever.

Strength. Grit. Determination.

Each and every one of you have these qualities inside of you. Tap into them when you need them. Know that you will land exactly where you are supposed to land.

And in the words of my dear friend Kathy Reading, "Go YOU"!

Maria



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MONONA  TERRACE



President's Message



Hello to all MPI-WI members,

Yes, it's me again. Normally we would be welcoming and celebrating a new board and a new president for our chapter. With the chapter redesign from MPI-Global, that won't take place until January 1st, 2025. This change was brought to us about a year ago, shortly after we all accepted our new board positions. Our chapter appreciates the additional commitment from our current board. We also understand the additional commitment from our co-workers and families for the next six months.

We are now in July looking to finish up our board term strongly. The new board for 2025 has been submitted to the membership. When the slate becomes available, please take a look and see who we have representing the chapter for the next year. We have a strong base continuing on the board and some really excellent people coming on the board for their first term. I'm really looking forward to seeing the

next board continuing the growth and success of our chapter. The board will be posted to the members for the month of July, then submitted to MPI Global on August 1st to keep in compliance with their deadlines. Thank you to **Becca Staats** and the **nominating committee** for all of your time and commitment on reaching out to our current board, seeking individuals to join the board, and following through with completing the board slate. Again, we are setting our chapter up for success with a great team.

This Fall, we'll also see the MPI Global survey come through our emails. Please look for this and return it promptly.

Our chapter gets graded each year by global on several different metrics. Membership, retention, member satisfaction, educational content, and number of accredited events vs. non-accredited events.

We get points for how we do in each category. At our mid-year review, we were in the top tier for all categories except for the member satisfaction survey. The survey hasn't come out yet. It would be great to get a large amount of positive surveys returned. This will qualify our chapter as a

"Chapter of Excellence." Our chapter has won this a couple of years in a row, so it would be great to keep the momentum going and add another year to our record.

Please check the back page of this *Agenda* magazine. We have three outstanding events to round out your year: August in Milwaukee, September in Green Lake, and October in Fontana. Take a minute right now to get these on your calendar. I would love to finish the year strong with a record number of attendees at each of these events.

Once again, here we are in July. This year has gone by quickly. Please make sure to take time for your loved ones, friends, and family. This industry seems to never have a "slow" period. Make sure to take some time out for yourself to recharge your batteries and let those closest to you know how much you appreciate them. Working with many "Type-A" people I've seen many folks look at their calendars in mid-August and realize they had some much planned for the summer but have not accomplished much yet. Take the time now to schedule days off or family days, etc.

Enjoy your summer, go easy on yourself, and I look forward to seeing you all in August, September, and October at our education events and our Awards Gala!

Cheers!

Reggie Disca, CMP



SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

MPI AWARDS GALA

Heidel House, Green Lake

By: Ashley Booth

Positioned on the edge of the waters of Green Lake, the newly renovated Heidel House Hotel & Conference Center deftly combines genuine Midwest hospitality with approachable elegance. This historic landmark boasts expansive views of the emerald waters of Wisconsin's deepest inland lake.

Centrally located in Wisconsin, and less than three hours north of Chicago, Heidel House Hotel & Conference Center offers breathtaking lakefront views, amazing spaces for meetings, executive retreats, gatherings, and activities, and accommodations to meet any group's needs. Dive in or sit back and enjoy exceptional amenities and easy access to nationally-rated golf, spa services, sunset cruises, watersports, biking, shopping, live entertainment and so much more. As the pace of life keeps getting faster, we welcome you to slow down, enjoy the views and host your successful event with us.

With flexible and comfortable meeting spaces indoors and outside, full-service AV equipment, attentive customer service, culinary excellence and spectacular scenery, Heidel House Hotel & Conference Center is your ideal meeting venue. The tranquility of our beautiful 12-acre property will inspire your team, while the abundance of



activities, both on-site and throughout the area, offer thrilling entertainment when your workday is done. The only limit to your event is your own imagination.

The Heidel House Hotel & Conference Center offers creative meeting space setups that are tailored to meet your every business need, providing you with a seamless platform to engage, ideate, and achieve your goals.

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- **Catering to Your Needs:** Whether you require catering services, specialized equipment, or unique room setups, our dedicated event planning team is here to accommodate your specific requirements, ensuring your meeting unfolds seamlessly.

Continued on page 9



- **Privacy and Security:** Your discussions are confidential and secure within our environment.
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Heidel House Hotel & Conference Center specializes in unique events. Our professional sales and catering team can accommodate groups for business and social events, weddings, reunions, golf outings, hospitality arrangements, holiday parties, and private yacht cruises. Expansive windows and walk-out terraces are the perfect setting to inspire event attendees. Host your next event at a lakeside destination that offers incredible lake views directly from every event space. ▴

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MPI-WISCONSIN 2023 HALL OF FAME

Alison Hutchinson



By: Kathy Reading



We are elated to announce that a true cornerstone of our chapter, **Alison Hutchinson**, will be inducted into MPI-Wisconsin's Hall of Fame this year.

Celebrating her 10th year at the Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau, Alison continues to excel in her distinguished career within the hospitality, meetings, and events industry. Since joining MPI in 2012, Alison has contributed to our chapter in numerous volunteer, committee, and board roles, including her vital service as Chapter President during the 2020-21 term. We are grateful for the profound impact of her dedication, innovative spirit, and unwavering inspiration on our chapter.

Join us in celebrating Alison's remarkable achievements!

Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

September 26, 2024

Heidel House Hotel & Conference Center

Green Lake, WI



FOOD FOR THOUGHT: CHEF JENNIFER KOSCHAK

Chef Jennifer Koschak, inspired by her Sicilian heritage, began her culinary journey at a young age, cooking alongside her family. Her passion for food led her to the Arizona Culinary Institute, where she honed her skills and graduated in 2015.

Jennifer's career is as diverse as it is impressive. She has served as a private chef to celebrities, politicians, and sports stars, showcasing her versatility and creativity in the kitchen. Her entrepreneurial spirit led her to establish both a mobile food business and a successful catering company. Jennifer served as an Executive Chef for seven years, during which she refined her culinary techniques and built a strong reputation in the industry. For the past year, she has been the Banquet Chef at the Heidel House Hotel and Conference Center, where her culinary prowess continues to impress guests and clients alike.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Jennifer is a devoted mother. She often shares that cooking comes second only to her love for her children, infusing every dish she prepares with the same warmth and dedication she gives to her family.

Chef Jennifer Koschak shares a favorite recipe that embodies her rich culinary background and is simple enough for home cooks to try: Short Rib Bolognese.

See recipe on page 11



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Short Rib Bolognese Recipe

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 lbs. beef chuck short ribs
- 3 tbsp. canola oil
- 2 stalks celery (finely diced)
- 1 medium carrot (finely diced)
- 1 medium onion (finely diced)
- 4 oz. pancetta (diced)
- 2 cloves garlic (minced)
- 3 tbsp. tomato paste
- 2 sprigs rosemary
- 2 sprigs thyme
- 1 sprig oregano
- ¼ cup heavy cream (optional)
- Salt and pepper
- 1 package pappardelle pasta

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Season and Sear:

- Pat dry and season all sides of the short ribs with salt and pepper.
- Heat oil in a Dutch oven or heavy pan over high heat until it shimmers.
- Sear short ribs on all sides until browned (2-3 minutes per side). Transfer to a plate, leaving about 1 tbsp. of oil in the pan.

2. Build the Sauce:

- Cook pancetta over medium-high heat until it starts to brown.
- Add celery, carrot, and onion, cook for 2 minutes.
- Add garlic, cook for 1 minute, stirring frequently.
- Reduce heat to medium, add red wine, and scrape the pan. Simmer for 1 minute.
- Add tomato paste and stir to combine.

3. Cook Low and Slow:

- Return short ribs to the pan, meaty side down.
- Cover and cook on low heat for 3 to 3 ½ hours, until meat is fork-tender.
- Remove ribs, pull meat off bones, discard gristle, and return meat to the sauce.
- Remove herb sprigs. If desired, stir in heavy cream and simmer for 30 seconds.

4. Cook the Pasta:

- Cook pasta in salted water according to package instructions. Reserve ½ cup pasta water before draining.

5. Combine and Serve:

- Toss pasta with short rib Bolognese. Add reserved pasta water for a thinner sauce if needed.
- Top with cheese and fresh parsley or red pepper flakes for added spice.

Enjoy this hearty and delicious Short Rib Bolognese, a testament to Chef Jennifer Koschak's culinary expertise and Sicilian roots.





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Wisconsin's Take on MPI-WEC in Louisville, Kentucky

By: Kortnee Carroll

The MPI World Education Congress (WEC) held in Louisville, Kentucky was an exceptional event, bringing together meeting and event professionals from around the globe. This year's congress was marked by vibrant networking opportunities, educational sessions, and unique experiences, all set against the backdrop of Louisville's rich culture and history. Here are some highlights and personal reflections from our Wisconsin chapter members:



Ed Buchner's Reflections:

Ed Buchner found the networking opportunities at MPI WEC in Louisville to be his favorite part of the event. He appreciated the diverse group of professionals it gathered, providing a unique platform to connect with industry peers, share experiences, and establish valuable professional relationships.

"The combination of educational sessions, workshops, and social events created an engaging environment where I could learn about the latest trends and innovations in the industry while expanding my professional network. The vibrant city of Louisville added to the experience with its rich culture, history, and hospitality," said Ed.

Continued on page 14



Shannon Timmerman's Favorites and Tips:

Shannon Timmerman highlighted the educational sessions and the relationships formed over the years as the main draws of WEC. She particularly enjoyed the unique experiences offered by the host city, such as creating Derby hats and mingling at Churchill Downs.

"Never danced the night away in the front row like we did this year! Creating our own Derby hats and mingling at Churchill Downs in our Derby best was a bucket list item checked off for sure. An amazing experience that so many people never get the opportunity to do," Shannon shared.



Shannon also expressed immense pride in witnessing the MPI-WI Chapter receive its first RISE Award.

"Being part of our Board for so many years, and watching our

Strategic Partnership program grow with the hard work of so many, was a very proud moment for me. GO WISCONSIN!!"

For new WEC attendees, Shannon advises applying for a scholarship to help justify costs to employers and joining the MPI-WI chat group to stay connected with chapter members.



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Rebecca Staats' Insights and Advice:

Rebecca Staats' favorite part of WEC was spending quality time with Wisconsin Chapter members. She recounted memorable moments from carpooling with fellow members to celebrating the chapter's RISE Award.

"One of the brightest spots of WEC was being in attendance this year to witness our chapter receive a coveted RISE AWARD," Rebecca enthused.

Rebecca's advice for future WEC attendees is to plan early and secure approvals for travel as soon as possible. She recommends registering early to get better hotel options and applying for scholarships for financial assistance.

"For 2024, I was a very lucky recipient and awarded a \$1,000 scholarship from the MPI Foundation. Plan ahead, just a little! Review the sessions and find out what you have to see and do in advance," she advised.



Continued on page 15



CONCLUSION

The MPI WEC in Louisville was a resounding success, providing attendees with numerous opportunities for professional growth, networking, and unforgettable experiences. The shared insights and tips from **Ed Buchner**, **Shannon Timmerman**, and **Rebecca Staats** highlight the value and impact of this annual event. Our Wisconsin chapter members returned with enriched experiences, stronger professional connections, and a sense of pride in their accomplishments. As we look forward to WEC 2025 in St. Louis, MO, their reflections will serve as a guide for maximizing the benefits of this premier event for meeting and event professionals.



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DAVID CARUSO:

Crafting Memorable Experiences

By: Kortnee Carroll

We are excited to announce that David Caruso will be our speaker for August Education Day!

With an impressive 22-year career as an event planner, designer, speaker, media personality, curator, and consultant, David creates spaces and experiences that foster joy and connection. As a native Milwaukeean, he has elevated the standard for events in his hometown and beyond, with his work extending to cities such as Chicago, Miami, San Diego, and Los Angeles and internationally to Costa Rica, Mexico, and the West Indies.

David's keen eye and business acumen have earned him appearances on news and talk shows nationwide, including his popular "Entertaining in Style with David Caruso" segment on Milwaukee's NBC show, *The Morning Blend*. His insights have been featured in *Brides Magazine*, *Catering Magazine*, and on various radio outlets.

A sought-after speaker, David presents on weddings, style, business, branding, and design across the country and internationally. His accolades include the prestigious Event Planner of the Year award from the National Association for Catering and Events (NACE).

David also hosts the Emmy-nominated TV show *Good Things Brewing*, designs linen collections for BBJ LaTavola, and is a founding member of The Giving Circle. He serves on the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF) board of directors. His collection, *Signature Style by David Caruso*, offers affordable, handpicked items from global creative partners.

David Caruso's life and career embody the spirit of hospitality. His commitment to excellence defines his life's work. We look forward to his insights and expertise at our August event. ▴



DYNAMIC *EVENTS*

By *David* Caruso



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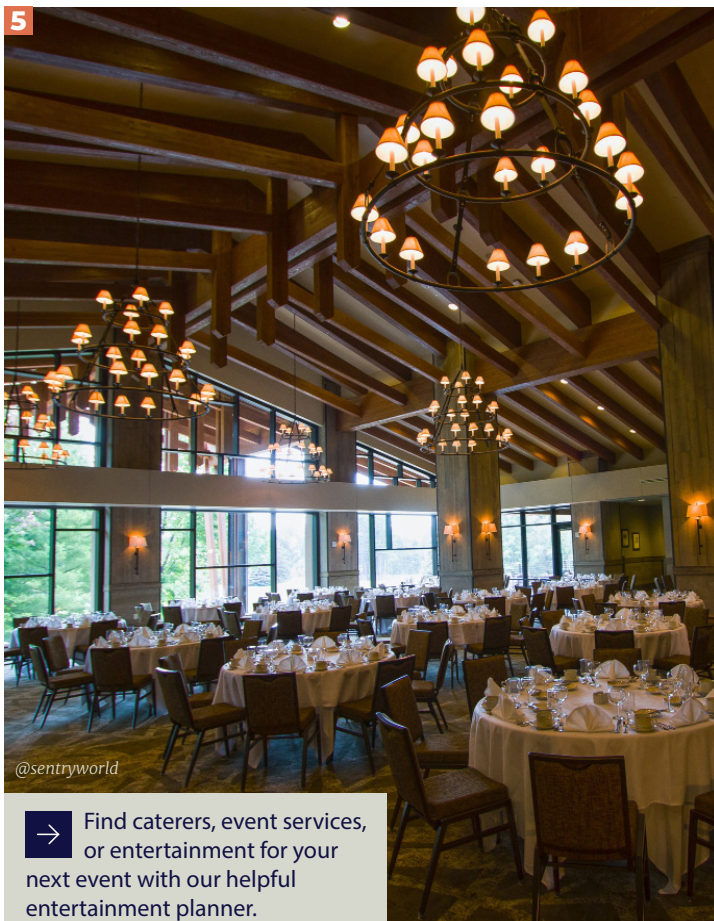
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WHO'S IN THE NEWS

Compiled by Cheryl Oswald, CMP



1

Farrah Slinger, recently accepted a new position as Development Coordinator with NCG Hospitality.

Congrats, Farrah!



2

Maria Peot, CMP, was recently promoted to Events Manager – Internal & Customer Events at Zywave.

Congrats, Maria!



3

Cheryl Oswald, CMP, recently participated in the inaugural Golf Certification on behalf of MPI. She is now a Golf Tournament Certified Planner.

Congrats, Cheryl!

CONGRATS!

NOTE: if you have any news to share in this column, please contact Cheryl Oswald, Director - Publications & Community Outreach, cherylOswald@cnh.com.

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Volunteer Spotlights:

ELIZABETH POH



ELIZABETH POH stepped in when a mid-term position opened up on our chapter board. She has been serving as Vice President of Membership since early 2024. In this role, she keeps our Membership team directors and committees on task and moving forward to best support our members.

Our membership appreciates you, Elizabeth!

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SAVE THE DATE

2024 CHAPTER EVENTS

AUGUST 15, 2024

AUGUST EDUCATION

Bars & Rec

The Best Place at Historic Pabst Brewery &
Brewhouse Inn & Suites, Milwaukee

SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

MPI AWARDS GALA

Heidel House, Green Lake

OCTOBER 14, 2024

OCTOBER EDUCATION

The Abbey Resort, Fontana

