

# CONNECTS

## ***“Luck be a Lady” At the MPISSN Annual Trade Show March 8, 2011***



**THUNDER  
VALLEY**  
CASINO · RESORT

*By Denise Yee*

**L**ucky people are skilled at creating, noticing and acting upon “chance” opportunities. They do this in various ways, including networking, creating events, and by being open to new experiences. They make effective decisions by listening to their intuition and gut feelings. Lucky people sure sounds a lot like event and meeting

planners! Luck will be on your side as you plan your next event especially if you attend the 2011 Meeting Professionals International Sacramento/Sierra Nevada (MPISSN) Tradeshow!

For the first time we are including a program immediately before the tradeshow. The ever-popular Innovations program will run from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM and is priced at an affordable \$20. Learn from the best on what is new in audio-visual, decor, food and beverage and more. You will come away with lots of great ideas during this exciting session.

The MPISSN Chapter is pleased to announce the Annual Tradeshow will be held on Tuesday, March 8th, 2011 between 4:00-7:00 pm and will be hosted by the Thunder Valley Casino Resort, 1200 Athens Avenue, Lincoln, California.

The Thunder Valley Casino Resort recently opened their new 9,740 - square-foot Pano Hall which is ideal for galas, balls, receptions, trade shows, meetings and conferences. Enjoy the versatility of this multi-use hall, where you have the flexibility to use the entire space or divide it into the main hall, plus four breakout rooms, and pre-function space. Thunder Valley Casino

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## WORTH YOUR TIME

**February 15:** ~ Jim Spellos, CMP returns with technology workshop - Workshop-Drexel University and Luncheon-Embassy Suites, Sacramento

**March 8:** ~  
Innovations and  
Annual Trade Show  
- Thunder Valley  
Casino/Resort



WHERE MEETING PLANNERS AND SUPPLIERS MEET

# SACRAMENTO/ SIERRA NEVADA CHAPTER MPI

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL

Meeting Professionals International Sacramento/Sierra Nevada Chapter shapes and defines the meeting and event industry in the greater Sacramento/Sierra Nevada region.

## CONNECTS

EDITORIAL/GRAPHIC DESIGN

**Diane Ramsdell**

[d.ramsdell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d.ramsdell@sbcglobal.net)

ADVERTISING

**Lynda Sagar**

*Sheraton Grand*

[Lynda.Sagar@sheraton.com](mailto:Lynda.Sagar@sheraton.com)

PRINTING

**Karen Leland-Dolce, CPA, CMM**

*Copeland Printing*

[karen@copelandprinting.com](mailto:karen@copelandprinting.com)

STAFF

**Cindy Miglino, CMP, CAE**

*Chapter Administrator*

P.O. Box 2338

Rocklin, CA 95677

916-624-2627

Fax 916-624-2648

[cindy@mpissn.org](mailto:cindy@mpissn.org)

[www.mpissn.org](http://www.mpissn.org)

**Next Editorial and**

**Advertising Deadline:**

Spring 2011 – February 13, 2011

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## President's Message

**Joy Florentino, CMP**

*Marriott International*



### *And the Survey Says....*

**W**e like it! Richard Dawson, I am not, but have you ever known the survey to be wrong?

We listened to our members and in an effort to respond to the needs of our community of meeting professionals, we are thinking outside the box and infusing our chapter with innovative learning opportunities.

We know from our 2009 Chapter Needs Assessment that 74% of our members have over 10 years experience in the meetings industry. Our industry professionals are telling us that they need advanced education. You are the same members that hold the key to the valuable information being sought.

So, we tried something new at our September luncheon and according to the attendees 100% "liked the discussion format of the program." The goal was to network and learn from our peers. We broke off into 8 knowledge hubs: Audio Visual, Catering, CMP/CMM Professional Development information, Education Formats, Marketing, Site Selection, Sponsorships and Trade Shows. Attendees grabbed lunch and joined a hub of interest to them for conversation with colleagues. Dessert provided the perfect chance to move to another hub for continued conversation and learnings.

October brought more good stuff as we learned to effectively use technology as our organizational system to turn intentions into actions and actions into results. Over half of the attendees were meeting planners. 100% of attendees agreed "the presenter's energy and enthusiasm kept the participants actively engaged."

So how are we doing? Survey says....

"Will be able to apply the knowledge and skills learned in this session to my job."

September	82% Agreed or Strongly Agreed
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October	95% Agreed or Strongly Agreed
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If your professional development is a priority, come take advantage of your membership!

Sincerely,

# Planner Spotlight!

By Katrina Duncan, CMP Meetings Consultant

## Jennifer Flohr Receives Key Promotion



Jennifer Flohr, CAE, CMP, the California Hotel & Lodging Association's (CH&LA) Director of Membership & Events, has been promoted to Senior Vice President.

Promotion is one thing that every employee strives for and works hard to achieve. Promotions are given only to the most deserving candidates.

How did she earn her promotion? What gave her boss the confidence to promote her to Senior Vice President? Please read on for the answers!

### ***Jennifer how long have you been a member of MPI?***

I have been a member of MPI for about four years and am currently the Chair of Professional Development.

### ***What made you decide to attain your professional designations?***

I obtained by CMP ( Certified Meeting Professional) designation in the winter of 2008 at the encouragement of my boss. I had been with the California Hotel & Lodging Association for about five years at the time and my position had started out as a Membership Manager handling Membership Sales but as I was planning more and more events for our trade association, he thought it would be a great idea as well and help to elevate me to a role as Meeting Planner for our association.

The CMP study group through MPI really helped me stay focused and helped me study for the exam. I also made lifelong friends. My CMP group meets for lunch every other month or so to catch up and if we have a meeting planning questions – we shoot an email off to our group and quickly get some opinions.

A year or so after getting my CMP, my boss, who was now president of my association encouraged me to apply to get my CAE ( Certified Association

Executive.) He had obtained his CAE and encouraged me to do the same.

### ***How has your professional designations benefited your career?***

When I received my CMP, I received a promotion from Director of Membership to Director of Membership & Events. And a few months after receiving my CAE I was promoted to Senior Vice President. I credit both these certifications in helping me elevate my knowledge and expertise and they helped me to achieve my professional goals.

I am lucky to have a mentor and manager that encourages me to continue my education and to participate in MPI events.

### ***Are you a member of any other professional organizations?***

I am also a member of CalSAE and ISHAE. ISHAE is the International Society of Hotel Association Executives.

### ***Has the knowledge you learned from your designations and professional memberships gained you any special awards or recognition or growth for your association?***

I am attending the ISHAE Conference in December in Charleston, South Caroline to accept our award for Best Event/ Fund-raising Program. I also received this award in 2008!

### ***Any words of advice for someone else seeking a promotion?***

I highly encourage everyone to continue to increase their expertise and to continue their education. When studying for professional certifications I highly recommend a study group – that is what really helped me to obtain both my designations..



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joy.florentino@marriott.com

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lauryl.hinerman@hyatt.com

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amanda\_flangas@janugget.com

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kelli@wmmpa.com

*Vice-President, Education*

**Theresa Stamey**

tstamey@comcast.net

*Vice President, Finance*

**Lisa Bispham, CMP**

lbispham@csdaca.org

*Vice President, Membership*

**Becky McGuire**

beckymcguire@comcast.net

*Vice President, Special Events*

**Sylvia Done**

sdone@calwaterfowl.org

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Lynda.Sagar@sheraton.com

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travelinbea@gmail.com

## Educational Programs Photos



Stay up to date at:

**[www.mpissn.org](http://www.mpissn.org)**

## ***Congratulations to Award Winners!***



***Crystal Platter Award -  
Hyatt Sacramento  
Jennifer Mann accepting Award***



***Cheryl Cox , STL , receives her  
25 year pin from President Joy  
Florentino***

***We want to hear from you! Please send  
articles, content, pictures for Connects to  
d.ramsdell@sbcglobal.net. Spring 2011  
issue deadline is February 13, 2011!***

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**Terri Schrader, CMP**

terri.schrader@marriott.com

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ht@eventswebpage.com

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bamblerthomas@hornblower.com

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kduncan1@surewest.net

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jpalank@caltrux.org

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ed@eventready.com

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deoriolaura@gmail.com

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jennifer@calodging.com

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d.ramsdell@sbcglobal.net

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**Denise Yee**

Dy1121@hotmail.com

**Rick Chapman**

rickchapman@charter.net

*Website, Chair*

**Celeste Berke**

celeste.berke@marriott.com



## CSR CORNER

### ***Smith Moore & Associates Embraces CSR***

*By Katrina Duncan, CMP- Meetings Consultant*

Smith Moore & Associates is a Sacramento-based association management firm whose business is growing in the worst recession in 70 years! How are they doing it? In addition to their client-driven service and consistently delivering the required results for their customers, they also have that special "likeability factor." Smith Moore & Associates not only believes in connecting with its clients, but also connecting directly with the local community. Smith Moore & Associates incorporates Corporate Social Responsibility into its business practices, including corporate citizenship, sustainability and social responsible initiatives.

I recently had the opportunity to talk to Smith Moore & Associates' Executive Assistant Fiona Young, who leads the company's business development team. She explained that Smith Moore & Associates decided as a company to match staff members' personal passion for philanthropy and sustainability with their company's business practices. They wanted to do more good and give back to the local community, and staff recognized they would have more collective power as a group rather than independently. Smith Moore & Associates incorporated and exemplified CSR as an integral aspect of its brand - they WALK the TALK.

In October, Smith Moore & Associates was certified as a Sacramento Sustainable Business, a designation earned by making changes to its company policies. They have earned both the pollution prevention and solid waste reduction certifications. Smith Moore & Associates participates in Sacramento SPCA's annual Doggy Dash, a 5K walk/run that is the Sacramento SPCA's biggest fund-raiser of the year. This summer they participated in United Way's toilet paper drive by acting as the collection point for toilet paper in their building and collecting more than 400 rolls. Their contribution, along with thousands of other rolls of toilet paper collected, was distributed to United Way's 140 nonprofit partners throughout the Sacramento region.

For the holidays Smith Moore & Associates is adopting a family through the Volunteers of America Greater Sacramento and Northern Nevada Chapter. They have adopted a family of three – a single mother with two children – with a list of both needs and wishes for the holidays. Smith Moore & Associates' staff is committed to fulfilling all of the family's needs,

and as many of their wishes as possible. Some staff members at Smith Moore & Associates are also giving their time to by volunteering for the Sacramento Food Bank, where they are gift wrapping donated gifts and food items for local families in need.

Young shared that the firm has set a philanthropy goal of participating in four types of philanthropic endeavors in 2011: an environmental project, a hands-on project to help the local homeless population, a donation drive, and the Sacramento SPCA's annual Doggy Dash.

Smith Moore & Associates active role in the community and among its clients is the driving force behind the growth of this young company. Put some of Smith Moore & Associates actions into your own life, company or conference, the results might astound you.

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### ***Meeting Space Calculator iPhone App!***

UCLA Conference Services has created a FREE "Meeting Space Calculator" application. The app is for meeting professionals and event planners who are planning an event and would like to know the capacity of the room or venue they are using in varied set ups (i.e. theatre, classroom, banquet, etc). You simply type in the square footage and the type of set up and the app will give you an estimate of how many people you can fit. Here is the

link if you'd like to download it or see more info:

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/meeting-space-calc/id395948760?mt=8>



We'd love to hear your feedback when you have a chance to view it and please pass it along to anyone you think may find it useful... and remember to let them know it's FREE!

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**Sacramento +3 new members 77.19% retention**

Texas Hill Country 77.92% retention



## ON THE MOVE

### PROMOTION

Jennifer Flohr, CAE, CMP, the California Hotel & Lodging Association's (CH&LA) Director of Membership & Events, has been promoted to Senior Vice President.

### NEW POSITION

Karen Grunwald is now **Senior Events Manager**  
**ServiceSource**

### **Rediscover MPIWEB.ORG.**

*With relevant multimedia content, robust tools, and resources, you'll find everything you need.*

### **Let your peers know what you are up to!**

Email promotions, new positions, designations, etc. to:

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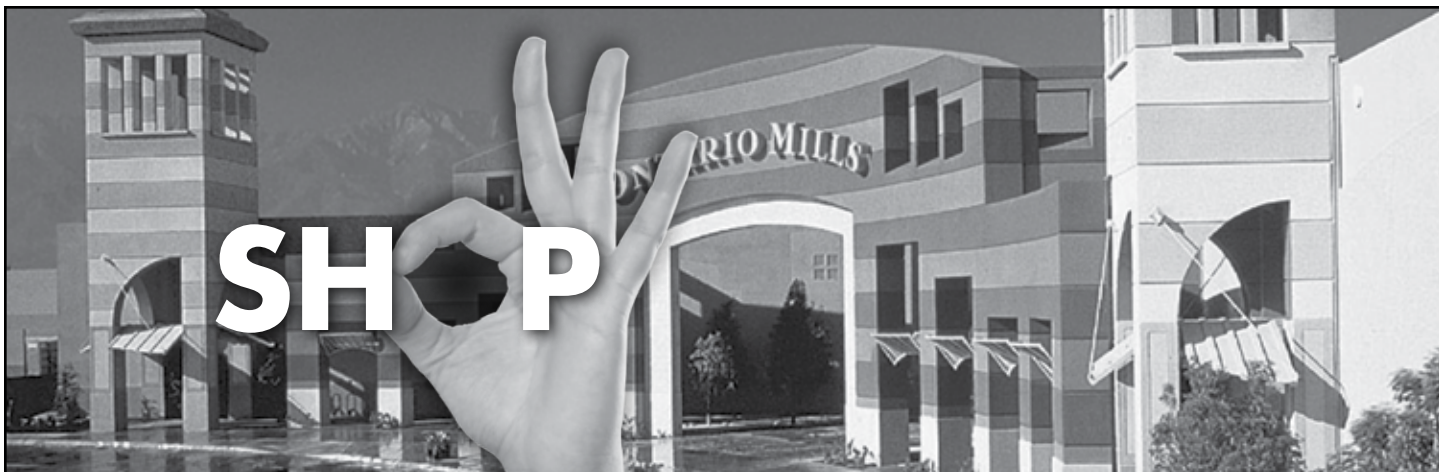
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Roseville CA 95747  
916-773-3821 • cell 916-425-8211  
e-fax 916-405-3687 • [terri.schrader@marriott.com](mailto:terri.schrader@marriott.com)

**Joy Florentino, CMP**  
Senior Account Executive  
State Association Sales Office  
Marriott, Renaissance and J.W. Hotels and Resorts  
P.O. Box 660153  
Sacramento CA 95866  
916-486-6218 • e-fax 916-914-2207  
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## (2011 Tradeshow

*continued from page 1)*

Resort is a luxury resort, featuring 300 well-appointed rooms and suites, and features of fabulous spa to unravel, unwind and rejuvenate. Then step into a world of Vegas style gaming entertainment in their 144,500 square foot casino, and visit the five exceptional bars and lounges. If you are feeling hungry, come and eat at nine incredible restaurants serving a diverse array of cuisines that bring delight and surprise to every bite.

At the end of the tradeshow, we will be raffling a grand prize giveaway from Thunder Valley Casino/Resort. The grand prize giveaway includes: one night stay in deluxe accommodations for two; dinner for two in the elegant High Steaks steak house restaurant; a 50 minute spa treatment.

Please join us for the Annual 2011 MPISSN Trade Show at Thunder Valley Casino Resort. MPI member planners and non-member planners are invited to attend FREE of charge. Come see the award winning offerings and socialize with meeting planners and suppliers.



Exhibitors will have the opportunity of presenting new and unique offering from their destination, facility, products and services while having fun incorporating the theme of 'Luck Be a Lady'.

In addition to delicious hors d'oeuvres, wine tasting, and entertainment, you could win a fabulous raffle prize. We encourage each member to invite a non-member to attend and experience the benefits of MPI membership at this festive event. We want to share how much good fortune is in our industry and learn new ways to sustain and grow our businesses.

Come maximize your "Chance" opportunities at the MPISSN Annual Tradeshow March 8, 2011!

*"Luck is when opportunity knocks and you answer."*

~ Author Unknown



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# One, Two, Three ~

## MPISSN's Education Programs Enjoy Three-Peat Success

By Theresa Stamey - TGS Consulting

The fall programming for MPISSN's education calendar resulted in some of the highest marks received for education. Missed some of the action? Read on...

**September:** *Join the Conversation! Knowledge Hub Luncheon Program*

Eight MPISSN experts guided the conversation on marketing, educational formats, catering, audio/visual, trade show, fund-raising/sponsorship management, site selection and professional development. Out of those conversations, the "take ways" were:

**Marketing, lead by Karen Grunwald, Senior Events Manager, SERVICESOURCE**

- Create different avenues of interaction for your attendees or customers by using ~ micro sites within your Website; Smartphone applications; multiple feedback opportunities; blog posts and Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.
- Personalize all marketing components
- Email layering to solicit participation on different levels

**Educational Formats, lead by Susan Buntjer, CMP, Conference Management Specialist, Rural Community Assistance Corporation**

- Use new trends ~: virtual; fish bowls (circle of 8 who trade off spots in the circle to join in the conversation); un-conference (content driven by attendees); Twitter/Foursquare/social media/webinars/ hologram speakers/You Tube

**Catering, lead by Dori Andreoni, Director of Catering Sales, Classique Catering**

- Serve more sustainable food and food from 100 mile radius
- Comfort food and family style are in demand
- Vegan/Gluten free and low calorie are being asked for regularly
- Trends: smaller portions; smaller budgets; ethnic; government; lots of smaller food stations

**Audio/Visual, lead by Robert Best, General Manager, Advantage Presentations**

- For lower cost, clients requesting different room set-ups and scheduling of rooms to maximize A/V dollars
- Podcasts and videos included in a/v budgets; and, marketing of videos at end of conference
- Combination of audio and PowerPoint presentations at end of conference
- LED lights and colors to set the mood

**Trade Shows, lead by Robin Rinehart, Owner, Rinehart Design & Consulting**

- Future of trade shows driven by attendee experience
- Trends include: things that touched attendees; polling; using technology; Ping.com; events within tradeshow
- Food on the floor draws attendees



**Fund-raising/Sponsorship Management, lead by Sylvia Done, Administrative Manager, California Waterfowl Association**

- Sponsorships are down
- ROI is needed
- Restructuring sponsorship levels is leading to more customization
- Function sponsors are big
- Sponsors asking for focus groups during meeting
- Sponsors asking for attendee list pre-conference
- Splitting sponsorship dollars emerging trend
- 

**Site Selection, lead by Heather Tanfani, CMP, President, events!**

- No time or money to do site selections
- Using CVB's, virtual tours, and others in the area for input
- Use of technology to show room setup
- Relationships are still the most important

**Professional Development, lead by Jennifer Flohr, CAE, CMP, Senior Vice President, California Hotel & Lodging Association**

- CMP Study groups
- Opportunities include using webinars; volunteering; and experience

**October: Working Smart with Microsoft Outlook**

In October, Todd Schmick, Western Regional Manager for Priority Management, Inc. lead a very lively discussion on the workings of Microsoft Outlook and it's time and workload management features. What did we learn? The most important function of Outlook task management is the "start date". Why? Because focusing on the start and not worrying about the due date gets the task done. Another key and best practice is to get your email inbox down to "0" by calendaring a request; completing the task; sending the email to a folder for no action; or, deleting it. Just be sure not to make too many folders.

Todd had great reviews and we hope to bring him back for a longer and more in-depth discussion on Outlook in the future.

**November: Naked Negotiating and "Compete Better Now" For the Best Performance Of Your Life**

November brought Deborah Gardner to Sacramento for a workshop presentation on powerful negotiation tools. She showed the group how to sort desirable outcomes into "must have", "would like," and "tradable". Her recommendation was to put it all out on the table to move the conversation. By laying it all out on the table, we will be able to reach a "win, win" for all parties. What does that involve? It requires trust, respect and integrity for all parties. To communicate desires, we must each listen actively, separate facts vs emotions, ask questions, and WRITE it down. Final steps in the negotiating process ~ this is where our belief system challenge comes into the process. First, get in the right frame of mind (make sure the timing is right); hold firm; believe in your products or services; and, repeat. Remember, customers and suppliers do come back to the discussion.

During lunch Deborah presented "**Compete Better Now: For the Best Performance of Your Life**". She outlined ways for each of us to confront competition. Tools to use included going beyond the unique or the best; and, getting out of the box and making what you are doing so good that the competition can't touch you. Her advice, remember you are your biggest competitor! You have to embrace you! If you want success, it starts with you. Using success



against your competition is secondary to what you need to focus on because you have to know what is right for you. Identify your strengths, focus on them and utilize partnerships to be successful. Be relevant and be an expert in that area. When you are relevant you have no ego. And, don't forget gratitude. Acknowledge those that have helped you. All these things will make you a winner.

*Deborah Gardner, CMP is the Principal and Founder of two highly successful companies: A business specialist and consultant for DG INTERNATIONAL LLC and a speaker/trainer for COMPETE BETTER NOW! LLC. A company that help translate competition into higher sales, better customer service, stronger negotiations, improved team performance along with greater personal and professional development.*

# Continuing Your Education Beyond the CMP Designation- A Viable, Respected and Affordable Option

*By Celeste Berke, M.T.A Director of Sales and Marketing, Courtyard Marriott Sacramento Midtown*



I always knew that I wanted to continue my education after completing my undergraduate studies; I just wasn't sure what that meant in terms of practicality and affordability or what possible options were available.

In 2001, I started my career working for the Greensboro Merchants Association (North Carolina) where my primary responsibility was to oversee an association of hotels – the Guildford County Hotel Motel Association. I quickly realized that I had a penchant for planning meetings and events and that I wanted to build a career centered on activities that allowed me to do just that. During these years, I attended many continuing education courses offered by various programs and schools but was eager to find a more structured forum. After five years in my position, I felt stagnant and ready to explore avenues to continue my education. The Internet search began.

I will never forget the moment I received a call from my mother letting me know that she had stumbled upon a Master's program from the George Washington School of Business in Tourism Administration! I knew that the University was well respected in the United States and around the world. The Master's of Tourism Administration

---

## Have you been thinking about getting your CMP?

Now is the time to become certified! The application has been revised, making it easier to apply. Applying now will give you the option to take the CMP exam in July 2011 or January 2012.

And now the industry-related continuing education requirement is only completion of 25 clock hours within the past five years. Getting your CMP will give you: recognition, a competitive advantage, per acceptance, possible salary enhancement, personal achievement and show you are committed to your career.

Don't delay ---the CMP designation next application deadline is March 1, 2011.

For more information go to [www.mpissn.org](http://www.mpissn.org) and click on professional development/designations.

degree program is designed to prepare students for career entry or mid-level management positions in public, commercial, or nonprofit organizations providing visitor services at the local, national, or international level. For more than 30 years, the GW Master of Tourism Administration (MTA) program has led the tourism industry with original graduate degree programs. The Accelerated Master of Tourism Administration (AMTA) program offers the same world-class graduate education as the MTA, but is packaged to meet the needs of working professionals. I wanted to continue to work full-time while attending school so the AMTA program was perfect for my needs and the cost was very affordable, especially when compared to tuition for the traditional college track.

Students are also encouraged to select an area of concentration or individualized study. I opted to select the Event and Meeting Management Concentration. This concentration enables students to gain a practical and theoretical understanding of special events, expositions, festivals, conferences, meetings, and celebrations. Experiential learning through internships, field trips, and guest speakers is provided.

After being accepted into the program, I began coursework in January 2007. I was able to complete the program in 28 months while simultaneously working and attending school on a full-time basis. I also relocated during the interim, moving from North Carolina to California. This was a seamless transition because you can access the program from almost anywhere in the world. The program does require two separate residency weeks in Washington, D.C. – one at the beginning of the program for orientation and networking with fellow students since all the courses are taught in a cohort style--and one at the end for a capstone experience.

The friendships, professional business contacts as well as the knowledge that I gained were invaluable to me. I was able to learn in a flexible and convenient online learning format, had individualized guidance, was able to network with industry professionals from not only the United States, but from around the world and was able to take advantage of a nationally ranked and recognized Tourism program. If you have ever thought about wanting to continue your education in the event and meeting management realm, then this may just be the program for you!

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## ***Notes From Headquarters***

Just a quick announcement to give you the heads up on the December 2, 2010 launch of a new resource for MPI Members.

On December 2, 2010 we rolled out a newsletter that features solely on our world-class content to our MPI membership. Spotlight is the name of our new venture and thanks to the collaborative work between our communications and knowledge teams, it will quickly highlight four dynamic and relevant education elements we have for our members. It will also “spotlight” unique discussions in our MPI Groups on the website, top viewed content and the latest digital edition of One+ magazine. During the initial roll out of Spotlight we intend to distribute approximately twice per month.

During the next six months, the MPI strategic communications team will evaluate the effectiveness of this project in connecting members to our educational resources and their satisfaction with this new venture. Any feedback you receive or have yourself is also appreciated and can be forwarded to me.

Please note: This newsletter will be delivered via email only to members who have indicated in their profile that they want to receive MPI newsletters.

***Theresa Davis***

***Director of Strategic Communications***

***Meeting Professionals International***



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