INSIDE BUZZ

SGMP Michigan

The membership newsletter of the
Michigan Society of Government Meeting Professionals (MiSGMP)

September/October 2026

|||President's Pen



Hello Members,

We're off to a good start since kicking off in August! Thank you to everyone who has joined us at our recent meetings. Your engagement and enthusiasm make all the difference as our board continues to settle into our new roles.

Speaking of engagement, the Board and our Membership Committee will be launching a new monthly meeting survey with more thoughtful, targeted questions. This will give us better insight into your thoughts on each meeting and help us continue to shape programming that truly serves our members. To encourage your input, everyone who completes a survey between now and December will be entered into a drawing for a free Annual Education Conference (AEC) registration! More details to be announced soon.

And speaking of AEC, be sure to mark your calendar for March 10-12, 2027, in Ann Arbor. This year's theme is "A Night at the Oscars," and we can't wait to celebrate with you.

You'll also notice a new section in this newsletter that highlights and details 2-3 of our chapter's committees. Our committees are the backbone of everything MiSGMP does, and we hope you'll take a look and consider becoming a member of one. There's a place for everyone, and we'd love to have you.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, concerns, or ideas. Everyone's involvement is valuable to the success of our chapter. Let's keep learning, growing, and having fun together.

Warm regards,
Cathy Mayhew

President of the Michigan Chapter of Society Government Meeting Professionals



PLANNER SPOTLIGHT



Danica Ewing
Health, Safety and Training Specialist, Air Quality Division, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)

Tell us a little more about yourself.
I currently work for the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Air Quality Division as a Health, Safety, and Training Specialist. Before joining EGLE, I spent almost 10 years with the Michigan State Police in the Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division. Much of my work there involved coordinating trainings, meetings, and events for emergency management and public safety partners. I handled many of the details for those events, including communications, materials, scheduling, and logistics. In my current role, I coordinate training and development for our staff along with larger division meetings and events. I often work with presenters and vendors, find venues, create agendas, manage registrations, track costs, and, of course, handle the little things that come up along the way. I like the behind-the-scenes planning and seeing everything come together, especially when people leave feeling like the training or event was worth their time. Outside of work, I'm married with three kids. I enjoy traveling, staying active, and spending time with my family.

How did you get connected to SGMP and the Michigan Chapter, and what do you like most about your membership?
I connected with SGMP through my work with the State of Michigan. Meeting and event planning has been part of my work for several years, and it has become a larger part of my current role. I wanted to connect with others in the field and learn more about government meeting planning. What appealed to me about the Michigan Chapter was being able to learn from people who do this work every day. I'm looking forward to getting more involved, hearing how other planners approach things, and also learning from the supplier side of the industry.

What are your thoughts regarding the industry moving forward, and how does SGMP play a role?

One thing I've learned is that getting people in the room is only part of it. Especially with government meetings and trainings, people take time away from their regular responsibilities, so I think it's important they leave feeling their time was well spent. That might mean learning something they can actually use, making a new connection, or having the chance to talk through an issue with people who understand their work. I think SGMP can play an important role by giving planners and suppliers a place to talk about what they're seeing, what has worked, and even what hasn't. I'm looking forward to learning from those experiences and finding things I can use in the meetings and trainings I plan.

What meeting trends are you seeing that may benefit other chapter members?

One trend I'm seeing is more focus on getting people involved instead of having them sit through presentation after presentation. I've been trying to include more discussion, panels, questions, and opportunities for people to connect in the meetings and trainings I plan. I also think it's important to help people see how different topics connect. When attendees can see the bigger picture and how one area relates to another, the information feels more relevant to their work. Sometimes just changing the format or allowing more time for conversation can change what people get out of a meeting.

🌟 MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Want to be featured in our next eNewsletter?
Complete the **MiSGMP New Member & Member Spotlight Form** and share your story!



Annual Education Conference Committee

What We Do

The AEC planning team brings MiSGMP members together for professional education, fresh ideas, and connections with fellow planners and suppliers.

What We've Been Up To

The team visited The Kensington Hotel on September 16 to begin shaping the 2027 Annual Education Conference. Led by committee chair Kathy Spackman, we're planning a two-and-a-half-day experience inspired by this year's theme, "A Night at the Oscars." We've also opened our call for presenters and are looking for sessions that offer useful takeaways for government meeting planners and suppliers.

Coming Up

Mark your calendar for March 10–12, 2027, at The Kensington Hotel in Ann Arbor. Have a session idea, or know someone who would be a great presenter? **Submit a proposal**.

Meet the Team Leaders

Board Liaison: Katy Golden
Committee Chair: Kathy Spackman

Join Us!

Interested in helping make AEC a hit? Contact Katy Golden or Kathy Spackman to learn how you can get involved.

Membership Committee

What We Do

Strengthen and grow membership by actively engaging current members, fostering meaningful relationships, and networking with industry professionals to identify and attract prospective new members.

What We've Been Up To

- Updating the “sponsorship longevity” spreadsheet.
- Contacting soon-to-be-expiring members and past members to get them to rejoin.
- Color-coding the chapter roster to show expired and soon-to-be-expiring members.

Coming Up

- Working with hotel brands to see about increasing members through that avenue.

Meet the Team Leaders

Board Liaisons: Tammy Palmer, Park Place Hotel & Conference Center
Jay Gladstone, Calhoun County Visitors Bureau
Chair: Alise Hale, Gaylord Area Convention & Tourism Bureau

Join Us!

We meet monthly by Teams and welcome new voices. Interested? Contact Jay Gladstone at jay@battlecreekvisitors.org



UPCOMING MiSGMP EDUCATION MEETINGS

Maximum Impact: Designing Events for Good

Presenter: Dr. Jonathon Day, Founder - Sustainable Tourism & Responsible Travel Lab, Purdue University

Sustainability has never been more important to the meetings industry. Yet it can be a complicated and confusing topic. In this presentation, we'll cover a range of topics to help meeting planners and tourism industry partners implement sustainability programs that improve participant satisfaction, support clients' corporate social responsibility goals, and contribute to your destination community's quality of life. We'll also address big-picture issues and provide practical tips you can apply to your next meeting.

Competency: Facilities and Services
Location: **Holiday Inn - Mt. Pleasant**
Credit Hours Include: 1 – GMS, 1 – CGMP, 1 – CMP (Sustainability and Social Impacts)

REGISTER NOW

CERTIFIED GOVERNMENT MEETING SPECIALIST

The Government Meeting Specialist (GMS) Certificate is an SGMP chapter program for planners and suppliers, new and experienced, who want the knowledge to perform effectively in the meeting industry. It is voluntary and especially valuable for government meeting professionals new to the field. It also serves as a strong precursor to the Certified Government Meeting Professional (CGMP) designation. To earn the certificate, members complete at least fifteen hours of professional development through their local chapter, with hours earned within each of SGMP's Core Competencies. Most members finish in three to five years, and progress is tracked using the GMS Tracking Form.

The **tracking form** has been updated to include the three new core competencies SGMP implemented. The update is also necessary because the Michigan Chapter must submit its annual education programming to SGMP, and that programming must align with National's core competencies.

If you are just starting, go to **GMS Certificate** and get started today!

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