

# Scoop.

THE MPISCC NEWSLETTER      JUNE '24



## The Power of Collaboration: Elevating Events Together

Collaboration is the key to success in the ever-changing world of meetings and events. Creativity, resourcefulness, and connectivity reign supreme and the ability to work together effectively can make the difference between ordinary and extraordinary. It sparks creativity and can drive innovation. Bringing together individuals with diverse backgrounds, skill sets, and perspectives, collaboration unlocks ideas and possibilities. Whether it is brainstorming unique event concepts or problem-solving during execution, the synergy of partnership often yields groundbreaking solutions and unforgettable experiences.

Collaboration doesn't stop with individual efforts and ideas; it extends the reach of resources available as well. From financial backing to logistical support and everything in between, pooling resources with partners amplifies each contributor. In turn, this ensures a higher standard of quality and professionalism across all aspects of planning the event and its execution.

Working in concert opens doors and networking opportunities within the industry. By joining forces with other professionals and organizations, you can showcase your talents to a broader audience and forge valuable connections that can lead to future opportunities and career advancement. Remember when you are collaborating with someone else, each of you are bringing your unique network to the tables and the potential is boundless.

To ensure stellar outcomes, it is essential to adopt strategies that facilitate seamless cooperation for all parties involved. Communicate clearly! This ensures that all parties are aligned on goals, expectations, and responsibilities. Building trust and fostering relationships further solidifies your bond with your team members, paving the way for smooth collaboration and mutual support. Identifying and aligning common goals provides a shared purpose that can guide your decision-making and collective efforts toward a unified solution.

MPISCC's annual [WE]Con event is a great case study as to how collaboration can be effective, fun and most importantly a new opportunity for those involved. Through leveraging annual sponsors, event partners, hotel partners, planner, suppliers and more MPISCC was able to collaborate and curate an event that was packed with experience, education, networking and fun. Partners were able to showcase their abilities and grow their networks,

Collaboration is going to continue to play a role in shaping the future of our industry. Emerging trends such as virtual collaborations, cross-industry partnerships, and innovative technologies will revolutionize the way event professionals work together. As the industry evolves to meet ever-changing audiences, synergistic partnerships will remain the key behind innovation, growth, and success.

In conclusion, collaboration is not just a passing trend in the events community; it is a fundamental principal that supports the industry's ability to thrive in a competitive landscape. We should all embrace it so that we can unlock new levels of creativity, access a broader range of resources, and forge valuable connections that can propel our career and elevate our events to new heights. Helen Keller said it best "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

***Amanda White, Corporate Sales, BMW Performance Centers; MPISCC Board of Directors***



# [WE]Con '24

APRIL 10-12, 2024 | NEWPORT BEACH

ELEVATE  
EMBRACE  
ENGAGE

## MPISCC's [WE]Con Event Recap: Igniting Passion, Innovation, and Community

In a whirlwind of excitement and anticipation, event professionals in the MPISCC community descended upon Newport Beach for MPISCC's annual [WE]Con event. From April 10th to 12th, the Renaissance Newport Beach transformed into a bustling hub of creativity, collaboration, and connection, as attendees gathered to explore the latest trends, share insights, and forge lasting relationships.

At the heart of [WE]Con were the insightful keynote sessions that set the stage for an unforgettable experience. Julius Solaris, the visionary founder of Boldpush, took center stage with his groundbreaking insights on redefining event experiences in the AI era. His words resonated deeply with attendees, challenging them to embrace innovation and harness the power of technology to create immersive and unforgettable events.

Board members Amanda White, Corporate Sales leader at BMW Performance Driving Schools and Margaret Launzel-Pennes, of POP | X, led dynamic sessions with a focus on AI. Amanda delivered a masterclass on revolutionizing sales through AI leaving attendees energized and equipped with practical strategies to navigate the ever-changing landscape of event marketing. Margaret led the audiences through a hands-on AI prompt session with bold ideas and a visionary approach to event planning, inspiring attendees to push the boundaries of creativity and reimagine what's possible.

Throughout the conference, attendees were treated to a diverse array of thought-provoking sessions and interactive workshops. From Gary Ware's exhilarating exploration of playfulness and improvisation to Katie Pederson's insightful discussion on leveraging ADHD as a superpower, each session sparked new ideas and inspired attendees to think differently about their craft. Hildee Isaacs' session on creating memorable moments through quality swag left attendees buzzing with excitement, while Joe Marcy and Gabe Romero's panel on production power provided invaluable insights into the logistics of executing flawless events.

But [WE]Con wasn't just about learning—it was about forging connections and building relationships that would last a lifetime. Networking receptions provided the perfect opportunity for attendees to mingle, share ideas, and collaborate on future projects. Interactive activities like scavenger hunts and guacamole-making competitions added an element of fun and excitement to the proceedings, fostering a sense of camaraderie and community among attendees.



# [WE]Con '24

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EMBRACE  
ENGAGE



MPISCC member and VP, Events Marketing at City National Bank, Brandy Thigpen summed up her experience. “As a corporate meeting planner, this was my second [WE]Con and I couldn’t be happier with my experience. [WE]Con is my absolute favorite industry conference for a multitude of reasons. I feel attendees want to be present and participate, leadership does a fantastic job with content and programming, and the networking opportunities are great. This was my first year participating in the Planner Partner Program and that was a phenomenal opportunity to meet other planners, partners, and provided a unique experience to showcase the destination. As a newer member of MPISCC, I’m proud to be a member, volunteer and look forward to supporting the chapter going forward.”

None of this would have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors and partners. From Visit Newport Beach to the Renaissance Newport Beach and all of our sponsors in between, their unwavering commitment and dedication to our community helped elevate [WE]Con to new heights. We extend our deepest gratitude to each and every one of them for their invaluable contributions.

As we reflect on the success of [WE]Con, we are reminded of the incredible power of passion, innovation, and community to drive positive change in the events industry. The connections made, insights gained, and memories created at [WE]Con will continue to inspire and empower event professionals as they navigate the ever-evolving landscape of our industry. With hearts full of gratitude and excitement, we look forward to building on the momentum of this year's event and shaping the future of events together.

*Photos courtesy of Dalia Taylor, see more here.*



# WANNA MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

SUPPORT MPISCC'S ANNUAL FUNDRAISER AT THE ICONIC GRAND CENTRAL MARKET IN LOS ANGELES - "GATHERING FOR GOOD."



This event is designed not only as a celebration of our vibrant community but also as a vital initiative to raise funds that directly assist event professionals through educational scholarships and essential resources. Our goal is to ensure that our colleagues, both current and future, have the opportunities they need to succeed and thrive in this dynamic industry.

You can participate by attending to be sure and we are also in need of items or services that can be auctioned or raffled during the event. Supporting our fundraising initiatives is the perfect way to show your gratitude for the incredible community we are all a part of.

For more info, click [here](#).



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# GOCAL: MEETINGS MADE EASY



Embark on a journey where the ease of travel and the warmth of collaboration intersect seamlessly in the heart of Greater Ontario California (GOCAL). Breeze through the Ontario International Airport, where the simplicity of arrival sets the tone for your entire experience. The convenience of accessing major freeways becomes as natural as a conversation with an old friend. Easy, unpretentious, and efficient – just like the roads leading you from the airport to the 60+ hotel partners, meeting spaces, and entertainment that define GOCAL.

Speaking of easy, working with the GOCAL team is akin to finding a partner who understands your needs before you even voice them. What sets GOCAL apart is the unique proposition of a single-point contact for both room and venue bookings, streamlining negotiations and ensuring a smooth planning process.

The journey through GOCAL is more than a series of destinations; it's a partnership with a team rooted in tradition.

We invite you to experience the perfect blend of accessibility, warmth, and professional collaboration. Our community is ready to welcome you with open arms and unparalleled support. Let GOCAL be the reason your next gathering becomes an unforgettable success.





# WEC WRAP-UP



MPI World Education Congress (WEC) wrapped up last Wednesday night as over 2,000 event and meeting professionals gathered in Louisville, Kentucky.

The conference featured numerous activations and educational sessions that filled each attendee's "cup" with knowledge and ideas to continue pushing our industry forward.

The opening reception received significant fanfare as all attendees were hosted at the First Turn Club at the legendary Churchill Downs, home of the Kentucky Derby. This was a highlight of WEC for me as I have been watching the Kentucky Derby since I was a child, and this was the first time I could visit the racetrack. The next few days were filled with amazing keynotes by Pamela Schuller, Mark Schulman & Heather Crider, Felipe Gomez, Jessica Lee Goldyn, Fergie Phillippe & Kyle Taylor Parker, and Princess Sarah Culberson.

The magic was in between all of the keynote sessions, with breakouts covering various topics, including networking, AI in the meeting industry, burnout, food and beverage trends, and limiting beliefs.

MPISCC had a successful meet-up at the Galt House Hotel on the 25th floor, where our chapter members attending WEC had the chance to meet each other and network. We can't forget about the Digital Program, which I had the pleasure of hosting for a second year in a row, that offered attendees intimate interviews with speakers, MPI staff, conference attendees, and even

Grammy-nominated Aloe Blacc, who was the featured performer at the President's Dinner that honored Steve O'Malley. Louisville, did a tremendous job hosting our group right after the PGA Championship and we are looking forward to WEC 2025 in St. Louis.

**AMANI ROBERTS**







## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS FOR EVENT PLANNERS: STRATEGIES FOR WELL-BEING

### [Navigating Stress and Burnout in the Events Industry](#)

**As Mental Wellness Month serves as a reminder, it's crucial for event planners to prioritize their mental well-being year-round. By acknowledging the challenges of the profession and exploring innovative solutions like AI tools, event planners can better manage stress and create more fulfilling experiences for themselves and their attendees.**

“

Event planning has been called the fifth most stressful job in the world. Today, as meetings resurge again and planners often must work with fewer resources and colleagues, burnout is real and ever-present.”

**Gary Diedrichs**

In a recent article by Gary Diedrichs in *Smart Meetings*, the significant stressors faced by event planners are brought to the forefront. Event planning has been ranked as the fifth most stressful job globally, highlighting the importance of mental health awareness and self-care within the industry. While traditional methods like exercise, meditation, and healthy eating are valuable, there's a growing need for open discussions around the challenges of burnout and overwhelm.

The article emphasizes the importance of acknowledging and addressing feelings of burnout, rather than pushing through them. Suggestions include designating trusted colleagues to cover during mental health breaks and embracing the concept of self-compassion. One notable suggestion highlighted in the article is the use of AI technology, such as the Apollo bracelet, to monitor and manage stress levels on-site during events. This innovative tool detects stress levels and provides soothing vibrations to help rebalance the nervous system, offering event planners a practical way to manage stress in real-time.





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LIFE OPENS UP

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TRAVEL IN  
2024

## CONNECT IN THE OPEN IN SONOMA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA'S WINE COUNTRY

Nestled between the Pacific coastline and the Mayacamas Mountains, just 30 miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge, Sonoma Wine Country is easy to reach yet a world away from the everyday. From breathtaking vineyards and luxury resorts to towering redwood forests and bustling cities and towns, Sonoma County offers a multitude of stunning backdrops and world-class venues that will motivate your team long after your event has ended.

Looking for team-building opportunities? Take your group on a zipline adventure through the California Redwoods, go on a half-day kayaking excursion along the Russian River or tour one of the area's 425 renowned wineries. If walkability is a must, cities like Santa Rosa, Petaluma and Sebastopol offer an array of hotels that are steps away from large event spaces, local restaurants, wineries and more. Or, treat your team to some R&R between sessions with an immersive wellness experience, like forest bathing with a local guide, group yoga and fitness classes, or one-of-a-kind treatments at a luxury spa.



The Sonoma County destination sales team is thrilled to welcome your group to the heart and soul of California's Wine Country. The team offers an array of complimentary services, including proposal distribution, assistance with coordinating off-site activities and transportation to and from the Bay Area, as well as a meeting incentive (up to \$5,500) toward your master bill or additional commissions (up to 5%) as a lucrative incentive to host your event in Sonoma County.

Visit [SonomaCounty.com/Meetings-Groups](https://www.SonomaCounty.com/Meetings-Groups) to learn more.



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Monica



Shell







# A Letter from EVENTMOBI'S CEO

I couldn't be more excited for EventMobi to be MPISCC's official Event App sponsor again this year. The MPISCC team creates invaluable opportunities for event professionals in the SoCal area to network, learn, and shape the future of events.

This past year, the conversation with EventMobi's 1000+ customers is best summarized by 3 key themes we have used to shape our strategy: leaner event teams, the demand for more ROI from events, and a need to increase engagement post-event!

In particular, we are incredibly excited to announce how we have re-engineered both EventMobi's pricing and the registration and event app platform so it will be your favorite tool throughout the entire event lifecycle, across all your events.

We've seen an undeniable shift in how our customers integrate pre- and post-event attendee engagement into their marketing strategy regardless of whether they run one event or many. The goal? To avoid having to start the entire process over again for the next event or the next year.

This prompted us to create a new pricing model to help simplify event marketing, event management, and facilitate year-round engagement with your attendees.

We're also introducing a new communications hub that will allow your organization to launch email campaigns from the same platform you use to build and manage your events.

I invite you to [book a call with the EventMobi team](#) as we'd love to show you all the cool new features EventMobi has launched to help you and other teams within your organization more easily engage your audience at and in between events.

Best,



Bob Vaez  
Founder and CEO, EventMobi

## [About EventMobi:](#)

Since 2009, EventMobi's comprehensive feature set and elegant simplicity have been loved by 30,000+ planners and millions of attendees. One of the industry's first Mobile Event App platforms, EventMobi's comprehensive suite of event management tools now includes Registration, Check-in, Lead Capture, and Badge Design and Printing.



# UPCOMING EVENTS



Follow us for announcements, updates & reminders for our upcoming events!

# SAVE THE DATE

**JUNE 26, 2024**

NETWORKING EVENT & ANNUAL FUNDRAISER @ GRAND CENTRAL MARKET

.....

**AUGUST 20-22, 2024**

EDUCATION ROAD SHOWS

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**AUGUST 2024**

CMP BOOTCAMP

**OCTOBER 7-10, 2024**

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STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

.....

**DECEMBER 2024**

AFTER 5'S

## MAY RECAP

*after* 5  
WHERE CONNECTIONS THRIVE

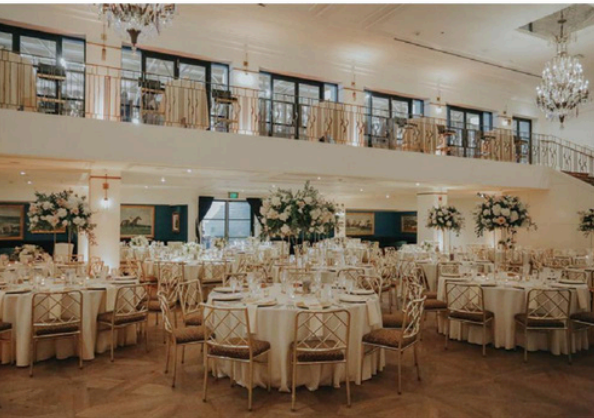




# Santa Anita Park



**MEETING ROOMS: 10**  
**INDOOR MEETING SPACE: 40,000**  
**LARGEST MEETING SPACE: 17,000**  
**THEATER CAP.: 600**  
**BANQUET CAP.: 1,000**  
**CLASSROOM CAP.: 200**  
**EXHIBIT SPACE: 25,000**



**H**ome to some of the most prominent horse racing events in the United States, Santa Anita Park is a historic and storied venue most known for its thoroughbred racetrack in Arcadia, California.

The massive 320-acre property showcases stunning views of the San Gabriel Mountains and is within convenient driving distance to all major Los Angeles area airports. With many venue options, classic Art Deco architecture and a responsive and dedicated sales and events team, Santa Anita Park is the perfect place for events of all varieties. The track boasts 1 million square feet of flexible indoor-outdoor space for meetings, social and corporate events, filming, race day experiences and special events capable of accommodating groups of up to 10,000.

Santa Anita Park has hosted everything from private party carnivals to entertainment for the thousands of staff from Fortune 500 companies. On November 3-4, 2023, Santa Anita Park hosted the 40th running of the Breeders' Cup World Championships. Over 109,000 patrons enjoyed the thrill of racing's biggest stage with the San Gabriel Mountains as the backdrop.

Whether during a large or small event, the convenient parking and wayfinding provides ease while navigating through the park. The traditional yet modern atmosphere makes for stunning photo opportunities. Santa Anita Park is truly a unique venue for creating memorable experiences.

Our on-site dedicated culinary team, as well as three dining options, add to the limitless convenience Santa Anita Park has to offer. The FrontRunner, a full-service restaurant, overlooks the racetrack. Silks combines formal with casual, allowing guests to watch the races from a reserved table.

Lastly, Clockers' Corner lies on the far western side of the grandstand, acting as the perfect place to enjoy dining. The numerous venue, entertainment and dining options make Santa Anita Park the prime location for hosting events in Southern California.

Your event is our passion.

## Standouts

- A wide range of venue options for any type of event
- Classic Art Deco architecture with beautifully manicured grounds at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains
- Plenty of parking with unique entrances
- Responsive sales and fulfillment staff
- Dedicated in-house culinary and hospitality team

## Santa Anita Park

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# Santa Ana, Authentic and Welcoming

## Discover this Vibrant Orange County Destination

In Santa Ana, CA you'll discover a community rich in culture and pride. An art scene that is a mix of funky and folk. Restaurants serving authentic flavors. Attractions that are hands-on and those that teach. Shopping for brand names and handcrafted. Along with events that celebrate all.

### THINGS TO DO

Founded in 1869, Santa Ana is one of the oldest cities in Orange County and one of the only cities that features original architecture and a historic downtown. View art at the largest museum in Orange County, Bowers Museum. Catch a live musical performance at the Observatory or a classic movie at the Frida Cinema.



Home to a diverse array of artists and musicians, art is everywhere. From galleries and studios to parking lots and alleyways, local art captures the true essence of Santa Ana and highlights the community's Chicano heritage. Take a self-guided walking tour of downtown and discover over 200 murals and sculptures.

Santa Ana's retail scene is eclectic offering everything from popular name brands to one-of-a-kind, handcrafted art, sculpture, and jewelry. Shop MainPlace Mall, Downtown, Zone9 Collective, galleries, night markets, and more to find something unique or a special gift.



The community's rich Hispanic/Latin culture brings you the vibrant flavors of Mexico. Steamed tamales. Rich brothy pozole. Crispy golden tortillas. Savor family recipes passed down from generation to generation along with some of the "best tacos in Orange County." Further

complimenting the dining scene are restaurants featuring a mix of classic and eclectic flavors, and those that take you on a culinary journey reflective of Santa Ana's diversity.



Santa Ana is a city of celebrations. From live music and performing arts to cultural festivals there's always something happening in the heart of Orange County.

### MEETING AND EVENT VENUES

Santa Ana hotels offer nearly 42,000 square feet of meeting space. Unique venues from historic to art deco are perfect for off-site event locations. The Yost, an iconic landmark of Santa Ana's vibrant downtown since 1912, is located front and center on the East Street Promenade of Santa Ana's Historic East End District. The 1912 offers stylish indoor space with high ceilings, large windows, and modern accents. Outside of downtown is The Green Parrot Villa, a Spanish-style villa and Mexican restaurant with indoor and open-air settings. Tucked away on 12 acres of gardens and citrus groves is the Victorian-era Heritage Museum of Orange County.

### GETTING HERE

John Wayne Airport (SNA) is located two miles from most of Santa Ana's hotels. The airport is served by 12 commercial and commuter airlines including Air Canada, Alaska, Allegiant, American, Breeze, Delta, Frontier, JSX, Southwest, Spirit, United, and WestJet, offering over 40 nonstop flights to destinations in the U.S., Canada, Mexico. Many of the local hotels offer complimentary airport shuttle service.

#### Other Transport Options Include:

- Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center, home to Amtrak and Metrolink
- Accessible via Interstates 405 & 5, and Freeways 22, 55 & 57



To learn more, contact  
**AnaLaura Becerra,**  
Director of Sales, Travel Santa Ana,  
AnaLaura@TravelSantaAna.com

Travel  
**Santa Ana**



# CELEBRATING MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Claudia Brett | 30 years  
 Margie Johnston | 30 years  
 Carolyn Creek-McCallister | 10 years  
 Darren Green | 10 years  
 Susan Gonzalez | 10 years  
 Lisa Bellissimo | 5 years

## and Celebrating 1 Year:

Diego Acosta	Isaac Gutierrez	Lavon Minor
Aliza Avalos	Amanda Hansen	Krystal Moreno
Emanuela Boni	Stephanie Harkness	Maria Fernanda Sanchez
Carissa Callaway	Michelle Hensley	Kim Smith
Beth Cole	Joeann LaMadrid	Kerensa Summers
Ericka Cunningham	Kim Lefebvre	Sue Stemley
Amy Daniele	Connie Luc	Ryan Taalbi
Ana Duarte	Anushka McCreary	Brandy Thigpen
Jay Escobar	Jill Michnick	Ricko Tindage

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Jessica Barganski	Deanna Jones
Toby Benson	Amber Karson
Jace Cohen	Ryan Kugler
Aleksa Draganic	Ivan Lazarev
Lisa-Marie Ebright	Katrice Offord
Eric Edmunds	Jennifer Payne
Dave Green	Jesus Tamayo
Vonnie Havener	Amber Washington
Nicole Hoyt	Sydney Zimmerman

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## MPI SoCal is searching for dedicated volunteers to join our community

MPI is looking for enthusiastic volunteers to join our team and help us elevate our experience. As a volunteer, you will have the opportunity to contribute to the growth and success of our organization while gaining valuable experience and networking with industry professionals.

We are currently seeking volunteers for various roles, including Marketing & Communication, Membership, Finance, Education & Programming, Regional Events and for Leadership. Whether you have years of experience in the industry or are just starting out, there is a place for you on our team.

If you are passionate about the meetings and events industry and are eager to make a difference, we would love to have you on board. Please consider volunteering with Meeting Planners International and help us shape the future of the industry.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities and how to get involved, please fill out our volunteer form [here](#):

(<https://www.mpi.org/chapters/southern-california/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities/volunteer-form>)

We look forward to welcoming you to our team! Thank you for your support and dedication.



## ...ON SUSTAINABILITY

In the dynamic landscape of event planning, the convergence of sustainability and technology is shaping a new paradigm of conscientious innovation. There is a profound impact when you integrate sustainable practices with cutting-edge technology, highlighting the transformative potential for event professionals.

At its core, sustainability in event planning represents a fundamental shift towards responsible stewardship of our environment. By leveraging technology, event planners can implement eco-friendly solutions that minimize waste, reduce carbon footprint, and optimize resource utilization. From digital invitations and virtual event platforms to smart venue management systems, technology offers a myriad of tools to streamline sustainability efforts and enhance event efficiency.

Moreover, this synergy between sustainability and technology extends beyond operational efficiencies to foster deeper engagement and meaningful experiences for attendees. By embracing sustainable practices, event planners can align their values with those of eco-conscious consumers, thereby enhancing brand reputation and fostering a sense of environmental responsibility among participants.

As champions of sustainability, event professionals have a unique opportunity to lead by example and catalyze positive change within the industry. By harnessing the power of technology and embracing innovative solutions, we can create events that not only inspire and captivate audiences but also contribute to a more sustainable future for generations to come. Let us embark on this journey together, leveraging the transformative potential of sustainability and technology to shape a brighter, more environmentally conscious world.