



Top Young Professionals

**Under
37**



Nominee: La'Zendra B. Danforth

Membership Category: Planner

Employer: University of Florida – College of Pharmacy

Chapter: Central Florida

Member Since: 2016

According to La'Zendra B. Danforth

Who/What influenced you to become involved in the government meeting industry? I had worked on the corporate and private side of the event and meeting planning industry for over 13 years prior to joining the Gator Nation. I was intrigued by the opportunity to take my passion for meeting planning and merge it with passion of University of Florida alumni to create an experience that is engaging and inspires them to want to reconnect to their alma mater. It is my hope that the events that my team and I create will inspire alumni to give of their time and resources, so that future students can benefit from their generosity.

Share an accomplishment that you are very proud of...My greatest accomplishment as a meeting professional, was earning my master's degree in hospitality and tourism. Through that journey, I was able to marry my extensive work experience with academic knowledge of industry trends, the evolution of technology, and the culture of tourism. Now, I am well equipped to share my knowledge, as it has always been my desire to teach and train aspiring meeting planners.

How would you prepare for the future success of the government meeting industry? Education! I believe that educating yourself on both social and current events is vital for the future of the government meeting industry. As leaders in the industry, we must continue to be on the forefront of event technology, safety protocol, and trends. This allows us to set the bar high and establish a gold standard for the meeting planning industry as a whole.

Nominated by Kelly Meahl

La'Zendra has impressed me with her professionalism and her strength of character. She is always pleasant and willing to take time for others. I believe she is very ethical and fair, which are both wonderful traits when mentoring others, especially those that are younger (she is a UF student mentor). La'Zendra is always fully engaged, completely present in the moment – whether she is participating in a SGMP event or meeting one-on-one with hoteliers or board members. I whole-heartedly recommend her for this honor. Not only is she an exemplary professional, I believe she is a very honorable person!

Nominated by Morgan Dukes

La'Zendra always goes above and beyond in whatever she does. She strives on planning a stand out event and puts her heart and soul in everything. I have had the opportunity to work with La'Zendra for the past two years and I look to her for guidance. I strive to be as passionate and motivated as her. She has the personality that can light up the room and all who know her, love her.

SGMP Leadership Positions:

1. Chapter Secretary
2. Chapter Board Liaison to the program Committee

Community Service: (Local non-profit, PTA, local food bank, etc.)

1. PK Yonge Developmental research School - PTA
2. University of Florida Student Mentor
3. UF Health & Human Performance College - Guest Lecturer – Special Events Course
4. Volunteer with local community initiatives through church