



## NATIONAL BOARD 2019-2021 CANDIDATES

### President Candidate(s)

#### Michelle Milligan, LSW, MLSW, CGMP (P)



Michelle Milligan, MSW, LMSW, CGMP, is the Director of the Clinic for Child Study, a part of the Third Circuit Court of Michigan, and is current National SGMP President. She has been planning annual state conferences and Court employee trainings for the last 20 years. As the Clinic Director she has the overall responsibility of leading a staff of 50 clinicians, case managers and support staff.

While serving as National President Ms. Milligan has focused on improving communication with Chapter leaders and membership by instituting regular conference calls with the Chapter presidents and regularly scheduled information emails to membership. Under her leadership the National and NEC websites have been refreshed and are now usable on mobile devices. She has also established greater transparency in Board operations.

From 2011-2015 Ms. Milligan served as the Michigan Chapter President leading the Chapter to several great achievements including becoming the 2nd largest Chapter in the nation and receiving Chapter Excellence awards 2011- 2014 and Chapter Honors award in 2015. Ms. Milligan was honored with the Gilmer Planner of the Year award in 2018 and received the SGMP National President's Award in 2013. She has presented programs for other Chapters as well as provided them with assistance related to board leadership and managing their website.

Ms. Milligan's goal as a member of the National Board of SGMP is to use her proven leadership skills to build a Society, which provides valued benefits to planners and suppliers and is the premier resource for government meetings.

#### *What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?*

I have served on the National board for the last four years, with the last three years as National President. During my tenure on the National Board I have led the Society through a major transition period and to what I believe to be more solid footing for the future. Throughout my work career I have held several leadership positions that have



prepared me for leading the Society. With my degree and licensure in social work I am granted a different set of skills that may not traditionally be found in SGMP; however, this unique background provides me the ability to look at our Society from a humanistic perspective from which we can continue to build a member focused organization.

*What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?*

I believe the biggest challenge facing the Society continues to be membership from an individual basis and developing future leadership for chapters and national. We have stopped the decline of membership, but have not truly achieved an increase. As more and more of our membership reach the age of retirement, we need to ensure that we are reaching the next generations of members and future leaders of the Society. In 2018 we began to send renewal postcards in hopes of catching renewals even if it is a new person in the position who would not have received the email reminders. In 2018 the National Board approved a pilot of recognizing our young members in hopes to encourage participation and groom for future leadership positions. I myself have begun to mentor a few members in hopes they will become the future leaders of our Society. Through all of this the Society must continue to meet the needs of multiple generations to ensure that it stays relevant into the future.

*What have you accomplished over the past two years while serving on the national board that has helped move SGMP forward in our industry and provide more return on investment for our members—both planners and suppliers? Be specific.*

Over the past 2 years I have led the redesign of our SGMP website, created the 2017 and 2018 NEC websites and approved the redesign of the 2019 NEC website, in all instances working towards more modern and user-friendly sites. I have led the National Board and Gilmer Trustees towards more transparency of our processes, including creating policies for all awards given at the National level. Recognizing the need for online education for our members, a goal was created to budget for an online webinar platform whereby the Gilmer Trustees could identify and plan for online education. We have successfully held two educational webinars and have four more planned this fiscal year. We plan to broaden our use of the platform and create leadership videos for chapter board members. As a chapter president I benefited from the annual 2-day Joint Leadership Meeting, however, these were discontinued due to financial concerns. Through successful budgeting and increased Society revenue we will be reinstating the annual Joint Leadership Meetings to provide guidance and leadership training for chapter boards. By providing this ongoing training chapters are able to share ideas with one another that ultimately provides return on investment for all of our members.



## 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Candidate(s)

### **Annette Wallace, CGMP, CMP (GP)**



Having worked for Missouri Economic Development (OED) for over 15 years, of which 13 have been as Event Planner, Marketing Specialist m, my responsibilities include planning the Governor's Conference on Economic Development and coordinating all other OED events.

Prior to working for state government, I served as executive director, program director and event coordinator for various associations, including the Missouri Association of Life Underwriters, Missouri State Chiropractors Association, and Associated Industries of Missouri. I have almost 30 years of experience in event planning, including 16 years in association management. I earned the Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) designation in January, 2009, the Certified Government Meeting Professional (CGMP) designation in June, 2018, and a BS in Business Administration/Management.

Presently I am serving my first term as Planner Director on the SGMP National Board. My SGMP goals and objectives include building upon the enhancements our National Board has made and the determination in making SGMP a better society. Understanding SGMP's mission and goals, I will continue to work hard implementing improvements to SGMP through mentoring local chapters, working to maintain and increase membership, continue to improve educational opportunities and grow leaders, resulting in professional meeting planners and suppliers.

My husband David and I live in Jefferson City, Missouri, with our two dogs and two cats. We have three children and five grandchildren, enjoy camping and boating, or just relaxing in the sun at the Lake of the Ozarks, or nearest beach.

### ***What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?***

My experience and passion. I have been an event planner for thirty years, fourteen years as a government planner and sixteen years as an association manager and event planner. I received my Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) certification in 2009 and my Certified Government Meeting Professional (CGMP) certificated in 2018. I served on the Missouri State Capital Chapter Board for seven years, three years as president, two years as treasurer, and two years as director, and two years as a planner director on the National Board. I truly understand and believe in the commitment necessary to serve on any board, whether the local chapter or national.



Having already served one term on the National Board as a planner director, I fully understand the SGMP goals and objectives and hope to continue building upon the enhancements our National Board has made and continue to make. I believe I can contribute to keep the momentum moving.

***What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?***

As a 30 year veteran, I know how hard it is to keep up with the ever changing meeting planning world. Education is the key to a successful meeting planner. Without up-to-date knowledge, it is very difficult to keep up with ongoing changes and SGMP is a very good resource. I rely heavily on all of the information provided to me through SGMP, whether it be articles, webinars, monthly chapter education, or the National Education Conference. These are valuable tools that help me to continue to be successful in my job and should be very important to our members.

Membership is also the key to SGMP's success. We need to be more pro-active in educating government planners and suppliers of the importance in joining SGMP. As the National Co-Membership Chair, the momentum is just starting and I would like to continue working on this very important challenge.

***What have you accomplished over the past two years while serving on the national board that has helped move SGMP forward in our industry and provide more return on investment for our members—both planners and suppliers? Be specific.***

Just finishing my first term on the National Board as a planner director has been a learning experience. The first year is just trying to catch up on everything that goes on at the National level. The second year is focused on implementing the goals and objectives. Both years I served as the Co-Chair for the National Education Conference Sponsorship Committee. We exceeded our goal last year and are very close to making or exceeding our goal for this year.

I also served as the National Communications Chair overseeing the weekly LINK publication and the bi-annual Government Connections magazine.

My second year on the National Board, I was assigned as Co-Membership Chair. We have started implementing membership incentives and promotions to not only increase membership, but more importantly retain membership. There is still work to be done in this area and with my knowledge and experience, I believe I can continue to enhance the momentum started.



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Candidate(s)

### Marie Arighi, CHSP, CMP (S)



What would I bring to the National Board -enthusiasm and excitement for the organization!!! I bring a desire to see the organization continue to move forward and the ability to help build leaders for its future.

Other talents that I can bring to the National Board:

- \* My ability to activate a group for a common goal.
- \* My experience with other hospitality organizations: IAVM, ACAE, ASAE, IMEX
- \* My experience with government organizations: AUSA, Quad A, SAE, AAMA, NDIA & Women in Defense

\*My experience with digital communications - websites, social media, Constant Contact & MagnetMail.

### *What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?*

I am seeking the position of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice -President and I feel I am uniquely qualified to serve in this position due to my unique position of being a supplier but my involvement with the local chapter of AUSA has allowed me to serve as a Government Meeting Planner on numerous occasions. I bring experience from both the supplier & planner perspectives.

My passion and my experienced with SGMP also makes me qualified to serve in a leadership position. I have been a member of SGMP since May of 2000 – I was an active member in the Atlanta Chapter (now Georgia Peach) and the Tennessee Chapter before chairing the Steering Committee to start a chapter in Alabama. I served as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President for 4 years and treasurer for 3.5 years before making the transition to the National Board in September 2016. I have attended the NEC seventeen times out of the last nineteen years (only missing twice due to my daughters graduating).

### *What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?*

**Retention of Membership.** Within the last couple of years, I have recommended and worked on projects that will help with membership retention by providing recognition and resources to members. I will continue to pursue and recommend ideas that will help with membership retention. (Please see below)



*What have you accomplished over the past two years while serving on the national board that has helped move SGMP forward in our industry and provide more return on investment for our members—both planners and suppliers? Be specific.*

- A. I presented the idea of the Top Young Professionals under 37 in June 2018 at the National Board Meeting. A committee was formed during the meeting and within 4 short months the augural recognition program was established. This program is a way to recognize and encourage young leaders for the substantiality of the organization.
- B. I recommended that SGMP create a resource library for our members and currently a committee is working on the resources. This resource library would provide our membership with sample job descriptions, RFP templates; etc.
- C. This past year I recommended and served as Board Liaison for a National Communications Committee.

### **Treasurer Candidate(s)**

#### **Chris McLaughlin, CGMP (S)**



If elected the SGMP National Board of Directors, I feel that I bring a vast skill-set to the National Leadership Team.

My work with the government customers began in 1998, as Manager of Global Sales for the Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group. In the year 2000, I joined SGMP. Thereafter in 2004, I was promoted to Director of Government Group Market. Since this time, I have overseen government group sales to our international hotel community, consisting of over 1,400 properties worldwide.

The networking and education that I received through SGMP has been paramount to my professional success, and I have a passionate desire to give back to this society that has given so much me. Today I have the privilege of serving as National Treasurer for the SGMP. Prior to this, I served one full term as SGMP NATCAP Treasurer (2013-2015), plus I earned my CGMP in 2008. In both cases, it has been a very rewarding experience. In addition to my involvement with SGMP, I also served on the school board at Holy Name Parish from 2013 - 2017, the last two years as president.

Today as SGMP's National Treasurer, I can confidently confirm that I possess a more whole understanding of SGMP's culture as well as operating infrastructure. In addition, in the future I feel that my largest contribution to our society will be in the areas of sponsorship, national visibility as well as successfully rolling out the budget for the next fiscal year. Thank you to SGMP for considering me for the honorable opportunity to serve as National Treasurer.



***What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?***

I am uniquely qualified to serve in the position of national treasurer for a variety of reasons.

First and foremost, the most valuable qualification that I bring to this position is experience; both in my current role as national treasurer as well as my position as NATCAP treasurer from July of 2013- June of 2015. In my current role as national treasurer, I gained a far greater understanding of SGMP's culture as well as its operating infrastructure and its internal systems. Furthermore, I also possess a much deeper knowledge of SGMP's bylaws, policies, programs, national board structure, GIL objectives, education components and chapter level operations. In addition, my experience as NATCAP treasurer has enabled me to identify with and effectively communicate to our chapter level leaders.

Furthermore, with the aid of the national finance committee, we will continue to incorporate best practices, specifically related to chapter security.

Most importantly, last year's valuable experience of learning how to generate and propose the annual budget will be paramount to the success of this position for the national board.

***What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?***

In my opinion, the most significant challenge currently facing SGMP is membership acquisition and retention.

Thus far in my term on the national board, I have taken every opportunity to promote SGMP in a positive manner to both my customer's as well as the Radisson national hotel community. In addition, I have utilized my position as co-chair of the Sponsorship Committee to encourage representatives from a variety of other hotel companies to invest in SGMP, both in memberships and sponsorships. Notably, at the 2018 NEC, I lead by example with a Diamond Sponsorship and the organized participation of six (6) Radisson sales professionals that attended and exhibited at the expo.

Finally, I have been very engaged in the Superheroes Circle Program. I can proudly confirm that last year I was recognized at the NEC as the national leader amongst all suppliers, plus I have continued to successfully recruit new members in the current year.



*What have you accomplished over the past two years while serving on the national board that has helped move SGMP forward in our industry and provide more return on investment for our members—both planners and suppliers? Be specific.*

The education and connections that I have gained through SGMP over the past 18 years have been key to my success. This being understood, I am very passionate about SGMP. As a result, over a long period of time I have strongly supported SGMP in the areas of membership recruitment, sponsorships, communications and NEC participations. I feel that my continuous investments in these areas has sent (and continues to send) powerful messages to my internal stakeholders, customers and competitors. Simply put, actions speak louder than words. As an opinion leader in this industry, my ongoing support illustrates SGMP's importance, plus my willingness to invest in SGMP encourages others to do.

### **Secretary Candidate(s)**

#### **Tecumseh Deloney, CGMP, CMP (CP)**



I am a seasoned leader in the hospitality industry with over 30 years of experience in the areas of government and association conferences, logistics, exhibit sales, fundraising, budget management, team building, contract negotiations and governance oversight. I'm a leader with proven organizational, problem-solving and prioritization skills. I lead through encouragement, positive examples, insightful questions and a "whatever it takes" approach to everything I do.

Currently, I serve as Senior Manager, Conferences & Meetings at ZERO TO THREE, the nation's leading nonprofit dedicated to ensuring babies and toddlers have a strong start in life. In this role, I oversee the planning and execution of 20+ government-contracted conferences, meetings and exhibits annually, ranging from 30 -2,000 attendees.

I have been an active SGMP member for 17 years with the honor of currently serving as SGMP National Board Secretary, 2019 NEC Task Force Chair, liaison to Group 3 Chapters and recipient of the 2017 Sam Gilmer Planner of The Year Award. Through these roles, I have demonstrated a strong commitment to developing close, high-value relationships with SGMP members and throughout the hospitality industry to further advance the mission of SGMP.

*What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?*



Proven leader with governance, organizational, problem solving, prioritization and strategic planning skills. A leader who leads by example through encouragement, motivation, professionalism, forward thinking and “whatever it takes”, to ensure our members have a voice at the National level. A collaborative leader with a track record of motivating individuals and teams to achieve goals through a shared mission and vision. A proud 2017 recipient of the Sam Gilmer Planner of the Year award.

Achievements during Chapter Presidency term of office included National Education Conference awards and recognition in National competitions, such as: Membership retention and growth, Newsletter of the Year, and most Creative showcase of chapter talents. These accomplishments encouraged me to take the next step to seek a position on the National Level.

With the support of my employer and a keen understanding of the uniqueness and complexities of serving on a volunteer board has afforded me to time to dedicate attention to work with assigned chapters, fulfill National Board responsibilities, attend annual National Education Conferences, enhance my leadership, delegation, communication, fundraising and collaboration skills.

***What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?***

As an organization I see membership and chapter board leadership as two of the key challenges facing SGMP. Recruitment of new members and retaining existing members is key to the success of SGMP. Chapter involvement is where it begins. Providing programs and education that is timely and relevant helps keep members active and engaged. Helping members see the benefits of committee service and the CGMP Certification, as well as and peer-to-peer networking and business opportunities validates ROI to both suppliers and planner.

Ensuring that chapter board leaders have adequate training and support to effectively fulfill their roles and responsibilities is critical. Additional we need to engage the next generation of leaders by actively recruiting and mentoring young professionals. TEAM work is the key to accomplishing our SGMP’s mission and goals.

***What have you accomplished over the past two years while serving on the national board that has helped move SGMP forward in our industry and provide more return on investment for our members—both planners and suppliers? Be specific.***

During my tenure as a National Board member, I developed and maintained great working relationships within the hospitality industry while continuously promoting the benefits and impart of being affiliated with SGMP.



Advocating on behalf of our government/contract planners and supplier members is a top priority. I ask critical questions of the National Board to ensure we are representing the interest of all members and implementing policies that continue to advance SGMP. As Liaison to assigned Chapters, serve as their first point of contact providing leadership, guidance and shared information and ideas between chapters and the National Board.

Recommended speakers for NEC, with an emphasis on bringing diverse perspectives. Served on sub-committee[s] and chaired NEC Task Force. Co-facilitation of “So You Are New To SGMP” afforded me additional opportunities to encourage members to maintain their membership and invest in their Chapter/association through sponsorships and committee involvement.

### **Director Candidates (s)**

#### **Dina Fong, CGMP (GP)**



I believe that my work experience and extracurricular activities have equipped me to be a member of the National Board. My career started in the California State Capitol where I worked as a scheduler for then-Assembly member Delaine Eastin. A scheduler needs to be organized, flexible, and be able to multi-task. During Eastin’s two terms as California’s SSPI, I served as her special assistant and worked on various projects including coordinating the SSPI’s statewide conferences and being the host state chair for the Council of Chief State School Officers conferences held in our state, as well as preparing event briefings, editing documents, and organizing school visits.

I then became a conference planner organizing multiple regional and statewide conferences ranging in size from 30-2,500. I was responsible for all aspects of an event from site selection, contract negotiation, registration, lodging, program development, audio-visual, food and beverage, and on-site management. I am familiar with many properties across the state and developed long-time relationships with many of our suppliers.

As a communications and executive office manager, I work closely with the SSPI and executive leadership in a busy office where I manage staff and handle multiple tasks that are often time-sensitive, politically-sensitive, and confidential which requires me to have discernment in making decisions.



As a government planner, I am aware of the challenges and needs that our industry and colleagues face and hope that my contributions as a board member can help make our jobs easier and help people grow personally and professionally.

***What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?***

I have been a member of SGMP for 16 years and have served on the Sacramento Chapter board in numerous capacities as president, immediate past president, secretary, and director. I understand what serving on a chapter board entails and have experience in working together with a team to ensure that our goals and educational objectives are met and that we meet the needs of our organization and members. I have led many teams over the years and work well with others in order to achieve a common goal and a successful outcome. I have integrity and am hard-working, dependable, easy-going, flexible, and calm even in stressful situations. I feel that my previous SGMP and other volunteer experiences as well as my job have prepared me to take on a new challenge in serving on the SGMP National Board. I appreciate SGMP and value what it has done for meeting planners and suppliers over the years. I have received many benefits through my involvement—the knowledge, education, and friendships I have gained are priceless. I would enjoy the opportunity to serve our members at the national level and help this organization continue to thrive and grow.

***What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?***

I believe that the most significant challenge facing SGMP is membership—recruiting new members and retaining current ones. Unfortunately, due to attrition from retirements, job changes, and the demise of many government conference planning units and full-time conference planners, our membership has declined over the years.

While it's important to recruit new members to bring fresh ideas into the organization, it can be difficult if government meeting planners have diminished and no one is replacing those positions. But one way we can try to be successful in this endeavor is to think outside the box and be more creative in where we look for members and reach out to places we may not have considered before.

Regarding member retention, it is important to ensure that our members feel engaged, supported, and valued as well as understand their benefits. Education plays a key role in retention so that our members receive professional and personal development and gain skills that they can apply in their jobs and other aspects of their life. This means investing in quality speakers who can provide takeaways during their presentations. Conducting an annual climate survey helps in assessing the needs of our members.



*Please share specific examples of how you have engaged SGMP members during your time serving in volunteer leadership positions for SGMP and what have you been able to accomplish? Please be specific.*

During my time serving with the Sacramento Chapter, I feel my greatest contributions in terms of member engagement have been in my involvement with our communications committee which included our chapter newsletter and chapter website where I was co-chair and/or board liaison for many years. Our team worked hard and produced an award-winning newsletter two years in a row. I was responsible for managing the content and writing and editing articles. We highlighted our members by featuring profiles of our planners and suppliers; and recognizing our scholarship recipients and our Planners and Suppliers of the Year and President's Award honorees. We spotlighted upcoming programs as well as provided a recap of our monthly programs and events such as the Joint Education Conference and the NEC so that those who couldn't attend could still benefit from what our speakers shared and gain some of the education that they missed. The newsletter was a great way for people to learn more about each other and about our programs. Our award-winning website was another way for members and guests to learn more about SGMP and our events, and was redesigned it to be user-friendly and easy to navigate.

**Lorie Jaegers, CGMP, CTA (S)**



In my opinion, the National Leadership Team is the best of the best. If elected as a National Board member I would strive to insure everyone in the government planning or supplier industry knows the true value of SGMP. I love to share the benefits, the education, the networking and the relationships one will receive. Never have I had the opportunity through any other organization to meet so many colleagues from all over the United States and learn so much at the same time. I would also encourage everyone to go through the CGMP class. Not only for the certification but the great education also.

I personally have learned all about social media, including building a website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Pinterest. I knew absolutely nothing about social media and now take great pride in our chapter's social media, I even became an administrator for the Courtyard's Facebook all because of what I learned with SGMP!

As a liaison for other chapters, I would encourage them to come up with new ideas, to gain membership, increase membership certification and new fundraising ideas for their chapters.

*What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?*



I am uniquely qualified to serve as a National SGMP Director because I truly believe in SGMP and all of the personal and professional benefits it has to offer. I have no fear in public speaking and feel it is an asset that will gain respect and benefit the Board and the entire membership tremendously. I believe it takes dedication, determination, and true commitment to serve on the National Board. I would never take this responsibility lightly and I am fully committed to doing whatever is necessary to help SGMP grow and prosper both on the National and local level.

*What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?*

I find gaining new members and membership retention are the most significant challenges facing the future of SGMP. I am very involved in my current chapter to ensure our monthly meetings are educational, yet fun. I often encourage everyone in the business to attend a meeting, see what we do, and recognize the many benefits SGMP has to offer. I regularly encourage our members to bring other government meeting planners or a supplier they work with, to let them experience SGMP for themselves. I try to make everyone feel welcome and like they are someone important in our chapter. I also encourage members to get involved, letting them know they will be pleasantly surprised with the personal rewards.

*Please share specific examples of how you have engaged SGMP members during your time serving in volunteer leadership positions for SGMP and what have you been able to accomplish? Please be specific.*

The most rewarding thing I have accomplished for our chapter is personally taking the time to revamp the MOCAP Chapter's website and newsletter so it would be more appealing. During this time, I would request members to send pictures, articles, or anything they wanted to see. I now have members that send me information and articles on a regular basis. When the website was first completed, we played a game every month, I would ask members to identify something new on the website, or which social networking site or page something in particular was located on. This provided an incentive for everyone to watch our social media and website on a regular basis.

Our newsletter was originally 30-50 pages long and was sent out quarterly. I changed it to monthly and our members actually started reading it. I know because they comment regularly about the articles or photos in the monthly newsletter.

At the 2018 National Education Conference, in Norfolk, VA, our chapter won third place Communications of the Year. I was honored to go back to our chapter members that because of their involvement in the website and newsletter, our chapter won this award for the first time ever.



## Mark Richardson, CGMP (S)



As a dedicated and passionate member of SGMP, I have served on the chapter level and national level supporting the organization since 2012. On the Chapter level for the Rocky Mountain Chapter, I served in several positions: Supplier Director, Treasurer, Fundraising Committee Chair, Membership Committee, Fall Education Committee, Awards Gala committee and served as mentor to new members. I continue to provide dedicated support to the Chapter on a regular basis and attend all monthly chapter meetings/special events.

On the National level, I serve as one of two Gilmer Institute of Learning Fundraising Trustees. I also serve on the Board of Directors for the Peak Military Care Network, the Association of the United States Army, and the Military Affairs Council. In this capacity, I provide guidance for increasing membership, venue selections and fund raising.

I will bring to the National Board my 23 + years in hospitality. My knowledge of how the government does business and experience working with the military branches (Army and Air Force) as well as other associations are highly recognized by my peers and superiors in the meetings industry. My expertise with RFPs will be an added asset to the team when reviewing RFPs and site selections for National Educational Conferences. My goal as a Supplier Director will be to;

- ▶ Support National policy updates
- ▶ Create unique Incentives to increase our membership
- ▶ Support all chapters and their members
- ▶ Continue serving as a Mentor to others to become leaders within SGMP

### *What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?*

I believe I am the most qualified for the Director position because of my experience serving on the Rocky Mountain Chapter board as Director and Treasurer, and my current tenure serving on the Gilmore Institute of Learning for fundraising. I will bring a fresh perspective on the possibilities to increase membership for struggling chapters, and increase overall revenues for a healthy organization

### *What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?*

Our decreasing membership at the chapter level is detrimental to the entire organization. We need to offer specific membership drives tailored to each chapter in need, offer new incentives for members who bring in new people, relax temporarily the



restrictions on planner members to grow membership and have members at large attached to a local chapter

*Please share specific examples of how you have engaged SGMP members during your time serving in volunteer leadership positions for SGMP and what have you been able to accomplish? Please be specific.*

On the Rocky Mountain Chapter level serving as Director I aggressively worked to increase membership, offering incentives for membership, a new Kindle for whoever brings in the most members.

We were a struggling chapter in the past, with the board's and memberships help we increased membership and are a strong chapter.

I also served as a mentor at the chapter level for new members getting them comfortable with the chapter, and encouraging them to join committees.

**Carolyn Wence, CGMP, CMP (CP)**



I have owned my own business since 1997 and the first thing I learned is to join organizations that help with your business and help with your community.

As an MPI, Oregon chapter member for 27 years, I have held an office position or served on a committee for each of those years. With MPI, helped with the Food Bank, Dress for Success and many others.

As an SGMP Oregon chapter member, I joined in December 2006 and asked to be on a committee right away but it seemed they were full on their committees until 2007. Then I offered to plan creative and educational meetings for the chapter and eventually became 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, then later served two terms as their President from 2011-2015.

Elected as a Gil Trustee July 2016 for a three year term. This was a wonderful experience to help with programs for the chapters. As I move along in different positions or just as a member:

I offer my talents: being open to new ideas and listen to others to what they have to offer, be supportive of those new ideas and working together as a team to attain our goal of good education for our members and offering my assistance in any way possible to reach those goals.



***What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?***

I feel that my leadership skills are great after serving as past president for our Oregon chapter for a two year term, also as past president for Oregon chapter of MPI, and I serve in leaderships roles for many organization such as Travel Portland, Advisory committee in the past or MPI Oregon chapter. I listen and try to fix any problems and engage with all the people setting on a board or committee and it has worked well for me in the past and present.

***What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?***

The most significant challenge facing SGMP I think is finding a way to spread the word for our great education and benefits of SGMP to all the different planners and suppliers at our local State government offices. I know that we could benefit many of the staff involved in meetings if they knew about SGMP

***Please share specific examples of how you have engaged SGMP members during your time serving in volunteer leadership positions for SGMP and what have you been able to accomplish? Please be specific.***

As a past president for GOSGMP, (Oregon Chapter) I was able us update our policies and the business plan that was very outdated, also able to invite new members and even today, I am adding another new planner to our chapter. I was able to meet and talk with all our members and found that when one or two members had questions that they felt they could not bring up any other way, they reached out to me as President and we worked out any problems.



## Gilmer Institute of Learning Trustee Candidates

### SCHOLARSHIP AND CERTIFICATION CANDIDATES:

#### Chele Clark, CGMP (GP)



I have worked in the government sector for 20 years. During my career, I worked with Executive Directors, Attorneys, CEOs and elected officials. The organization and management skills learned while working with this diverse group of leaders have served me well within SGMP.

As Chapter President, I was fortunate to share my experience in leading others, negotiations, and bringing teams together in a collaborative environment for the betterment of the Chapter and SGMP as a whole. I assisted in creating a mentorship program for new members to ensure they were welcomed to the SGMP family with open arms.

Simultaneously while serving as President of the chapter, I served on the Meetings Industry Council (MIC) Advisory Board. My role on the Board was to be a voice for the government planner. My involvement in MIC gave me the opportunity to promote SGMP, its benefits, resources and networking opportunities with our planner and supplier members.

On the SGMP National level, I was on the National Program Committee and served on the Blue Ribbon Task Force Committee. As a dedicated and passionate member of SGMP my goals as a Gilmer Trustee will be to:

1. Rewrite the 2020 NEC Scholarship Application focusing more on "National" level participation.
2. Work with the National scholarship recipients throughout the conference to ensure they are taking full advantage of the learning opportunities at NEC.
3. Prepare a comprehensive report on Chapter scholarships, committee members and recipients that will serve as another resource tool for SGMP leaders.



***What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?***

A proven leader who served as a former Chapter President and Planner Director. Working with a diverse group of other like-minded leaders have allowed me to grow professionally and personally throughout my tenure in SGMP, since 2007. Learning from fellow planner and supplier members about annual forecasting, adjusting budgets due to shortfalls, active listening, being open-minded and how to make sound decisions that are in the best interest of our members are just a few leadership traits and skills that I will continue to use.

***What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?***

One of the challenges that is facing SGMP nationally is showing members ROI on their investment. Education is the one of the keys to show ROI. The CGMP designation provides the education needed for both planners and suppliers to see tangible proof that the investment in SGMP pays off. The knowledge gained from the CGMP course helps all members to provide elegant, effective and cost saving meetings. My role on the GIL is to work with Garland and the other trustee to ensure the exams are current and updated, to find proctors that are qualified to proctor the tests and to help individual members recertify.

***What have you accomplished during your current term on the GIL that has helped move SGMP forward in our industry and provide more return on investment for our members – both planners and suppliers. Please be specific.***

I have had direct involvement in CGMP testing, revising test questions, creating a scoring matrix for chapters' use when scoring internal scholarship applications, and working with NEC Scholarship recipients. Currently, working on creating a national proctor list to help find CGMP proctors, and revising by-laws that pertain to the recertification program.



## EDUCATION AND PROGRAMMING CANDIDATES:

### Jeanne Larson, CGMP (CP)



In my role as Board President I lead our Chapter by managing monthly Board meetings and monthly membership meetings. My leadership has included implementing strategies to increase membership growth and retention, refreshing our chapter programming, updating our Chapter logo, migrating our website to the StarChapter platform to improve the user experience and functionality, and planning our Chapter 20th Anniversary celebration!

One of my key strengths is bringing people together by finding commonalities, and helping to heal hurt feelings and differences in order to persuade people to work together towards a common goal. I am also a good communicator and a good listener, and I love a good organizational project! I have a great passion and enthusiasm for SGMP, and I would love to help grow our profession by being part of the dynamic and creative board that will take this Association into the future.

I am the Conference and Logistics Manager at the Battered Women's Justice Project in Minneapolis, MN, a position I designed and have held since 2006. My background is in incentive travel and meeting planning, having worked in corporate travel and meeting planning for several years prior to joining BWJP.

I am responsible for all logistical elements of off-site conferences and meetings offered by BWJP, as well as several other agencies within the CDS funding stream, including logistical elements such as procurement, pre-program management, onsite program management, post-program conference reporting and billing. Thank you for your time and your consideration.

### *What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?*

I have been a member of SGMP since 2007. I have been a SGMP Northern Lights Chapter Board member since 2008 and am currently serving my second term as SGMP Northern Lights Board President (2015-2019). I earned my CGMP Certification in 2009. My primary responsibility on the Board from 2009 through 2015 was Programming Chair. I deeply value and respect the SGMP objectives of Education, Resources and Networking and have always worked hard in order to achieve all three in the Northern Lights Chapter. One of my strongest assets is that of bringing people together over a common issue and I look forward to supporting and advising Chapters regarding monthly programming and government content.



***What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?***

I believe the most significant challenge to SGMP is that of membership and retention. I'm committed to education and I believe that it is through education that SGMP attracts and maintains a strong membership. Serving on the Gilmer Institute of Learning will enable me to do my best to provide a thoughtful evaluation of Programming that will serve and benefit all members of SGMP, in the long term. As an

Education and Programming Trustee, I would be honored to have the opportunity to influence the direction of this effort.

***Please share specific examples of how you have engaged SGMP members during your time serving in volunteer leadership positions for SGMP and what have you been able to accomplish? Please be specific.***

I have been able to facilitate filling Board vacancies via appointment. I talk to people about the benefits of being on the Board, for example, personal career advancement and an opportunity to serve fellow Chapter members. Because of this engagement Northern Lights has a great pool of nominees for the coming election.

In conjunction with my Program Chair duties I have identified people who have special interests that they may want to share with the Chapter. This has resulted in many popular educational programs, and members feeling more connected to SGMP due to this involvement.

In order to best serve our membership, I make it a point to know who our Chapter members are. I network at every monthly meeting to find out if people are getting value from their membership. This information has been instrumental in developing education programming that benefits the specific needs of our Chapter.

I engage with new members through a Chapter New Member Lunch. By finding out what their interests are, as well as what their expectations are of us, this makes new people feel comfortable, valued, and fosters mutual respect and responsibility.



## Christina Saragnse (S)



As a graduate of the University of South Carolina with a B.S. in Hospitality Management, I have a deeply rooted passion for serving others. Also having come from a military family as well as being the daughter of educators and state employees, my respect and advocacy for public service is a priority. Having worked in various departments including front office, events and food and beverage management for Hilton prior to moving into a sales role, I have a strong background in hotel operations as well as revenue management and contractual legalities. Experience outside of the hotel industry includes management of special events such as The Masters

Tournament at Augusta National, the US Open at Merion Golf Club, The Philadelphia Eagles and many other unique opportunities. Residing just outside of Washington, D.C. and just towns over from Hilton headquarters, the accessibility and exposure to both government entities and resources provided by an industry leader gives me a huge advantage to making an impact in the government meetings setting for suppliers and customers alike.

### *What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?*

As a Hilton Worldwide Sales Manager, I have the unique benefit of overseeing the government market from an elevated perspective which allows me to identify trends and patterns impacting our hotels and planners alike. By working closely with my support team and partners, we were able to successfully secure more than 5,000 government meetings from over 100 government agencies amongst our 4,000+ US-based hotels within the Hilton portfolio in 2018 alone. Serving as the liaison between our government meeting planners and hotel partners to ensure that our work is done with the highest levels of integrity is my passion and privilege.

### *What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?*

In my experience, the most significant challenge facing SGMP is that there can be a sense of divisiveness between suppliers and planners. We all lose perspective when that gap grows too wide or deep. We are at our best when we collaborate and respect each other's roles and responsibilities. I've worked for two Hilton complexes in the heart of government business between the district and the Pentagon in addition to serving in my current role at Hilton Worldwide Sales and have found the best solutions when there is collaborative, honest and respectful dialogue. We all as members of this amazing organization have an obligation to each other to work together on an equal playing field with a "one team" mentality. We have common goals to grow our networks, enhance our



education and ensure we have the sharpest skills in the industry. My goal as a Gilmer Institute of Learning Trustee would be to enhance our opportunities together by bridging the divides through better understanding and education of the government meetings market and the hotel industry.

*Please share specific examples of how you have engaged SGMP members during your time serving in volunteer leadership positions for SGMP and what have you been able to accomplish? Please be specific.*

While not in a volunteer leadership position, I have had many valuable opportunities to engage with SGMP members, especially over the last two years in my current role as a national sales manager. The most beneficial experiences have been the various Hilton Lunch & Learn events we've hosted where we incorporate planners, contractors and hotel partners and provide them with relevant educational opportunities such as the Network Ninja course provided by PSAV to help us all understand the inner workings of hotel Wi-Fi (and its pricing!). Also being able to contribute to the National Education Conference in '17 and present in '18 was very high-level exposure to the organization overall which greatly improved my outlook on how I could be a positive contributor to SGMP. Capitalizing on the feedback received from members and our hotels, I was able to elevate the level of engagement. The best example of this was the exceptional presence of Hilton at the '17 and '18 NEC Exhibit. With all the additional insight and experience I look forward to gaining in this role, I anticipate the success only to grow every year moving forward.

### **FUNDRAISING CANDIDATES:**

#### **Wayne Callis, CGMP (S)**



Wayne Callis is the Government Sales Manager with the Norfolk Convention and Visitors Bureau (d.b.a. VisitNorfolk). As a member of the SGMP, he brings fresh ideas by thinking outside of the box to promote membership growth and financial stability. Wayne promotes SGMP at every opportunity through daily interactions with clients and hotel partners, showing the benefits of the society.

During his tenure as the Treasurer for the Old Dominion Chapter for two terms, he raised the level of accuracy and accountability for the chapter. As a result of his efforts he was awarded "Most Improved Treasurer" in 2014 and received the National Treasurer's award in 2017.

Wayne has served on the chapter's Education Committee and is currently on the Membership and Fundraising Committees for the Old Dominion Chapter. He



encourages fellow members to become more involved with the society to further their professionalism and leadership skills. Wayne commits his enthusiasm, SGMP team spirit and professionalism to meeting and exceeding the fundraising goal for the society. He would consider it a privilege to hold the position of Fundraising Trustee for the Gilmer Institute of Learning.

***What makes you uniquely qualified to serve in the leadership position that you are seeking?***

I am qualified for the position because I have over 25 years of experience in the hospitality industry including managing events. During my career I have managed catered events up to 1100 people, weddings, high-end silent and live auctions and socials events. I have valuable experience from both the hotel side as well as the Convention and Visitors Bureau side.

As a member of the Old Dominion Chapter's Fundraising Committee and past Treasurer, I have worked with the committee to initiate creative fundraising events to increase revenue streams for the chapter. Making fundraising events creative, fresh and engaging is a key to member engagement and higher revenue growth.

Of course, one of the most important aspects of fundraising is soliciting donations. Working with perspective donors on unique ideas for their donation items for the auctions helps to increase interest, participation and revenues. Sharing advice and ideas with chapter fundraiser chairs will benefit chapters financially and the society as a whole.

***What do you consider to be the most significant challenge facing SGMP and what have you done or would you do to ensure success regarding this challenge?***

I feel the most compelling challenges we face as a society is membership growth/retention and financial stability. Engaging current members on the chapter level is essential to chapter and society growth. Just as I felt as a new member, not exactly sure what would be expected of me on a committee or board position, I would not have taken the step without encouragement from veteran members. Mentorship is a key to engaging new and potential members to make them feel welcome and help spread the word on the benefits of membership.

As a trustee I will continue to encourage potential planners and suppliers to experience the education, networking, professionalism and relations that are valuable to me as a member. I will promote a pro-active and dedicated attitude to the society's fundraising events to engage members and improve revenues at the NEC and other national events. I am dedicated to increasing the financial growth of the society. Overcoming challenges, even those out of our control, with persistence is extremely important.



Even in times of sequestration and government shutdowns I have always supported SGMP financially and morally. I will continue to support the society with enthusiasm and professionalism to reach these goals.

*Please share specific examples of how you have engaged SGMP members during your time serving in volunteer leadership positions for SGMP and what have you been able to accomplish? Please be specific.*

During my tenure as the Old Dominion Chapter Treasurer, I engaged the chapter board and members on the distribution of more funds for education to fall well within the 80/20 rule. I feel with better education all the members of the chapter benefit and see the value of membership. As a result, stronger education programs brought higher attendance which lead to growth in monthly revenues. The higher income yields the availability for scholarship funding from the chapter for the annual NEC. Sharing this with the members at our chapter meetings kept them engaged and aware of our efforts. Working on the fundraising committee, we have implemented fun and engaging ways to increase revenues. Our annual Culinary Auction, Big 50/50 and CVB Destination Baskets Auction are examples of where I encourage and challenge fellow members to outdo each other on our donations and sales. This has resulted in the highest revenue growth of all of our fundraising efforts.

Keeping my hotel partners involved and encouraging my partners that are non-members to attend meetings and the chapter's Education Conference shows the enthusiasm I have for increasing membership in the society. Norfolk hotel partners have renewed their memberships annually, year after year.