

*“Vacations are cool, but sometimes you need more than an escape.*

*On the soundless paisley carpeting, in dimly lit hotel hallways and at the circular tables in ballrooms, I temporarily leave behind my long to-do lists and fall under the spell of a good conference. I find space to reimagine my routine. A conference is obviously not the same as a vacation, though I do sometimes arrive a day early and visit a site or two, have lunch with an old friend or meet a sibling for dinner. But the change of scenery, the subtle reframing of who I am, where I’m from and what I do creates a meaningful shift. Vacations provide an escape; the best conferences give me momentum. For a little while, I forget about my aging parents, my daughter’s looming college search and my own midlife malaise. I think about possibilities instead of obligations.”*

[New York Times. "My Secret to Creative Rejuvenation? Conferences"](#)

Dear MPI Virginia Members,

As summer approaches, we have a series of fantastic events and activities lined up to keep you connected, inspired, and engaged. I am sure your calendars are full of vacations, weekends at the beach and fun family plans, but mark your calendars for our upcoming meet-ups and our highly anticipated Annual Conference. Here’s what’s in store:

***June 5 – Member Meet-Up at Fogo de Chão***

Kick off the summer with us at Fogo de Chão in Richmond. This Brazilian steakhouse is renowned for its vibrant atmosphere and delicious cuisine, making it the perfect setting for networking with fellow members and industry professionals.

***July 10 – Member Meet-Up at Henrico Sports and Events Center***

Join us at the new Henrico Sports and Events Center for an exciting evening of networking and exploration. This state-of-the-art facility offers a unique backdrop for our meet-up, blending professional interaction with a taste of local sports culture. We are excited to be hosted by MPI Virginia Board Member, Megan Hazzard

***August 5-7 – Leadership Amplified: Inspire. Innovate. Ignite.***

***Annual Conference, The Forum Hotel in Charlottesville***

Our Annual Conference in Charlottesville promises to be a highlight of the year. This three-day event will feature a variety of sessions designed to inspire creativity and innovation in event planning. Take this opportunity to learn from industry leaders, network with peers, and explore the beautiful city of Charlottesville.

In line with recent insights from a New York Times article I referenced on conferences and creativity, our Annual Conference will delve into how creative approaches can transform event planning and execution. The article emphasizes the importance of professional engagement and fostering meaningful connections, all while delivering memorable experiences. We look forward creating a space that our colleagues and industry professionals will find educational, as well as stimulating and exciting. Join us in Charlottesville, a break from your day to day, but I guarantee you will leave the conference feeling rejuvenated with fresh ideas and strategies.

We look forward to seeing you at these events. Stay tuned for more details and registration information in your email and on our website.

Best regards,

Martina James  
President  
MPI Virginia Chapter