



MID-ATLANTIC COALITION OF
HOSPITALITY & MEETING PROFESSIONALS

A PARTNERSHIP FOR PROGRESS



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DC Area Meetings Industry Groups Unite to Create “Mid-Atlantic CHAMPS: Coalition of Hospitality and Meeting Professionals,” Forming a “Partnership for Progress”

Washington, DC -- Six leading DC area meetings industry associations unite to create a collaborative community, the Mid-Atlantic CHAMPS (Coalition of Hospitality and Meeting Professionals) – Partnership for Progress:

- Association of Meeting Professionals (AMPs)
- International Association of Exhibitions and Events, Washington, DC Chapter (IAEE Washington, DC)
- Meeting Professionals International Potomac Chapter (MPI Potomac)
- Professional Convention Management Association Capital Chapter (PCMA Capital Chapter)
- Reston Herndon Meeting Planners (RHMP)
- Society of Government Meeting Professionals, National Capital Chapter (SGMP NATCAP)

CHAMPS’s mission supports and unites the meetings industry within the Mid-Atlantic region through a singular platform in order to foster growth and healing within our community. Leaders from each organization felt a need to come together in this time of crisis to offer resources to those affected by the pandemic, both economically and emotionally. CHAMPS is designed to help those who have experienced employment interruptions with an avenue of staying connected to the industry, especially critical if individuals have dropped memberships with industry organizations.

Each of the six founding organizations pledges to work together to help those in need. Beginning today, CHAMPS offers a [LinkedIn page](#) which brings together a united industry calendar and resources for employment and professional development opportunities. Through social media, CHAMPS provides an outlet for people to share and stay connected.

CHAMPS does not replace or replicate other industry associations or replicate what each founding organization is already doing but to collaborate and help those in need, fostering a sense of forward progress and community togetherness. Jointly, the organizations are communicating, “You are not alone.”

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“This is a huge step forward in such a critical time,” said John Rubsamén, president of the PCMA Capital Chapter. “We realized that our voice and industry resources would be more accessible by joining with our fellow professional organizations.”

Devin Lewis, president of the MPI Potomac Chapter, agreed. “What we need now is a united front. Many of our colleagues have been laid off or furloughed, and it’s important for everyone to feel connected regardless of which industry group they belong to or whether they currently belong to a group or not.”

“Taking action on a local basis is critical,” added Paula Herz, president of IAEE Washington, DC. “This market is one of the largest in the country to employ planners and suppliers to the meetings and trade show industries. We need to make sure that everyone feels connected regardless of their employment status.”

“Just like other meeting organizers, government meetings professionals have had to drastically adjust travel and in-person meeting plans,” said Melissa Woodruff, president of the SGMP National Capital Chapter. “By collaborating with other professional meeting associations, we are sharing our resources and strengthening our industry and relationships.”

Andre M. Cholewinski, CMP, AMPs Chair said, “As AMPs reinvents and realigns with our foundation, we’ve championed “Community in Unity” as our theme for the upcoming year. This aligns perfectly with the focus of CHAMPS – bringing all our collective resources into action to both support and embrace our members and colleagues for what is now and what’s up ahead.”

“This combined effort speaks to how far and wide our community reaches,” said Phil Rappoport of the Reston Herndon Meeting Planners. “It’s very much a regional concern. We included ‘Mid-Atlantic’ in the title because of the geography of our community, stretching in multiple directions as far as Baltimore, Richmond, and Hampton Roads.”

For more information about the Mid-Atlantic CHAMPS or questions, contact machamps@googlegroups.com.

[About Association of Meeting Professionals \(AMPs\)](#)

The Association of Meeting Professionals (AMPs) is a nonprofit association that represents and fosters the educational and professional needs of people working in the meeting management industry. Founded in Alexandria, VA in 1982, AMPs has grown from being a handful of peers to a robust group of planners and industry partners from throughout the Washington Metro Region. At the core of the AMPs experience are the educational and networking programs created to provide members with the tools they need to be as successful as they can possibly be in the meeting planning industry. More information can be found at ampsweb.org.

[About International Association of Exhibitions and Events Washington, DC Chapter \(IAEE\)](#)

The Washington DC Chapter of IAEE offers numerous educational and peer to peer engagement opportunities. It provides the opportunity for young professionals to interact with senior members of the exhibitions and events community often. From free networking events for first-timers and monthly sponsored educational lunches, the chapter recognizes the importance of fostering the next generation of leaders.

[About Meeting Professionals International Potomac Chapter \(MPI Potomac\)](#)

Since 1978, MPI Potomac Chapter continues to build a rich community in the Maryland, Washington, DC, and Northern Virginia area providing members in the meeting and event industry innovative and relevant education, networking opportunities, and business exchanges. The signature networking events offers members to connect with passionate, like-minded people and develop genuine relationships. MPI internationally has more than 16,000 members.

[About Professional Convention Management Association Capital Chapter \(PCMA Capital Chapter\)](#)

As the largest PCMA chapter, the Capital Chapter serves over 1,600 members from Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia. It is known for its innovative and thought-provoking educational programming; caring and impactful community outreach initiatives; high energy networking events; engaging sponsorship opportunities and rewarding mentorship programs focused on the meetings and convention profession.

[About Reston Herndon Meeting Planners \(RHMP\)](#)

Reston Herndon Meeting Planners (RHMP) provides opportunities for meeting and event planning professionals to network, collaborate, learn and innovate. Thanks to generous sponsor support, RHMP offers complimentary membership and is known for its no-cost networking breakfasts with inspiring and informational speakers. In-person programs are hosted in the Northern Virginia area, and they attract meeting professionals throughout the Washington, DC-Baltimore region.

[About Society of Government Meeting Professionals, National Capital Chapter \(SGMP NATCAP\)](#)

The Society of Government Meeting Professionals, National Capital Chapter, is comprised of individuals involved in planning government meetings and for the companies who provide facilities or services to those planners. Membership includes employees of federal, state and local governments, as well as contract meeting planners, who manage government meetings on a full- or part-time basis. The chapter delivers membership value of education, resources, and networking to 2,300 members and through 29 chapters. All members pledge to uphold SGMP's Code of Ethics. SGMP is one of 31 organizations represented in the Conventions Industry Council (CIC) that promotes professionalism within the meetings, conventions and exhibitions industry.

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