

# INSIDE BUZZ

SGMP  
Michigan



A monthly membership newsletter from the  
Michigan Society of Government Meeting Professionals (MiSGMP)

**March/April 2025**

## ||| President's Pen



Hello Mary,

I hope this email finds you well! First, let me say how amazing the Annual Education Conference (AEC) was. As this was my first AEC as president, I quickly learned that pulling off such an incredible conference is one of those moments where the president relies heavily on the brilliance of committees. Honestly, all I did was stand and talk—a lot! (I think I burned enough calories to skip cardio for a week!)

But in all seriousness, I forgot to express how much I appreciate each and every one of you. The board and I do what we do because of you. We give it our all, and while challenges will always arise, AEC was truly one for the books. I'll never forget it. So thank you, Michigan Chapter, for being amazing and for everything you do for this industry. To everyone who joined us at AEC—thank you for coming and putting up with me (perhaps next year we'll add "presidential stand-up comedy" to the agenda).

On another exciting note, we launched our new website at AEC! The hiccups are slowly decreasing, and soon we'll be running at 100%. If you spot any issues, please don't hesitate to reach out—I promise not to blame the IT gremlins (too much).

Looking ahead, we're gearing up for our special etiquette training in April at the Radisson in Kalamazoo—my hometown! Good friends, good food, and good education await. Just don't forget those time changes on the start time; missing a course on proper tea-time pinky placement would be tragic!

We're also planning our June special event at the Lansing Lugnuts stadium and preparing for

NEC in May—it's all moving fast and looking bright. Now if Michigan weather could just cooperate, it'd be perfect!

Lastly, congratulations to all our Top Emerging and Top Young Professionals winners! Fun fact: I won this award just as I turned 40 a few weeks ago. Let's see how the next 25 years go—I might aim for "Top Old Professionals" someday!

With that, I'll stop typing (for once) and just listen. Have a fantastic week, everyone!

Sincerely,

Nick Stratton, GMS



Nick Stratton, GMS

*President*

**Michigan Chapter of the Society of Government Meeting Professionals**

Conference and Event Manager, Community Mental Health Association of Michigan



## Member Recognition

<p><b>SAMI CHAU</b> TOP YOUNG PROFESSIONALS</p> <p>"The relationships I've created in the industry have been so meaningful in my professional career and personal life. I hope to continuously learn from others and share my experience as well to contribute to the government meeting industry."</p> 	<p><b>STEPHANIE REED</b> TOP YOUNG PROFESSIONALS</p> <p>"I think it is important to always be curious and learning. As technology has changed and the meeting industry in general, we have to be creative in how we plan our meetings so we can continue to keep our attendees engaged and have the same impact."</p> 	<p><b>NICHOLAS STRATTON</b> TOP YOUNG PROFESSIONALS</p> <p>"To prepare for future success, we should continue to evolve our industry as the global industry is adapting to new technology and ever-changing culture. Study and attend more seminars."</p> 
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<p><b>LAURA ELKIN</b> EMERGING LEADER</p> <p>"Building strong relationships with stakeholders, while expanding my knowledge through training and educational opportunities, will ensure that I remain a valuable resource for our hotels and effectively support government meetings moving forward."</p> 	<p><b>MANDI VANOOTEGHEM</b> EMERGING LEADER</p> <p>It is vital to continue to learn and stay connected with meeting planners as well as suppliers."</p> 
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Heartfelt congratulations to the outstanding members our chapter who have been recognized by SGMP as Top Young Professionals and Emerging Leaders in the industry. Your dedication to excellence has not only elevated our chapter but continues to shape the future of government meeting planning across the state. We celebrate your well-deserved recognition!

## Showcase YOUR Business



Sponsorship and advertising opportunities are available! To explore sponsorship options or customize a package, visit our [website](https://www.misgmp.org) or contact [treasurer@misgmp.org](mailto:treasurer@misgmp.org).



MiSGMP members asked for more opportunities to meet members in the Mid-Year Survey. Now's the time to let members learn about you! It's simple, just answer a few questions about yourself and SGMP. If you've never been spotlighted and are interested, please complete the [MiSGMP New Member and Member Spotlight Form](#).

## Planner Member Spotlight

Sarah Botruff | Director of Education and Training | Community Mental Health Association of Michigan

**Tell us a little bit about yourself:** I am new to SGMP and government meetings but have been planning association and other meetings for 5 + years. I started my new position with Community Mental Health Association of Michigan in December 2024. I love the meeting planning and hospitality industry and am excited to get involved and learn from SGMP!



**How did you get connected to SGMP and the Michigan Chapter and what do you like most about your membership?** I started my new position and wanted to get involved with SGMP to learn more about government meeting planning. I'm looking forward to the resources and education surrounding government meeting planners.

**What are your thoughts regarding the industry moving forward and how does SGMP play a role?** I believe I will rely on SGMP to provide updates on specifically the government elements of meeting planning as that is a new world for me coming from my previous experience. I'm excited to get involved and learn from SGMP.

**What meeting trends are you seeing that may benefit other chapter members?** I understand we are moving back to a lot of in person trainings for our events.

## Supplier Member Spotlight

**Candy Carroll | Director of Sales | The H Hotel**



**Tell us a little bit about yourself.** I have been in sales for over 15 years and Director of Sales for three years. I am passionate about my work and love helping my team succeed. In my free time, I love spending time with my family you will find me Up North and traveling our beautiful state.

**Tell us a little bit about the property you represent.** The H Hotel is a AAA 4- Diamond hotel located in the heart of downtown Midland. There is over 20,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor meetings space with a seasonal courtyard, three on-site restaurants.

**How did you get connected to SGMP and the Michigan Chapter and what do you like most about your membership?** Several members expressed how wonderful the organization is and how beneficial the networking is.

**What are your thoughts regarding the industry moving forward and how does SGMP play a role?** It has been challenging to connect with a lot of people working remotely. I am looking forward to meeting new people.

**What meeting trends are you seeing that may benefit other chapter members?** Mobile check-ins, ecofriendly practices are more common, wellness incorporated into the meetings. Planners are looking for an authentic experience.

If you've never been spotlighted and are interested, please complete the MiSGMP new [Member and Member Spotlight Form](#).

## Membership Report

As of March 31, 2025, MiSGMP 160 members: 77 Planners | 78 Suppliers | 5 Others. The planner/supplier ratio is at



50%. Overall SGMP membership is up at 1,502. An increase of 81! SGMP has met their goal of 1,500 members by the National Education Conference!!

**WE HAVE MET OUR THE STRATEGIC FOCUS #1 BY INCREASING THE MISGMP MEMBERSHIP TO 150 MEMBERS.**

**NEW MISGMP WEBSITE** – use your SGMP website login credentials. Log into your **SGMP member account**, update your profile, and check your membership expiration date.

The SGMP **FY24-28 SGMP Strategic Plan** offers many membership capacity building initiatives.

Our member value is delivered through education, resources, and networking. [Read more...](#)



### **JESSICA GIBSON**

JESSICA@BLUEWATER.ORG  
[bluewater.org](http://bluewater.org)

The Blue Water Area Convention and Visitors Bureau is pleased to welcome Jessica Gibson as the new Director of Meeting Sales. Jessica is a Thumbcoast native and comes to us with 20 years of marketing & event management experience, most recently with MIT's CS & AI Lab. She is excited to showcase the **stunning waterfront venues and unique activities** along the Thumbcoast and help planners and their guests enjoy **seamless and engaging events** surrounded by **natural beauty**.

Email Jessica today to tour where **waterfront meets wow** and **affordability meets adventure**.



## **Education**

### **Upcoming MiSGMP Education Meetings**



#### **Meeting Table Manners and Essential “Do’s and Don’ts” of Lunchtime Etiquette**

**April 16, 2015**

*Speaker:* Kelly Duggan, Image Consulting

*Competency:* Protocol and Facilities & Services

Credit Hours: 2 – GMS, 2 – CGMP, 2 – CMP

(Domain G: Meeting or Event Design)

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 2 p.m.

*Please note: Registration will open at 11 a.m. The education session will be presented from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and will occur over the lunch hour with member announcements from 1:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. All guests will receive a \$10 discount on registration.*

In this session, you will engage in a skill building dining etiquette and personal social skills workshop. This engaging and informative session is tailored for government meeting planners and suppliers, to enhance dining etiquette skills and ensure presenting oneself with confidence and professionalism during government meetings.

Participants will learn essential table manners, navigate complex table settings, and engage in polite, effective conversation. With real-world skills and confidence gained, participants can professionally and successfully manage themselves with poise and grace at the table.

Elevate your meal etiquette and make a positive lasting impression at your next government event.

**Location:** Radisson Plaza Hotel & Suites, 100 W Michigan Ave, Kalamazoo, MI

**Community Service:** Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes. Please bring one or more of any of the items from their **wish list**.

[Venue Website](#)

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## MiSGMP 2025 Annual Education Conference



Click on the picture below to view more photo moments from 2025 AEC



**Listen to some on the spot reviews for MiSGMP 2025 Annual Education Conference [HERE](#)**

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## ||| **Community Service**



**April's Community Service** project: Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes.

They do not have an Amazon wish list, though items they need are on their [website](#)

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**Certified Government Meeting Professional (CGMP)**



# YOU ARE A GOVERNMENT MEETINGS EXPERT



BUILD EXPERTISE



GROW YOUR NETWORK



BECOME A LEADER



**YOU** are a government meetings expert, and holding your Certified Government Meeting Professional (CGMP) designation is the proof. Don't forget to renew your CGMP every three years. Renewing is as easy as 1-2-3. Here's how:

## Step 1 = Earning Credits.

- Earn hours at **SGMP National Events - National Education Conference (NEC)**
- Earn hours at **SGMP Chapter Events** - View our chapter listing [here](#).
- Earn hours online - View our online learning portal [here](#).

**Step 2 = Track Your Hours.** Login at <https://learn.sgmp.org> with your regular SGMP login credentials. Add outside education sessions or track the ones that you've already taken through national, another chapter, or MiSGMP.

## Step 3 = Apply for recertification.

**Upcoming Classes** = The next CGMP Virtual Class will be held January 22-24, 2025, via Zoom. Go [here](#) to register. There will also be a Virtual Class **July 23-25, 2025**. Or take the CGMP course in St. Louis at the National Education Conference.

If you have any questions about the recertification process or requirements, please contact SGMP Education Director, Alan Kleinfeld, at [education@sgmp.org](mailto:education@sgmp.org).

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**Government Meeting Specialist (GMS)**



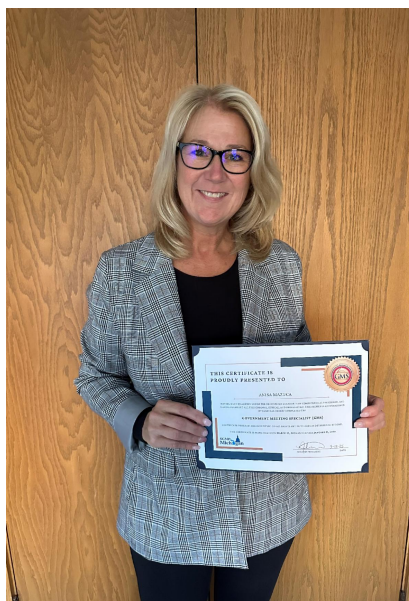


The Government Meeting Specialist (GMS) Certificate is a professional development program offered by MiSGMP for both planners and suppliers.

Open to current SGMP members, this voluntary certificate provides essential meeting management knowledge through MiSGMP monthly meetings, Annual Education Conferences, and approved National SGMP programs. The program typically takes 1-3 years to complete and is suitable for professionals at all experience levels.

The GMS is now a **prerequisite of the CGMP!**  
Learn more and start earning your certificate [HERE](#)

**\*Friendly reminder to GMS holders to wear your GMS pin at all MiSGMP events.**



Anisa Mazuca, Director of Operations, Michigan Works!, recently earned and received her GMS certificate. She now joins our elite group of Government Meetings Specialists



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## National Education Conference 2025



### National Education Conference

The SGMP National Education Conference (NEC) is an annual event featuring over 20 hours of professional development sessions, exciting keynote speakers, an industry tradeshow, networking opportunities, a fundraising silent auction, and more!

The conference will be held May 6-8, 2025, at the St. Louis Union Station Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri. Learn more and register online [here](#). We hope you'll join the many other Michigan Chapter members attending!

[Register Online](#)





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