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**EDITOR IN CHIEF** Blair Potter, bpotter@mpi.org  
**MANAGING EDITOR** Michael Pinchera, mpinchera@mpi.org  
**VICE PRESIDENT, BRAND** Jeff Daigle, jdaigle@mpi.org  
**ART DIRECTOR** Hamilton Hedrick  
**DESIGN** Morganne Stewart  
**DESIGN & PREPRESS** Sherry Gritch, sherry@sgproductions.net

**MPI ADVERTISING STAFF**

**Walter Kupiec**, Vice President Business Development & Sales Operations |  
 wkupiec@mpi.org, (415) 688-0109  
**Cheryl Hatcher**, CDME, Vice President, Business Development, Northeast  
 U.S., Southeast U.S., Caribbean, Hotels, Airlines, Cruise Lines |  
 chatcher@mpi.org, (859) 433-8335  
**Katri Laurimaa**, HMCC, Vice President, Business Development, Midwest U.S.,  
 Southwest U.S., Western U.S., Europe | klaurimaa@mpi.org, (817) 996-0223  
**Amy Wrede**, Vice President, Business Development, West Coast U.S., New  
 England, Mexico, Asia, Australia, LATAM | awrede@mpi.org, (720) 261-6593

**MPI EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT**

**PRESIDENT & CEO** Paul Van Deventer, pvandventer@mpi.org  
**CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER** Rachel Benedick, rbenedick@mpi.org  
**CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER** Tim Boobar, tboobar@mpi.org  
**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER** Michael Crumrine, mcrumrine@mpi.org  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MPI FOUNDATION** Kevin Kirby, kkirby@mpi.org

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## Paying it forward

**RECENTLY, KATHY HEATH, THE SPOUSE OF MPI'S ORIGINAL CEO,** Doug Heath, dropped off several boxes of MPI legacy items at my home in Orlando. The items inside were a time machine from our first president's journey leading a fledgling association in the 1970s.

I never met Doug. I did, however, get to meet dozens of his contemporaries through my own MPI journey. They all shared his passion to use relationships and innovation to make our industry and association better. I can think of no better legacy to support.

Since the start of the MPI Foundation, no other industry association foundation has distributed as much back to individual professionals or offered as much support to sister associations.

Annually, your Global Board of Trustees rallies to provide financial support to raise the bar on education, professionalism, industry research, workforce development and service. We also seem to find a way to support other tangential philanthropic efforts.

And it's not a coincidence that relationships and innovation mentioned by our first CEO remain at the forefront of association and Foundation efforts 50+ years later. We celebrate unleashing professional potential through innovation and engagement.

This past year, through the generosity of countless partners, dozens of fundraising events across the globe and donations both large and small, the MPI Foundation has helped sustain our industry and community. And EVERY DAY it is through relationships and innovation that we continue to give back.

If you're searching for a legacy to support and want to join us in paying it forward, let us know.

Special thanks to those partners who supported the creation of this publication and to those who donate to the MPI Foundation annually. You affirm what it means to me to be servant leaders.

One person. One chapter. One community. One industry. Celebrate the Power of Good today and always!

Gratefully,

Kevin Kirby  
 Executive Director | MPI Foundation



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# MPI Foundation Community Impact

A not-for-profit organization that funds grants, scholarships and pan-industry research in support of the global meeting and event industry, the MPI Foundation has been making a difference in the meeting and event industry since its inception more than 40 years ago. Let's take a look at the impact, by the numbers.

## IMPACT IN 2025

**\$243K**

Back to  
the Community

**252**

Scholarships

**12**

Grants

## IMPACT SINCE THE PANDEMIC

**\$1.8M**

Back to  
the Community

**63**

Chapter Grants

**4**

Major Grants

**3,800**

Individuals  
Assisted

## IMPACT SINCE 1984

**\$14.6M**

Back to  
the Community

Over

**25,000**

Individuals  
Assisted

**100%**

of MPI Chapters  
Assisted

**Dozens**

of Industry Association  
Research Collaborations





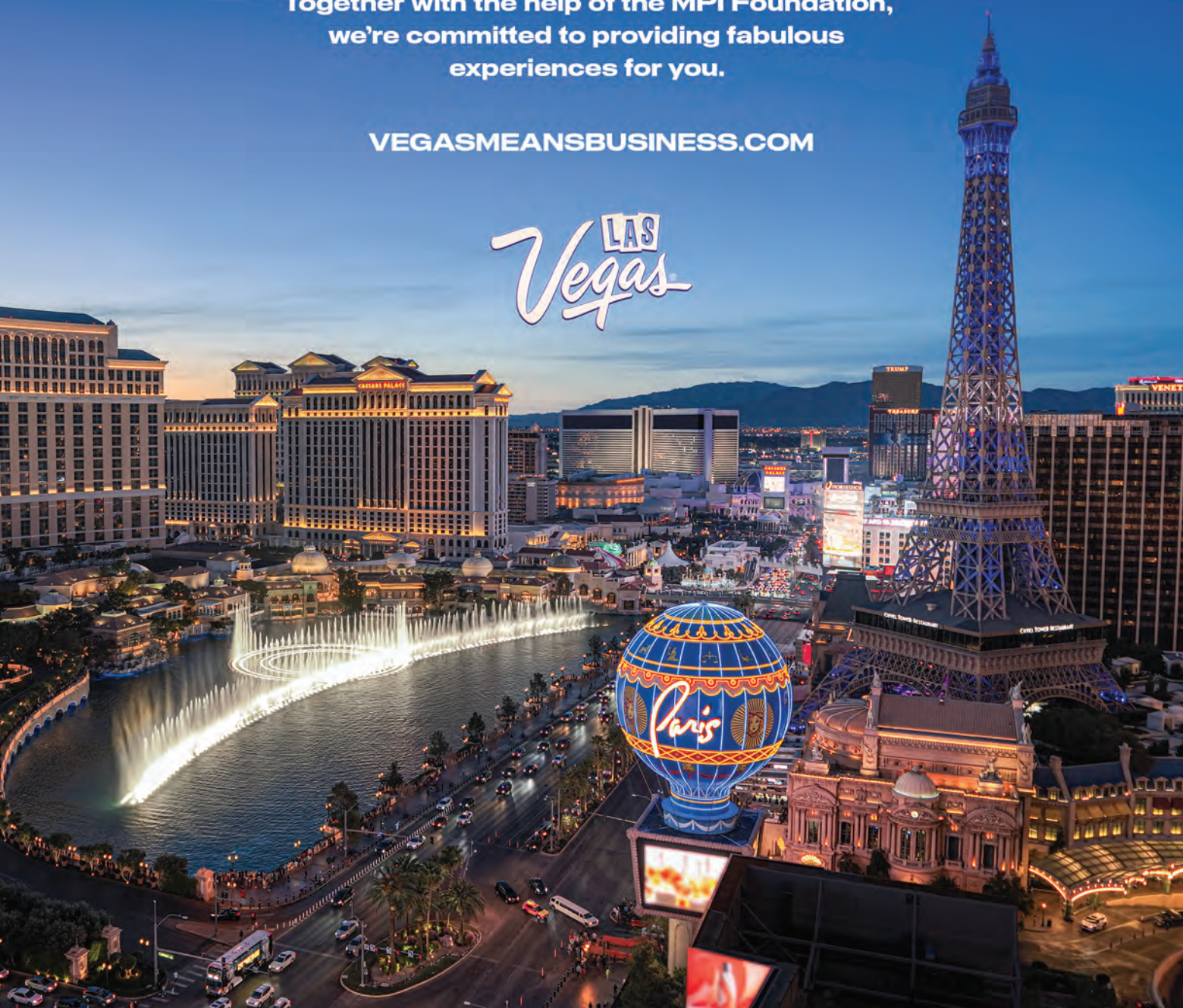
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A large crowd of people is seated in a theater, holding up their phones with the flashlights on, creating a sea of light. The theater has a curved, tiered seating arrangement and a large, dark, curved ceiling with some lights visible. The overall atmosphere is one of excitement and participation.


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# FUNDRAISING, storytelling and gratitude

The passionate volunteers who led the MPI Foundation Global Board of Trustees in 2025 look back on key accomplishments and proud moments from an impactful year.

By Blair Potter

Rebecca DeLuca, 2025 chair of the MPI Foundation Global Board of Trustees (GBOT), says the group's focus in 2025 was centered on three words: fundraising, storytelling and gratitude.

"We're wrapping up the year very close to reaching our budgeted fundraising goal thanks to the incredible work of our trustees, the MPI team and our supporters and partners across the industry who believe in the Foundation's mission," says DeLuca, vice president of destination sales for the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA). "For storytelling, I wanted to build awareness and remind our community that we are funding our future by showing the people behind the scholarships and grants. We launched the Foundation's Instagram account on Global Meetings Industry Day to help us meet our community where they are—online—and continue sharing those stories. And for gratitude, we made a conscious effort to say thank

you through personal outreach and meaningful recognition of every donor and supporter who helps us make an impact."

Richard Allchild, CMP, 2026 chair of the GBOT, says that in 2025, the Foundation created multiple ways that made it easy to support its main goal of raising as many funds as possible to give back to the community through scholarships, education and grants.

"This includes events like MPI Rendezvous, the Thought Leaders Summit and our newest venture: pickleball!" says Allchild, head of sales, North America for IMEX Group. "Also, we've had multiple silent auctions and raffles throughout the year as well as individual giving opportunities."

Allchild says that when measuring success for the MPI Foundation, the most accurate indicator is how much money was raised and how much was given back to the community.

"That is the reason we are here!" he says. "We had another record-breaking year with funds raised, allowing us to give back nearly \$250,000





in grants and scholarships to the MPI community. We had great success with our auctions this year thanks to some amazing partners—for example, Hilton donated 1 million Hilton Honor points and Universal Orlando Resort and Visit Orlando donated a trip that raised thousands for the Foundation.”

DeLuca agrees that 2025 was an incredible year for the Foundation based on balance sheet success but also through implementing stronger governance practices and the recruitment of a powerful new board for 2026.

“We’re fiscally healthy, and the good work we’ve done this year will carry forward to ensure the Foundation continues to thrive for many years to come,” she says.

## OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

DeLuca says that while the Foundation experienced a dip in a few areas of financial giving compared to 2024—which can largely be tied to broader global factors—the GBOT doubled its efforts, resulting in one of the strongest IMEX America fundraising weeks to date.

“Special thanks to our partners at Caesars Entertainment and MGM Resorts for their incredible support of MPI Rendezvous and Red, White & You,” she says. “Their partnership helped us close the year on a high note.”

Allchild says one of the biggest challenges for the Foundation has always been raising money at other industry events that don’t feature dedicated MPI events.

“This year at IMEX Frankfurt, in order to drive engagement and donations to the Foundation, the wonderful LVCVA donated an

amazing prize of tickets to the Monza Grand Prix,” he says. “This high-value item meant high raffle ticket sales, allowing us to raise over \$10,000 at the event and create huge awareness for the Foundation in Europe.”

**“We’re fiscally healthy, and the good work we’ve done this year will carry forward to ensure the Foundation continues to thrive for many years to come.”**

## PROUD MOMENTS

Allchild is particularly proud of MPI’s Canadian chapters and past GBOT chair Jennifer Beatty.

“Jennifer was diagnosed with breast cancer during her year as chair and this year they organized an amazing event in her honor for her to tell her story of resilience and the importance of advocacy in women’s health,” he says. “The event raised money for the Canadian Association of Pathologists but also for the MPI Foundation. All donations pledged were matched

by the Foundation up to \$20,000 in order to set up the Jennifer Beatty Legacy Endowment. This endowment will offer two scholarships each to attend MPI events: the World Education Congress and the EVENT in Canada. These scholarships will honor an amazing woman who has also been past president and Mentor of the Year for the MPI Ottawa Chapter as well as a member of the MPI International Board of Directors.”

DeLuca is incredibly proud of GBOT members for their passion and service.

“Serving as chair has been one of the true highlights of my career,” she says. “Working side by side with Kevin Kirby, our executive director, has been an incredible experience, and I’m deeply grateful for the support of Susie Townsend, past chair, and Richard Allchild, chair elect. Together, we’ve built momentum that will carry the Foundation forward for years to come.”

**“This support opens the door for me to grow within MPI, to connect with inspiring leaders and to strengthen the way I serve my organization and community. But beyond my own journey, your generosity shows how deeply you believe in developing talent and elevating the future of our industry. That means more than I could ever say. So, thank you for investing in me and for building a community where we lift each other up. I’m grateful, excited and ready to pour this forward.”**

*Brittney Laws (MPI Greater New York Chapter)  
MPI membership scholarship recipient*



Scan the QR code to learn more about MPI Foundation scholarships and some of our inspiring recipients.





# The human impact of MPI Foundation scholarships

By Michael Pinchera

Event professionals share the impacts MPI Foundation scholarships have had on their education, industry engagement and career advancement.

**FOR MORE THAN 40 YEARS, THE MPI FOUNDATION** has supported meeting and event industry initiatives and the professionals working within the space. An important component of these efforts relates to grants and scholarships, which are often incorrectly perceived as charity whereas, in reality, they are genuine awards to help propel individuals and groups within the industry.

In just the past five years, the MPI Foundation has distributed \$1.8 million to individuals and MPI chapters for professional growth and to help fund industry research.

Looking beyond the numbers, the most important way to highlight how MPI Foundation scholarships impact the exceptional event professionals who receive them is to hear their stories in their own words. (See Page 14 for an example of an MPI Foundation grant helping to uplift an entire MPI chapter community.)

## **MELISSA MCELROY TURPIN, HMCC, MMP**

Owner and Founder, MMT Events  
MPI Potomac Chapter



### **How did the MPI Foundation scholarship to earn the HMCC certificate impact you?**

The MPI Foundation scholarship arrived at a moment when I was rebuilding my career and stepping into a new chapter of growth. It gave me the chance to deepen my healthcare compliance expertise in a way that would have been difficult to do on my own. The support reminded me that our industry believes in lifting one another up. The HMCC certification strengthened my confidence, sharpened my skills and gave me the tools to serve clients with even greater clarity and integrity.

### **Can you share a favorite takeaway from the HMCC experience?**

My favorite takeaway was discovering how thoughtful compliance can elevate trust. The HMCC program teaches the technical side of regulations, but it also helped me understand how compliance can support



a meaningful and ethical attendee experience. Knowing how to combine regulation with compassion has become one of the most valuable skills I now bring to healthcare meetings.

**Did that experience affect your perception of professional scholarships and the MPI Foundation?**

Yes. Before this, I viewed scholarships as something intended mostly for students or early career professionals. The MPI Foundation showed me that support is available to any professional who wants to grow, evolve or expand their knowledge. It changed my perspective on what is possible when organizations invest in people. I felt seen, encouraged and supported, and it made me want to pour that same energy back into the industry.

**What would you say to event industry peers who may be hesitant to apply for similar scholarships?**

I would tell them not to hesitate. Many of us hold back because we think someone else is more qualified. The truth is that scholarships exist to open doors and remove barriers. If you have the desire to learn and advance your skills, you are exactly who these programs are designed to support. This opportunity can change the way you work, the way you grow and the way you show up for your clients. Give yourself the chance.

---

**CHRISTIAN BORDON**

National Account Manager, BBW International  
Event Staff  
MPI Toronto Chapter



**How did the MPI Foundation scholarship to attend theEVENT impact you?**

Being granted the MPI Foundation scholarship to attend theEVENT was truly transformative for me. As someone who moved from the Philippines to Canada during the pandemic and is still fairly new to the industry, this opportunity felt like a door opening into a world I had only dreamed of being a part. theEVENT gave me access to learning, inspiration and people I would not have been able to connect with otherwise. It allowed me to immerse myself fully in the experience—learning, creating and growing alongside passionate professionals from across the country. It gave me confidence, validated that I belong here and reminded me why I chose this industry in the first place.

**Can you share a favorite takeaway from the experience?**

My biggest takeaway was the power of collaborative learning. theEVENT isn't just a conference—it's a space where

people genuinely show up to help each other discover their strengths. Participating in hands-on workshops and listening to thought leaders made me realize that skills can be taught, but community is what builds lasting impact. The connections I made—people who encouraged me, shared ideas and welcomed me with open arms—became the highlight of my experience.

**Did that experience affect your perception of professional scholarships and/or the MPI Foundation?**

Absolutely. Before receiving the scholarship, I saw professional scholarships as something reserved for people much further along in their careers. But this experience changed that. It showed me that the MPI Foundation truly invests in people at every stage—whether you're just entering the industry or already established. I saw firsthand how committed they are to creating accessible, meaningful opportunities that help people grow. It reshaped my understanding of what support looks like and deepened my respect for the Foundation's mission.

**What would you say to event industry peers who may be hesitant to apply for similar scholarships?**

I would tell them: Apply—because these opportunities are for you, too. You don't need to be the most experienced or have the longest résumé. If you're passionate about learning, growing and giving back to our industry, then you deserve to be in these spaces. As someone who started as an international student, who was new to Canada and new to the industry, I'm grateful I took a chance. MPI welcomes people from all backgrounds, and scholarships like this exist to help you take your next step. Don't hold yourself back—your story and your potential matter more than you think.

---

**JAMES BOGGIE, CMP**

Event and Staff Assistant, Harvard Medical School  
MPI New England Chapter



**How did the MPI Foundation scholarship to attend the European Meetings & Events Conference (EMEC) impact you?**

EMEC expanded my horizons. I had never traveled abroad. I was born in Boston, went to school in Boston and work in Boston. Yet, I serve a highly diverse population of students from around the world. I welcome them to campus with orientation but I had no frame of reference for that kind of culture shock. Attending EMEC put me in the same position as many students: traveling to a new country and unfamiliar culture and jumping straight into a large event. This experience enhanced my ability

to create inclusive, welcoming environments that strengthen our community.

### Can you share a favorite takeaway from the experience?

Professionally, I found Nils Roemen's keynote about narrative events fascinating. He told a story about planning a birthday party for his friend's daughter around a personalized story-driven scavenger hunt. Stories have a unique power to impact us deeply because they reach us intellectually and emotionally. I had never considered integrating narrative elements into my events. It opened my eyes to new opportunities to go above and beyond for my attendees.

Personally, exploring Istanbul was eye-opening as well. I spent a week in the city. I went on the Culinary Connections Learning Journey, visited the major historical and cultural sites and explored the old city. I thought I was getting to know the city pretty well. On my last day, I took a cruise on the Bosphorus Strait. I realized I had spent my time in

two neighborhoods. Istanbul is 20 times the size of my city. I could read about that online, but I needed to experience it to understand.

### Did that experience affect your perception of professional scholarships and/or the MPI Foundation?

I did not plan to apply for a scholarship. I work at Harvard. When I think of scholarships, I think of exceptional talent or extraordinary need. I doubted that I qualified, and frankly, I worried that my peers might judge me for asking for financial support. Receiving the scholarship and meeting other scholarship recipients made it clear that the MPI Foundation is sincere in its dedication to opening doors for event professionals.

### What would you say to event industry peers who may be hesitant to apply for similar scholarships?

We are all event professionals here. No one understands the value of connection more than we do. If costs keep passionate, talented people out of the room, we all lose.

*"This was my third EMEC event—and this time was different. I wasn't sure I had the energy and resources to go, but this scholarship was a difference maker, so it helped me make the decision to attend, and I'm very, very pleased that I did. I want to say a huge thank you to the sponsors and donors and those that take their time to administer this process and get people like me out into the world to do what we do best and that's to meet and change the world."*

*-Adam Fillary, Professional Association of Networking, 2025 EMEC scholarship recipient*



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TEXAS







# Elevating community and engagement

Grants from the MPI Foundation help MPI chapters provide enhanced education and networking opportunities.

**AS ONE OF THE RECIPIENTS OF MPI FOUNDATION** grants this year, the MPI New Jersey Chapter utilized the \$1,000 Cvent grant to help fund its Annual Signature Celebration and Recognition event honoring the CMP/CMM Community in November.

“This event brings peers together to connect, share experiences and applaud the dedication that elevates our profession. In addition to being a recognition, it’s a celebration of leadership, learning and the power of our MPI community!” the chapter explained in its post-event report.

Specifically, the grant funds were used to bring in two stellar speakers—Joanne Dennison, MEd, CMP, and Ashley Brooke James—for the event’s educational programming.

Heather Kresge, chapter administrator for MPI New Jersey, says the grant had a meaningful impact by providing necessary financial support that allowed for an elevated event experience.

“With the grant, we were able to bring in two high-quality speakers—a keynote and a TED-

style presenter—who delivered impactful, relevant content,” she says. “The funding also helped us enhance the overall program in ways that would not have been possible otherwise, creating added value for our membership and strengthening engagement.”

Kresge specifically appreciated the focus on personal well-being and intentionality delivered by these speakers.

The experience has positively shaped Kresge’s perception of the MPI Foundation.

“Receiving this support reinforced that the Foundation is truly committed to helping chapters in meaningful and timely ways,” she says. “It demonstrated their dedication to strengthening our community and investing in impactful programming. Having been a recipient of this support, I feel even more encouraged to recommend contributing to the Foundation in the future, knowing firsthand the difference these grants can make.”

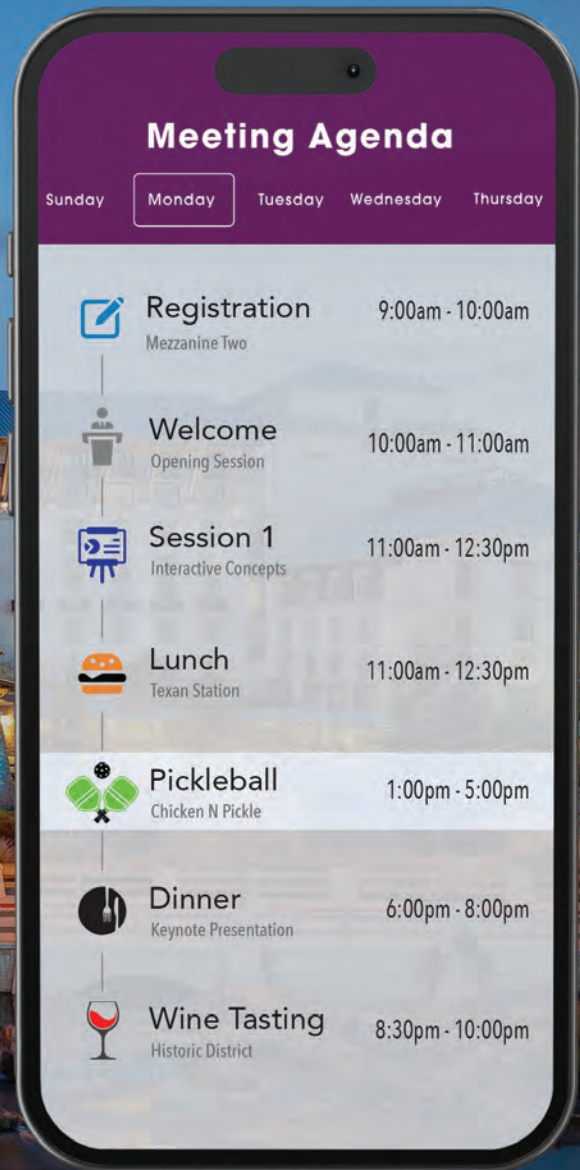
Accordingly, she encourages other MPI chapters to apply for such grants without hesitation.

“The process is easy and worthwhile, and the potential impact on your chapter or career can be significant,” she says.

By Michael Pinchera



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Right: Rendezvous  
at IMEX America,  
sponsored by Caesars  
Entertainment.

Next page: The Topgolf  
TEE Party event before  
IMEX America.

Page 20, Left: Tourism  
Ireland's Las Vegas golf  
outing before IMEX  
America.

Page 20, Right: MGM's  
L'Atelier de Joël  
Robuchon hosted a VIP  
dinner during IMEX  
America.

# Celebrating the SPIRIT AND ENERGY that defines the event industry

With key activities  
throughout IMEX  
America week, the  
MPI Foundation and  
important partners  
came together with  
purpose.







**IMEX AMERICA REPRESENTS A SUBSTANTIAL AND** critical portion of MPI Foundation funds raised annually.

“Las Vegas provides us with a diversity of options to meet our donors in unique ways commencing Sunday night through Thursday afternoon,” says Kevin Kirby, executive director of the MPI Foundation. “Cumulatively, we were so pleased to share that our week’s activities yielded over \$700,000 in 2025!”

We spoke with several of our key IMEX America partners—Caesars Entertainment, Topgolf, Tourism Ireland and MGM Resorts—about the fundraising events they hosted during that week and why their missions align so clearly with that of the MPI Foundation.

#### **MORE THAN A NETWORKING EVENT**

Partnering with the MPI Foundation for over 15 years reflects Caesars Entertainment’s commitment to supporting the professionals who drive the meeting and event industry forward, according to Michael Massari, chief sales officer.

“We believe in the power of connection and community within the meeting and event industry,” he says. “The Foundation’s work in education, schol-

arships and research aligns with our values of empowering growth and innovation. By investing in MPI’s mission, we’re helping to shape the future of meetings and events, ensuring that planners and suppliers alike have the tools and resources they need to thrive.”

The MPI Foundation’s Rendezvous—the IMEX “party of parties”—was once again hosted on Wednesday night during IMEX America at Caesars Entertainment’s Drai’s Nightclub this year. The event sold out and has become a “can’t miss” part of any IMEX America itinerary.

“Rendezvous is more than just a networking event—it’s a celebration of the spirit and energy that defines our industry,” Massari says. “For Caesars Entertainment, it’s been a unique opportunity to connect with our clients, partners and peers in a fun, relaxed environment that fosters genuine relationships. “Now, with the exciting debut of Soleia, located above the new Vanderpump Hotel in the heart of the Strip, we’re ushering in a fresh chapter,” Massari says. “Soleia brings a sophisticated, elevated ambiance that will

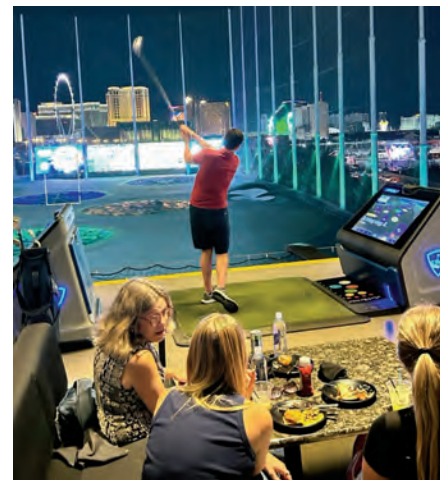
reimagine the Rendezvous experience while preserving the dynamic spirit that has made it a must-attend event for over a decade.”

Raising over \$500,000 through Rendezvous at IMEX America 2025 was a proud moment for the entire Caesars Entertainment team, Massari says, while a memorable personal moment for him was seeing the incredible turnout and energy.

“Supporting the MPI Foundation is more than a sponsorship—it’s a commitment to the future of our industry,” he says.

#### **SO MUCH TO SEE AND DO**

Nick Kopach, senior director, national event sales and programs for Topgolf, says we can’t get the word out enough about the amazing career paths and opportunities for growth within the hospitality industry.



“To have this channel through the MPI Foundation to educate young people coming out of college looking for the right career path and also raising funds to offer scholarships is fantastic,” says Kopach, a member of the MPI Foundation’s U.S. Council.

Partnering with the MPI Foundation to host 80+ MPI hosted buyers and 15 suppliers at the Topgolf TEE Party fundraising event the Sunday before IMEX America 2025 was a valuable opportunity.

“We had great food, great drinks, music, ambiance—the fourth level at Topgolf Vegas is just amazing for networking,” Kopach says. “And that’s what we did that night. We were shifting everyone around, bay to bay, making sure that they got in front of all the different types of planners or suppliers that were in attendance. What better week to bring the industry together and facilitate an event like that?”

It was also an opportunity for Topgolf to showcase its full event capabilities.

“This is our flagship venue on MGM’s property, and there’s so much to see and do,” Kopach says.

### CREATING A DYNAMIC RUNWAY

The MPI Foundation’s mission of investing in people, programs and partnerships resonates strongly with Tourism Ireland’s priorities, according to Alison Metcalfe, executive vice president North America and Australia/New Zealand for Tourism Ireland, which rallied dozens of golfers to challenge the links and enjoy quintessential Irish hospitality during a Monday golf outing before the start of IMEX America.



“Business events are recognized as a high-yield segment that can deliver national impact and already contribute over €1 billion annually to the Irish economy, while supporting 22,000 jobs,” she says.

By partnering with the MPI Foundation, Tourism Ireland demonstrates its commitment to developing talent, fostering global connections and advancing sustainability goals, Metcalfe says.

“IMEX America is a flagship event on Ireland’s glob-

al business events calendar, offering unparalleled opportunities to showcase the island to corporate meeting and incentive buyers,” she says. “Hosting the golf tournament on Monday created a dynamic runway into the week and provided an additional platform for Tourism Ireland and many of our industry partners to spend quality, informal time with key clients and prospects.”

### CREATING LASTING MEMORIES

MGM Resorts is proud to support the MPI Foundation’s work directly strengthening the meeting and event industry through professional development, scholarships and research, according to Megan Archambeault, vice president



of sales for MGM Grand Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. An invite-only dinner at the resort’s L’Atelier de Joël Robuchon offered VIP guests the opportunity to savor award-winning French cuisine through an intimate dining experience.

“As a Global Board of Trustee for the MPI Foundation, we wanted to create a memorable experience that not only brings industry peers together but also raises awareness and funds to support the MPI Foundation’s mission,” she says. “Partnering with the Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority allowed us to reimagine ‘Red, White & You’ and deliver something fresh and exciting. I’m grateful for the incredible support from so many industry leaders who share our commitment to advancing the meeting and event community.”

Success for the dinner, according to Archambeault, was measured through two key outcomes: delivering a fresh, memorable experience and meeting fundraising goals for the MPI Foundation.

“Hearing from both the Foundation’s Global Board of Trustees and MPI’s International Board of Directors that the event stood out as one of the most memorable was incredibly rewarding,” she says. “We created an intimate, interactive dining experience that fostered meaningful connections among industry peers. Personally, knowing we achieved our goals while creating lasting memories is the ultimate highlight.”



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# 'I felt alive again'

Jennifer Beatty, former MPI Foundation Global Board of Trustees chair, put her event experience to work in her breast cancer battle.

By Maria Lenhart

The diagnosis of a rare and terminal form of breast cancer has not stopped Jennifer Beatty, former chair of the MPI Foundation Global Board of Trustees (GBOT), from drawing on her meetings and tourism background to make a difference in breast cancer treatment as well as support others in the industry she loves.

Partnering with the Canadian Association of Pathologists - Association canadienne des pathologistes (CAP-ACP), Inflammatory Breast Cancer Network Foundation Canada (IBC) and the MPI Foundation, she and CAP-ACP Executive Director Heather Dow organized In Her Own Words: Tea for Advocacy, an event at the Fairmont Château Laurier Ottawa on Oct. 31. The high tea/brunch event put Beatty's own medical journey in the spotlight, with several of her healthcare team providing perspective to an audience that

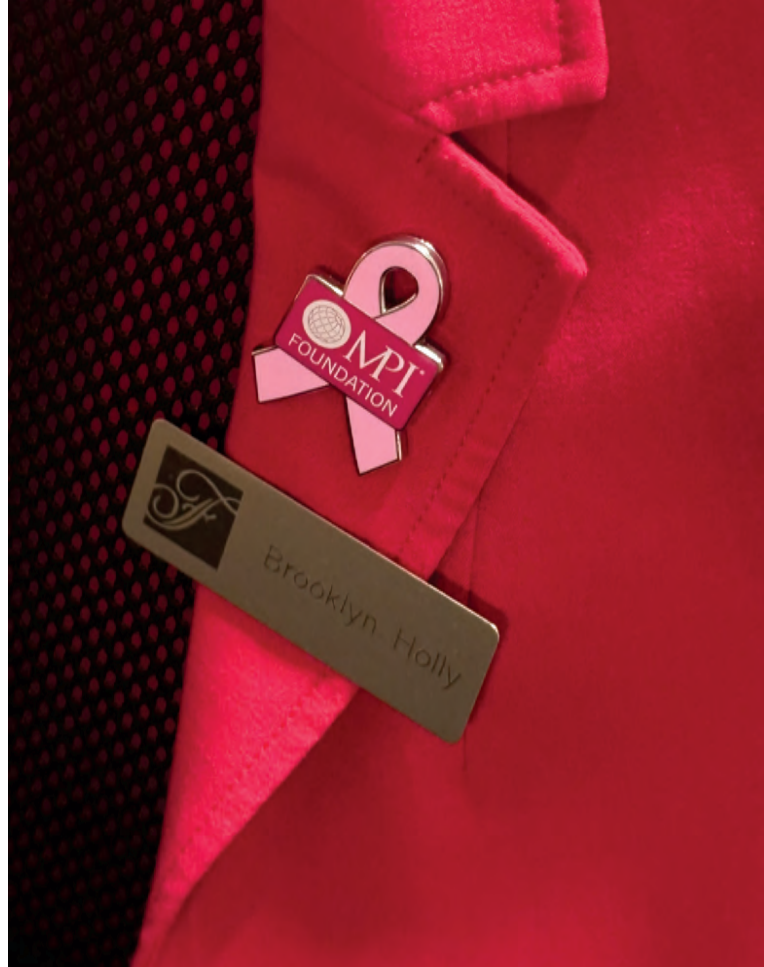
included healthcare professionals, industry leaders and breast cancer survivors (those with lived experience). Proceeds from registration, sponsorship, corporate tables and an online auction went to support IBC scientific research, the IBC Network Foundation and the MPI Foundation.

For Beatty, who received her diagnosis of metastatic triple negative inflammatory breast cancer 31 months ago and is now facing her final line of treatment, the event grew out of her frustration with what she saw as a lack of shared knowledge among physicians.

"Doctors can work in silos and it's difficult for them to attend conferences, so how do we better educate them to help people?" she says. "My thought was to get them on the stage together, discussing my journey."

## 'NOW THEY ARE ALL CONNECTED'

Rather than a fixed panel seated on stage, Beatty and Dow invited each member of the healthcare team to join the stage in alignment with the timeline of Beatty's cancer journey. Participants included Dow (moderator), Dr. Moira Rushton (oncologist), Dr. Jason Karamchandani (pathologist), Julie Harper (Palliative Care Counselor), Dr. Suzanne Rutherford (Medical Assistance in Dying [MAiD] physician) and MPI Foundation Executive Director Kevin Kirby. Together, they provided a combined medical and community perspective on care and advocacy. The session functioned as a rare interprofessional learning moment bringing pathology, oncology, palliative care, MAiD expertise and community support together on one





stage, illustrating the continuum of patient care through a single lived experience.

"I wanted it to be very much a story, as I'm in the business of storytelling," Beatty says.

The important objective of bringing doctors together was to integrate the various aspects of the treatment and support process.

"When people are brought together, the integration happens," Beatty says. "In silos, this doesn't happen. Now they are all connected. As a result, my oncologist plans to work more closely with pathologists in order to understand the tumor, because everyone's cancer is different. If the two work together, they can better lay out a treatment plan."

According to Beatty, Tea for Advocacy has generated interest in greater study of inflammatory breast cancer, a

difference in pulling off this complex and deeply personal event. Beatty and Dow's understanding of audience engagement, program design and interprofessional convening informed each element of the Tea for Advocacy structure. Together, they designed Tea for Advocacy as both a fundraiser and an educational experience—one that challenged traditional conference formats by centering a patient's lived journey.

"I wanted to showcase and bring my type of cancer to light in a way that I know how to do because I'm in the meeting and event industry," she says. "It gave me the experience and contacts that I have from doing medical and other types of conferences."

Among those important contacts is Dow, a current MPI Foundation trustee, who co-created the Tea for Advocacy event. The two always

Beatty credits support from MPI colleagues with helping her find purpose and meaning after her devastating diagnosis.

A special moment during the event was the establishment of the Jennifer Beatty Legacy Endowment, which offers two \$2,000 scholarships in perpetuity for Canadian meeting professionals to attend future editions of MPI's World Education Congress and theEVENT, MPI's Canada-centric conference. The MPI Foundation is matching donor grants of up to \$20,000. Kirby delivered the news on stage to the delight of the audience as well as surprising Beatty.

For Beatty, the Tea for Advocacy event is something she regards as the high point of her career.

"If it turns out to be my farewell event, it was perfect," Beatty says. "I never got to

*"I am a bit of a cultivator of relationships. It's my skill set. I know how to bring people together."*



fast-moving disease of which not enough is yet known.

"The goal is to review cases in Ottawa and Toronto over the past decade to publish on local outcomes as well as understand the system issues that challenge IBC patients, so they can design a program for expedited access to diagnostics and treatment of suspected IBC cases," she says.

For Beatty, expertise gleaned from her two decades as a meeting industry professional made all the

wanted to work together.

### **'I KNOW HOW TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER'**

Beatty's experience in the industry includes almost 20 years in executive roles.

"I'm very passionate about our industry, and I wouldn't be where I am in my career without MPI," she says. "I am a bit of a cultivator of relationships. It's my skill set. I know how to bring people together."

have a retirement party. I had just run into a cement wall and everything I was before seemed to be gone. But sitting up there choked me up. There were 200 people out there to support me. I felt alive again."

Through both the legacy endowment and the renewed collaboration among her medical team, Beatty hopes the momentum sparked at Tea for Advocacy will carry forward advancing research, education and compassionate care long after the event.



Scan the code to contribute to the Jennifer Beatty Legacy Endowment, which offers scholarships in perpetuity for Canadian meeting professionals to attend future editions of MPI's WEC and theEVENT. The MPI Foundation is matching donor grants of up to \$20,000.



# Moving insights into real change

Cross-industry partners drive innovation and show the strength of the MPI Foundation.

By Blair Potter

**PART OF WHAT MAKES MPI FOUNDATION EFFORTS** so fulfilling is the opportunity to collaborate with other associations, according to Executive Director Kevin Kirby.

“Beyond providing support for individuals across the globe, the MPI Foundation often collaborates with cross-industry partners to tackle specific issues and research,” he says. “A current project spearheaded by San Diego State University (SDSU) researchers is focusing on the opportunity to rebrand the hospitality, tourism and meetings and events labor market (HTME).”

SearchWide Global, the American Hotel & Lodging Association Foundation, Destinations International and the MPI Foundation are subsidizing the report to help the entire industry better understand the current labor dynamics in play and the critical need for a pipeline of talent to support our industry’s growth.

It was important for SearchWide to partner with these leading organizations, along with our academic partners at SDSU, to bring a full, 360-degree lens to the workforce challenges, according to Chairman and CEO Mike Gamble. “At SearchWide Global, we sit at the intersection of talent and leadership for the HTME sectors,” he says. “Each organization represents a different but

equally essential part of the ecosystem. We also wanted to ensure the research was not only comprehensive but actionable, and these partners are the ones who can help move these insights into real change.”

Gamble believes one of the most impactful steps we can take is to make career pathways more visible.

“Our research showed that many professionals, especially those early in their careers, struggle to understand how they can grow in HTME or what opportunities exist beyond entry-level roles,” he says. “By mapping clear advancement routes, sharing real success stories and highlighting the transferable skills that open doors across the industry, we help people see a future for themselves here.”

Having served as chair of the Global Board of Trustees in the late 1990s, Gamble says he’s always had a “soft spot” for the MPI Foundation, noting its mission to fuel professional development and strengthen the global meeting industry aligns closely with SearchWide Global’s commitment to building a more inclusive and future-ready talent pipeline.

“Their work expands access to education, networking and career advancement for professionals who might not otherwise receive those opportunities,” he says. “Our research shows that visibility, belonging and clear pathways for growth are essential to attracting new talent and supporting those already in the field.”



Viktoriia Yushkaliuk  
(center) with MPI's  
Rachel Benedick and  
IMEX Group's Ray  
Bloom.

# Shaping the leaders who will define tomorrow



## MPI Foundation Global Board of Trustees members share their 2025 highlights.

By Blair Potter

**SEEING MPI GEORGIA CHAPTER MEMBERS AT MPI'S** World Education Congress (WEC) for the first time thanks to MPI Foundation scholarships was a 2025 highlight for Angie Ahrens, CMP Fellow, CMM, head of growth experiences for Intuit Mailchimp.

"Many of them have been in the industry for years but haven't been able to go due to company support or economic conditions," she says. "Seeing more Georgia members at WEC this year warmed my heart as it is my chapter. And then watching them apply what they learned as officers was the pinnacle of that experience, really bringing it all together."

A standout success in 2025 for Gary Murakami, GTP, GLP, CMP, CMM, DES, vice president of global sales and industry relations for Teneo Hospitality Group, was the incredible fundraising achieved via silent and live auctions through collective board trustee efforts and thanks to a strategic approach in identifying and securing high-impact auction items.

"This thoughtful planning not only engaged our community but also maximized contributions that directly support scholarships, chapter grants and industry-advancing research," he says. "These efforts demonstrate how strategic collaboration and community engagement and support can create lasting opportunities for professionals and strengthen the future of our industry."

Valeria Serrano, PCS, founding CEO of CTA Event Designer DMC, was inspired by the 2025 success of Viktoriia Yushkaliuk. After receiving an MPI Foundation scholarship a few years ago that enabled her to complete her studies, the Ukrainian student was also able to participate in the 2025 IMEX-MPI-MCI Future Leaders Forum, where she won the International University Challenge with her event proposal "Mental Health & War: Healing the Invisible Wounds."

"Her impactful presentation not only earned her this prestigious award but also showcased her dedication and passion for the meeting industry," Serrano says. "This recognition underscores the essential role of the scholarships provided by the MPI Foundation, empowering students to pursue their dreams in the hospitality field and make meaningful contributions to their communities."

# La Dolce Vita:

## Community, connection and giving

With its Movie Charity Auction 2025, the MPI Italia Chapter raised \$11,000 for the MPI Foundation.

By Michael Pinchera

**THIS YEAR, THE MPI ITALIA CHAPTER'S MOVIE CHARITY Auction** brought together more than 100 professionals from the meeting and event industry, gathering in Venice and Rome for a cause that goes beyond simple business.

Organized by All Star Agency, supported by Be Academy students and sponsored by the Venezia Unica Convention Bureau and the Roma & Lazio Convention Bureau, this 12th annual iteration of the event was hosted at Hotel Indigo Venice by IHG on Sept. 4 and Doubletree by Hilton Rome Monti on Oct. 23. Attendees had the chance to bid on 70 vouchers for stays and experiences from top hotels and brands across Europe, as well as emerging destinations like Oman and Morocco.

The online auction raised \$11,000 for the MPI Foundation, reinforcing the chapter's ongoing commitment to supporting both the event industry and its future professionals.

According to MPI Italia Chapter President Luisa Bianco, the event is about more than fundraising, it supports the MPI Foundation's core

mission of contributing to the development of the meeting industry and the education of future event professionals.

The Movie Charity Auction, she says, offers participants a chance to connect, support a good cause and enjoy precious time with colleagues.

Mauro Bernardini, founder of All Star Agency, noted the event's success both in visibility and fundraising and that it's rewarding to see how much the Italia chapter—MPI's first in Europe—remains dedicated to the association and the MPI Foundation.

Such dedication to supporting those who will follow in our event industry footsteps evokes a quote of unknown origin that's been dubiously attributed to former Fiat head Gianni Agnelli, former U.S. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and others—but the sentiment is sound: “Il futuro appartiene a chi ha il coraggio di guardare avanti”—“The future belongs to those who have the courage to look ahead.”

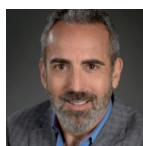




# Build your legacy in our global community



Through the MPI Foundation 1972 Society, you can give over multiple years or make a one-time contribution in recognition of your lasting impact. Your support strengthens the programs, scholarships and resources that help shape the next generation of industry leaders. Become a greater part of our enduring story and make our community stronger than ever!



*"I wholeheartedly support the industry by giving to the MPI Foundation. MPI is the true cornerstone to my professional success, and I urge everyone to support this meaningful and impactful Foundation that gives so much back to members and the event community at large." -David Kliman*

## A sincere thank you to these industry champions who have made a commitment to the MPI Foundation 1972 Society!

Rob Adams  
Angie Ahrens  
Michelle Allgauer  
Charles Bello  
Brian Crumby  
Rebecca DeLuca  
Antonio Ducceschi  
John Ehlenfeldt  
Steven Foster  
Gerilyn Horan  
Kevin Iwamoto

Steve & Allison Kinsley  
Kevin Kirby  
David Kliman  
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Join the industry champions you see on this page as a member of the MPI Foundation 1972 Society. Scan this QR code and complete a commitment for \$5,000 to honor your legacy and ensure the MPI Foundation's growth for generations to come!

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