



**VIRGINIA**  
CHAPTER

---

## VA Voice: March 2024

*This edition of the VA Voice is generously sponsored by Kalahari Resorts.*



---

### Letter from MPI-VA President, Martina James

*"As we embrace the vibrant spirit of spring, it brings me great joy to extend warm greetings to every one of you. With blossoms blooming and nature awakening, it's the perfect time to celebrate growth, renewal, and the excitement of new beginnings."*

[Read More Here!](#)

---

#MeetingsMatter



Join MPI for our eighth annual, industry-leading Global Meetings Industry Day: Virtual experience. This live, 12-hour broadcast features education and activities from all over the world as the meeting industry comes together to celebrate, commemorate, and honor the millions of global events that impact the lives of billions of people every year.

Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID) is an international day of advocacy showcasing the undeniable value that business meetings, trade shows, incentive travel, exhibitions, conferences, and conventions bring to people, businesses, and communities. This year's theme is #TheEventProfessionalsJourney and we relish this opportunity to *celebrate* the wonders the future holds for bringing people together in meaningful ways with thousands of industry friends and colleagues.

The live broadcast will run from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. US Central Time (06:00 to 18:00 UTC -5), offering you the opportunity to connect with other industry leaders from all over the world. The broadcast is FREE, but we're asking you to consider donating US\$10 toward supporting the efforts of the MPI Foundation, which has awarded more than US\$5 million in grants, scholarships, and research since 2009.

GMID: Virtual is the perfect event to rally together—because when we meet, we change the world.

[Register for GMID's Live Broadcast Here.](#)

---

## MPI Virginia Upcoming Events



[March Chapter Meet-Up](#)

Marker 20, Hampton, VA

March 27th, 2024

[Register Here](#)

## April Member Orientation

April 10th, 2024

[Register Here](#)



## Spring Quarterly Education & Networking Program

Hilton Richmond Downtown

April 15th & 16th, 2024

[Register Here](#)

## Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID)

April 11th, 2024

[Register for MPI's Virtual Broadcast Here](#)



## May Chapter Meet-Up

KEVA Studios, Midlothian, VA

May 15th, 2024

[Register Here](#)

## MPI's World Education Congress (WEC)

Louisville, KY

May 21st-23rd, 2024

[Register Here](#)





### July Chapter Meet-Up

Henrico Sports & Events Center,  
Glen Allen, VA

July 10th, 2024

[Register Here](#)

### 2024 Annual Conference: Save the Date

August 5th - 7th, 2024

The Kimpton Forum Hotel  
Charlottesville, VA



### November Quarterly Education & Networking Program: Save the Date

November 19th & 20th, 2024

Hilton Norfolk the Main  
Norfolk, VA



---

## Leadership News

Thank you to our 2023-2024 Board of Directors!

Interested in joining the Board? Contact Megan Hazzard at at  
[Hazo29@henrico.us](mailto:Hazo29@henrico.us).

**Martina James**, President

**Dwight Driskill**, President-Elect

**Steve Tewksbury**, Immediate Past President

**Megan Hazzard**, Director of Leadership Development

**Brittany Rice**, VP of Finance

Director of Sponsorships - **Vacant**



**Penny Guiles**, VP of Education

**Sarah Lester**, Director of Special & Monthly Events

**Lori Leib**, VP of Membership

**Kara Allen**, Director of Member Care

**Cynthia Bell**, Director of Member Recruitment

**Allyn Hodgins**, VP of Communications

Director of Communications- **Vacant**

---

**Looking to gain exposure at the Annual Conference taking place in August in Charlottesville? Volunteer on the Annual Conference committee!**

If interested, please email Kim Carragher, our Annual Conference Chair,  
[kim.carragher@whitelodging.com](mailto:kim.carragher@whitelodging.com).

---



**VOLUNTEERS WANTED**

for Board of Directors & Committee roles.



**Get Involved with YOUR MPI VA Chapter**

We are looking for volunteers to join committees and the MPI Virginia board! Time to get involved and get all the benefits out of your membership! Please reach out to Megan Hazzard at [Hazo29@henrico.us](mailto:Hazo29@henrico.us) if you are interested in learning more about how to get involved with YOUR chapter.

We have openings in Membership, Finance, Communications, and Education so wherever your interest in the meeting profession lies, we would love to have you!

---

## Membership News



March's Featured Member is Kelly Corley. Kelly the Manager of Events & Engagement for Lightwave Dental Management and is one of our chapter's newest members. She has only been a member of MPI Virginia for 2 months. Get to know more about Kelly below:

### **Q: Why did you join MPI Virginia?**

A: Graduated with my Career Diploma in Event Planning in 2017 while working in student activities in higher education and was given a membership for graduation. Unfortunately, I let my previous membership laps (life got in the way) but wanted to come back to learn from my peers and all the wonderful available resources.

### **Q: What do you enjoy he most about the meeting and events industry?**

A: The peak moments I help to facilitate. At the end of it all, we tend to only remember the peaks and pits, whether it be at an event, during a family vacation, or in life in general. I want to do my best to create peak moments attendees will find memorable for years to come.

**Q: What advice would you give someone entering the meeting and events industry?**

A: Create templates!!! I find myself going back over and over again to a previously used template to kick off my planning process and brainstorm new ideas.

**Q: How do you define success?**

A: This has taken me quite a long time to learn, but I define success through the enjoyment and outcomes I and others experienced at an event. I used to take all feedback in post-event surveys very personally, even if it may be something small. I have had to learn that someone's feedback is tool for growth, not a personal attack on my abilities as a planner.

**Q: What is a fun fact about you?**

A: I love being scared! Horror movies, roller coasters, haunted attractions, etc. are my favorite hobbies.

**Q: What is your favorite hobby?**

A: I love kayaking with my husband in the warmer months and love doing spooky themed activities in the fall.

Thank you Kelly for letting us get to know more about you!

If you would like to be featured in one of our upcoming editions of The VA VOICE, please complete our [Member Spotlight Questionnaire](#).

---

**Happy March Membership Anniversaries!**

Christi Ruddy, CMP, Covington Meetings and Events- 24 Years

Nicole Rea Walker, CMP, Consultant- 10 Years

Frank Passanant, Hilton Worldwide- 7 Years

Allison Bancroft, The Glebe Retirement Community - Lifespire of Virginia- 2  
Years

Eva Chaisson, CMP, Ferguson Enterprises- 1 Year

Brooke Doty, CMP, TD Synnex- 1 Year

Joshua Hoffman, Cvent Inc.- 1 Year

Julie Leonardo, CHIRE- 1 Year

Barbara Pavesi, Cvent Inc.- 1 Year

Shaun Simon, Cvent Inc.- 1 Year

---

**Welcome New Members!**

Takia Archer, CMP, McGuire Woods, LLP, Conference Services Manager

Valeria Brannan, Brighthouse Financial, Event Planner

Mark Brown, Lost Office Collaboration, Co-Founder Principal

Micah Dupie, Airport Consultants Council, Event Manager

Ashley Neufeld, The Forum Charlottesville, Sales Manager

Stacy Nicodemus, CMP, Sigma Phi Epsilon, Programs & Events Director

Tiffany Noyes, Sigma Phi Epsilon, Executive Events Manager

Henry White, Sigma Phi Epsilon, Program & Technology Manager

---



Want to shine a spotlight on who you are, personally and professionally? We're looking for members who want to be featured in the next issue of the VA VOICE.

If that's you, [please submit your profile today!](#)

---

### **Update your MPI Member Profile Today!**

It is essential that our members have fully-completed and up-to-date information on their member profile page so we can make their membership tailor-made to their needs. Please take a look at your current profile and make any necessary changes, today. It only takes a couple of minutes!

Check out this video for step-by-step instructions on how to edit your profile.





## Thank You to our Sponsors!





MPI Virginia Chapter | 1307 W Morehead St | Suite 207 | Charlotte | NC | 28208 | US

The VA Voice Newsletter is your monthly source for member news, events, and industry updates. It's produced for members and non-members alike. Have a colleague or prospective member who could benefit from receiving the VA Voice? Email Claire to have them added to our distribution list.

[claire@themanagementoffice.com](mailto:claire@themanagementoffice.com).

If you no longer want to receive emails from VA Voice, please [Opt-Out](#).