



# Meeting News

October 2008

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## President's Message



Dear Members:

**Fall already?!** In our business, the month we affectionately refer to as "rocktober" is upon us. It's convention season and whether you are a supplier or

## Congratulations to our newest CMP's!

*Candidates pass August 2008 exam*

### Christine Nagelsmith, CMP

Planning Support Specialist  
NYS Association of School Business Officials

### Kim Partridge, CMP

Executive Board / Conference Coordinator  
Public Employees Federation

### Jennifer Rexus, CMP

Sales Manager  
Albany Marriott Hotel

Congratulations to all of you for passing the Certified Meeting Professional exam this year! Your hard work and dedication has paid off! MPI NENY wishes you the best of luck as you take the next steps in your meeting professional careers.

## CMP Exam Reflection

*Recent CMP test taker, reflects on her experience*

It's difficult to find time to think about anything except making it through your next event successfully. **But for your NENY Board, all the summer planning is about to pay off as we head into our fall educational programs.**

Hours of volunteer time has gone into planning these events and no doubt the year will fly by. But at the end of our year, how do we know how successful we've been as a chapter?

International has recognized that no two chapters are alike and therefore they have launched a new chapter metric tool that allows each chapter to measure their success based on the chapter's past performance. The Board has set very clear goals and expectations for this year tracking the following criteria:

**Net Member Growth** - This is defined as the number of members we have total at the end of the fiscal year. It's a total number including new members, members who have left us and affiliate members. We have set a goal of growing our chapter by 8% over 2007-2008.

**Membership Satisfaction** - This category is weighed on the International chapter satisfaction survey that will be sent out sometime in February/March of 2009. We will certainly keep everyone updated as to when the survey is coming, and ask that all members please participate by responding.

**Engagement/Participation** - This category looks at two key measures; our average monthly attendance at our events and the number of volunteers we have in our



For all meeting planners out there who wish to become certified in their field, **a good first step in that direction is to become a member of MPI** (Meeting Professionals International). As a member, you may attend study groups in your area at no cost to assist in preparation for the exam. **These study groups are not only packed with a tremendous amount of useful information** for the day to day operation of your job, but also allow you to work with and form lasting bonds with others in your field. The instructors are terrific and the benefits bountiful.

When signing up for the exam, you may choose a location near you. Bonding with others in your class allows you to form an alliance for travel and housing for your exam site, as well as settling the nervousness that befalls many of us when taking an exam.

When test day arrives, you have 3 ½ hours to complete 165 multiple choice questions in areas such as risk management, marketing, budgeting, insurance, function room set-ups, exhibitions, international events, food and beverage, and audio visual, to name a few.

**From personal experience and in speaking with others who have taken the exam, the consensus appears to be that the hardest thing in taking this exam is the 4-6 week waiting period to receive results.** My waiting time ended this week with favorable results. I am proud of my persistence and hard work, thankful to all those who helped along the way through study groups or words of encouragement, and excited to see what my future has in store for me.

**Congratulations to all those who have been down this road and good luck to those who plan to proceed down this path in the future!** For those who are still at the consideration stage, I urge you to put forth the effort. The value to your career and the profession is immeasurable.

**- Christine M. Nagelsmith, CMP**  
Planning Support Specialist  
NYS Association of School Business Officials

## **Destination: Education**

***Continuing education avenues that will inspire you and your career!***

**SIGN UP TODAY!**



attendance at events number is simply growing our average attendance over last year. Chapter volunteerism is a total number of members that have volunteered in any capacity for our chapter.

**Chapter Financial Management** - This simply looks at the budget we set at the beginning of the year and measure if we were able to meet and/or exceed our goal.

Each month, our chapter will provide International with an update in each category. This will help us to identify where we need to focus more of our energy throughout the year to keep our chapter successful. International will be rewarding chapters based upon this metric. **Our success could result in additional scholarship money from International as well as International chapter recognition and awards.** At the end of the day, it's all about you, OUR MEMBERS! Please support your chapter by attending our events and providing feedback and being involved. If you have any interest in learning more about the metrics and how your chapter is performing, let us know.

Our Board meetings are always open to members and we would love to hear from you. We hope to see you at our next event!

- **Carrie Hillenbrandt, CMP**  
MPI NENY President

**Save the Dates in  
2008!  
MPI NENY**

**October 28** - Destination

## Do you know where you're heading?

If your plans for the future include a promotion, a career change or a greater level of responsibility, then education is what you need to help get you there.

**Tuesday, October 28**  
**Albany Molecular Research, Inc.**

Registration: 8:00 AM  
Program: 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM

**Sign up for MPI NENY's Destination Education program on Tuesday, October 28.** Here you will learn what avenues you can travel to gain new skills and increase your value as a meeting professional.

MPI members will cover the **Certified Meeting Professional** (CMP) program and re-certification, the **Certified Meeting Manager** (CMM) program, and higher education degrees including **SUNY Delhi's** program and other university Master's Degree programs.

You will come away with knowledge on what's out there, how it is important to you and how your chapter can help you get to the next level.

**Destination Education** - your travel plans start here! Visit our website for more information ([www.mpineny.org](http://www.mpineny.org)) or click **REGISTER NOW** to sign up today!

### Registration Fees

Members: \$30  
Non-Members: \$40  
Students: \$15



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**Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative Rules**  
***New York State DMV offers enhanced drivers licenses***

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Education

**November 18** - Ignite Your Imagination

Please refer to the website for more details:

[www.mpineny.org](http://www.mpineny.org)

## Destination CMP



**To get to the next level you need your CMP designation. Don't Delay!**

Visit [www.mpineny.org](http://www.mpineny.org) for more information!

**Upcoming Exam Deadlines**  
**February 25, 2009 for**  
*July 2009 Exam*

**CMP Study Group Classes**  
Take advantage of this Members' Only benefit and prepare yourself for the upcoming exam by attending the sessions! Contact **Heidi Longton, CMP** for a full schedule at [hlongtoncmp@verizon.net](mailto:hlongtoncmp@verizon.net).

**The next study group session will begin on October 28, 2008 for the January 2009 exam!**

Please visit the CIC website for information on exam locations and costs associated with each application or registration.

Exam materials and applications are available for download at: [www.conventionindustry.org](http://www.conventionindustry.org)

**Special Events**  
**Showcase - Member**

Effective June 1, 2009, the US government will require specific ID documents from travelers who were previously exempt - including citizens of the US, Canada and Bermuda, according to the final version of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), released March 27.

WHTI requires all citizens of the US, Canada, Mexico and Bermuda to have a passport or other accepted document that establishes the bearer's identity and nationality in order to enter (or depart from) the US from within the Western Hemisphere.

Make sure to visit [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov) or [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) for more information.



## **New York State DMV now offers drivers enhanced licenses that comply with the WHTI.**

On September 16, 2008, NYS began to issue WHTI-Compliant Enhanced driver licenses (EDL) (includes Enhanced learner permits) and Enhanced non-driver photo ID cards (ENDID) to applicants who can prove U.S. citizenship and NYS residency.

An EDL or ENDID can be used instead of a passport at U.S. land and sea border crossings between Canada, Mexico, Bermuda and the Caribbean. WHTI is a federal law that regulates which documents U.S. citizens can use when they travel in the Western Hemisphere.

You can read more about this initiative at the web site of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). An EDL or ENDID is an approved travel identification document for land and sea border crossings between the U.S. and Canada, Mexico, Bermuda and the Caribbean, and an EDL is also a driver license. An EDL or ENDID is not acceptable for air travel between these countries. There is an additional fee for an EDL or ENDID, but the fee is less than the fee for a U.S. passport. Because the applicant is required to show proofs of identity, NYS residency and U.S. Citizenship, all applications for EDLs and ENDIDs must be made at a DMV office. You cannot apply by mail, by telephone, or over the Internet.

Learn More Visit the NYS DMV at <http://www.nydmv.state.ny.us/edl-main.htm>

**- Vanessa LaClair, CMP**  
Membership Services & Events Coordinator  
[vanessa@ippny.org](mailto:vanessa@ippny.org)

## **World Education Congress 2008 Recap** ***What happens in Vegas doesn't have to stay in Vegas!***

WEC-2008  
Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas, Aug 9-12

Las Vegas has proven again to be the most sought after conference destination for business and pleasure demonstrated by MPI garnering a record 4200 attendees from around the globe. The second time around for me was no less eye-popping than last year's Montreal conference in my humble opinion. However there were some typical complaints or suggestions for improvement rather, which I or any seasoned meeting professional might suggest, like training the registration staff

## Input Needed!

The 2009 MPI Special Events Showcase will be held May 6th at the Gideon Putnam in Saratoga.

We are asking members for help in putting together a panel to address the topics of fundraising and sponsorships.

In this tough economy we could all use some tips on how to continue these types of events. If you feel you have expertise in either of these areas, please consider sitting on the panel.

**If you are interested, please contact Kelly Deitz at 800-291-2629 no later than March 1, 2009.**

We are looking for at least four participants. Thank you.

## Finance Is Fabulous: New Chapter Partnership Programs

MPI NENY is introducing our new Chapter Partnership programs. Finance Team members will be reaching out to regional and national organizations to partner with our chapter and members.

### Why Become a Chapter Partner of MPI NENY?

**More than 80% of Professional Planners have the buying power** to approve or recommend facilities, select geographical locations and destinations, and product and services.

**CONNECTIONS & EXPOSURE!** You will get connected and increase visibility within the regional and national meetings industry

better (who were less than friendly) and buying/printing more conference collateral like the CMP badge ribbons and On-Site Guides which ran out by Monday morning. None the less, I am still a staunch believer in MPI products and services and can still be floored by the talent of the event producers who contribute to these conferences. They are really super stars in my eyes!

The opening night reception was a pleasure for the eyes and taste buds hosted by Harrah's Entertainment at Caesars Palace. Their floor to ceiling event design was totally unique. The reception had elaborate glass trays strung by wire tempting you with delicate hors d'oeuvres and delicious pomegranate martinis throughout a fog drenched room. But the ultimate experience was the DJ in the all red lounge for decadent desserts. Did anyone get his business card, I want to bring him to my next event?? We were talking about his dance moves and animal magnetism all week. All the hotel brands also did an exceptional job of hosting fun after parties each night – in fact there were so many to choose from it was difficult to make it to everything. A special shout out to Hyatt for hosting a one of a kind event at the Post Position Raceway (hey girls read here 'electric go karts'). It was totally fun, had an excellent caterer, and provided one of the 10 best industry gifts I have received - any style you wanted Maui Jim sunglasses.

I saved the best for last though. The Mandalay Bay is a huge resort but they made us feel like a small crowd at an exclusive party at the Beach on the closing conference night. There were so many cool elements that I don't have space to list all; there was an ice bar with dried ice shot glasses you had to use gloves to pick up, dancers throughout the area to snap photos with, a graffiti wall, and of course we listened to The Styx live in concert while wading up to our knees in the wave pool or dancing barefoot in the sand. With more than a dozen MPI NENY members in tow we had an awesome time and look forward to seeing more of you next year in Salt Lake City.

– **Megan Kiessling, CMP**  
Meeting Consultant  
Site Solutions Worldwide

[megan@sitesolutionsworldwide.com](mailto:megan@sitesolutionsworldwide.com)

## Member Spotlight

### *Meet the Members of MPI NENY*

#### **Christine Naglesmith, CMP**

Planning Support Specialist  
NYS Association of School Business Officials

## MPI Members BUY MPI!!!

**Gain immediate access to the chapter membership list.** Use this throughout the year to keep in touch.

Now is the time to buy MPI NENY! **This IS the opportunity to reach all members of MPI NENY.** Choose a partnership that is best suited for your organization. There are endless possibilities for Chapter Partnership and Event Sponsorship!

Contact **Adelynn Waldie**, VP of Finance at (518) 376-9213 or by email at [awaldie@golfsaratoga.com](mailto:awaldie@golfsaratoga.com) for more information!

## Welcome, New Members!



### Renee Isgro Kelly

Catering Sales Manager  
Clarion Hotel of Albany  
[cateringandsales@clarionhotelalbany.com](mailto:cateringandsales@clarionhotelalbany.com)  
**Referral:** Gina Mintzer

### Linda Persico, CMP

Association Sales Manager  
Conference Center Niagara Falls  
[lper88@aol.com](mailto:lper88@aol.com)

### Don't wait to get involved!

Boost your career and increase your network by joining the premier meeting industry association today!

[Download the MPI Membership Application Today!](#)

**Congratulations Chris on passing the CMP exam last month!** MPI NENY is proud of all our recent CMP designees. When interviewed Chris felt the CMP study groups and exam has helped her career tremendously as well as various MPI educational sessions. As compared to when she began in this industry more than 12 years ago, she says **today there is even more reason to keep your knowledge base up to date on cutting edge issues** like green meeting planning just like the Business Officials have increased pressure to maintain their edge by implementing e-meetings and webinars for continuing professional development. Meetings cost a lot more now than compared to when she started due to international and economic issues like gas prices and 9-11.



That doesn't stop her from worrying day and night about work though. **Chris is a confessed rollercoaster lover as well as participates in billiard and bowling league.** Recently diagnosed with Diabetes, she is working on maintaining a healthy lifestyle very typical of many conference attendees these days, noted by the increase in special dietary requests at meetings, particularly gluten free meals.

**Chris, how do you keep up with our busy meeting profession?** On occasion, she doubles her vacation time with friends and family to investigate new properties for her association meetings, actively uses Microsoft Outlook to keep up with her contacts and tickler file, and recommends to all new meeting professionals to take advantage of the CMP study groups as they can be beneficial even if you are not sitting for an upcoming exam.



### Kathryn Viggiani

Meetings & Program Coordinator  
Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS)

**What is your favorite hobby or past time and how have you incorporated that into your career if at all?** I love the water. Oceans, lakes, rivers or pools -- it doesn't matter. I'm lucky that two of my association's annual conferences are held in Lake George.

**What steps have you taken to evolve your career in the meetings industry? Or plan to take?** Continuing education programs offered by MPI and ESSAE, networking and preparing for the CMP exam are the biggest steps I've taken lately. Because I'm new to the Upstate NY meeting industry, after relocating here from Washington, D.C., I am trying to get to know people in the field and familiarizing myself with meeting locations.

**Describe an unusual meeting challenge and how you overcame that?** Several years ago, I had a group of 400 high school students who were waiting...and waiting...for their breakfast program to begin. It was getting rowdy and as you can imagine, difficult to control. In another room within the meeting facility the actor Michael Keaton, who played Batman, was waiting to speak at a press conference on

## We Want You!



**Are you creative?  
Innovative? Motivated?  
Are you ready to make a  
difference?**

Join a Chapter Committee Team Today! If you are interested in learning more about Chapter Teams, please contact any of the following:

### VP MEMBERSHIP

**Gina Mintzer**, CMP, Director of Sales  
Albany County CVB  
518.434.1217 x301  
[gmintzer@albany.org](mailto:gmintzer@albany.org)

### VP EDUCATION

**Julie Ann Price**, CMP, Manager, Travel & Conference Svc.  
New York State United Teachers  
518.213.6000 x6625  
[jprice@nysutmail.org](mailto:jprice@nysutmail.org)

### VP ADMINISTRATION

**Cindy Sullivan**, CMP, Sales Manager  
The Saratoga Hilton  
518.693.1002  
[csullivan@luxuryresorts.com](mailto:csullivan@luxuryresorts.com)

### VP MARKETING / COMMUNICATIONS

**Vanessa LaClair**, CMP, Membership Services & Events Coordinator  
Independent Power Producers of NY  
518.436.3749  
[vanessa@ippny.org](mailto:vanessa@ippny.org)

### VP STRATEGIC PLANNING

**Doug McPhee**, CMP, CMM  
Experient  
518.895.8320  
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### VP FINANCE

**Adelynn Waldie**, Golf Services  
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environmental issues. I threw caution to the wind and marched right past his "people" to ask if he would be willing to say a few words to 400 Batman fans. Needless to say, the students went wild when they saw Keaton and forgot all about being hungry and bored. He spent twenty minutes talking and answering questions, finishing up just in time for their meal to be served. Once again, Batman to the rescue!

**What advice would you give to someone thinking about entering the meetings industry?** First, take advantage of the educational opportunities available through professional associations, colleges and universities. Second, get as much experience as you can, even if it is on a volunteer level. If you cannot find a paid position, volunteer with a charity to help run their fundraising event or register with the local Convention & Visitors Bureau to help out when they are looking for extra hands. **Third, network! Step out of your comfort zone and make a few calls to people whose jobs you'd like to have one day. Ask them for advice or if they know of any entry-level job opportunities.**



If you would like to be featured in a future newsletter, download the [Spotlight](#) Questionnaire and return with a digital photo and company logo to **Megan Kiessling** via email to [megan@sitesolutionsworldwide.com](mailto:megan@sitesolutionsworldwide.com)

## Ignite Your Imagination

**2nd Annual MPI NENY Special Education Event**

### SAVE THE DATE!

Bring a co-worker and a fire extinguisher! Our chapter's second annual Ignite Your Imagination will be held on **Tuesday, November 18, 2008, in the brand new GE Theatre at Proctors, 432 State Street, Schenectady, NY from 1:30 to 6:00pm.**

In addition to a stimulating educational program, you will also get to see and experience this incredible venue that has multi-purpose space with 436 retractable theatre seats. This location has the iwerks Extreme Screen as well as state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment. Complimentary parking for the event will be right next door.

Our Northeastern New York Chapter will be presenting burning topics that are so very timely right now in our industry. CEUs will be available.

## Green Meetings In Action

It is not easy being green. How environmentally friendly are your meetings? Back by popular demand, this second series will feature a green panel including the **Syracuse Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)**. The Syracuse CVB has taken the initiative to start a green state-of-mind for its destination and they will be sharing some of their insight with all of us.



## Got News?

We'd love to hear from you! Please e-mail your announcements to [Vanessa LaClair](mailto:Vanessa.LaClair@albanyny.org), CMP, VP Communications.



Click here: ([Production Schedule](#)) to view the 2008-2009 MPI NENY Newsletter Production Schedule.

If you are having trouble viewing this newsletter with graphics, please visit [www.mpineny.org](http://www.mpineny.org) to download a PDF version.

## Quick Links...

[Our Website](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[CMP Information](#)

[Chapter Leadership](#)

[MPI International](#)



## Virtual Job Fair Unveiled

It is one of the hottest new employee recruiting tools and you will enjoy being in the virtual world. **Cindy Sullivan, CMP** has started this project and will now walk us through all of the steps.

In addition to dynamite educational sessions, **Brian Palazzolo and his team at Classe Catering** will be providing all of the scrumptious food for our session breaks and networking reception. I know Brian will have a sizzling menu for everyone to enjoy.

We are currently seeking sponsors and exhibitors for this event. This is the only event where our chapter offers exhibit booths and our highest exposure for program sponsors. We will only be able to accommodate a few partners. **Don't you be left in the cold; if you want to be hot, hot, hot - sign up now!**

To learn more about sponsoring or exhibiting, please contact **Debby Goedeke** at 518-434-1217 x100 or [dgoedeke@albany.org](mailto:dgoedeke@albany.org). Further details will be available soon on our website.

**- DEBBY GOEDEKE**

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Albany, NY 12207  
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