

2024

PCMA Foundation Impact Report



Our history, our future.
world's largest business event
convening Leaders. Networking
Marketing intelligence. ✨
Global business events industry
Extraordinary experiences.
“Fostering conversations.”
the social and economic progress

Grateful



Receiving the Chris Wehking Scholarship created opportunities for me to meet other students and professionals within the business events industry. Additionally, the financial impact of receiving this scholarship was huge for me and my family. I am grateful for everything that has come with receiving this scholarship, such as being able to attend Convening Leaders 2024.

For the first time, I was able to attend an actual conference. Which might not mean much on the surface, but it allowed me to gain professional skills, participate in relevant educational sessions and workshops, network with students and industry professionals, and most of all, it brought me to a place where I felt confident and surrounded by people that were like-minded and also part of the same industry I aspire to be a part of. This short description of how this scholarship is just a glance at the vast impact the Chris Wehking Scholarship had on my life. I will forever be grateful!



Will Jones

Student, Johnson
& Wales University

**CHRIS WEH KING
SCHOLARSHIP WINNER**



The PCMA Foundation Impact Report is published annually to share key results from all the Foundation programs and initiatives.

Since 1985, the PCMA Foundation has been dedicated to advancing the business events industry by providing scholarships, funding research, and delivering essential resources. Through collective fundraising efforts, the Foundation has awarded over 2,900 scholarships and contributed over \$1M USD annually to initiatives that propel the global business events industry forward.

In 2024 alone, the Foundation awarded more than 200 scholarships, expanding educational opportunities for students and building vital

connections with industry leaders. \$300,000 USD was directed toward research and educational projects, enabling the community to adapt to emerging trends and challenges. Additionally, the Foundation contributed \$45,000 USD to support four charities.

This impactful work is only possible through the generosity of our members and community, empowering the industry and nurturing the next generation of leaders.



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and CEMA



Meredith Rollins
Chief Community Officer,
PCMA & Executive
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JoAnn Bedrosian Ryan
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Foundation





↑ The PCMA Foundation awarded 221 scholarships in 2024.



Emily Zirbes
Student, Iowa State
University

CONTINUING
EDUCATION
SCHOLARSHIP



How did the scholarship help you?

For me, this scholarship is funding more than some of the costs of my education; it is funding my professional future. Education is something everyone says that can never be taken away. However, the ability to achieve education often poses financial hurdles that one must be able to overcome to even get the opportunity.

This scholarship helped to alleviate some of those worries allowing me to focus both on my studies as well as contribute to the development of my startup, which is fundamentally the product of both my passion for event management as well as my higher education. Since being awarded this scholarship, I am one step closer to my goals!





Kadejah Pearson
Event Manager, National Head
Start Association

DEBORAH SEXTON
SCHOLARSHIP

How did the scholarship help you?

This scholarship has significantly advanced my goals by supporting my Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) studies, including the costs for prep courses and study materials.

Earning the CMP credential is essential to my professional growth, as it validates my expertise, enhances my credibility in the field, and prepares me to take on more complex and impactful event management responsibilities. I aspire to be in a leadership role within a nonprofit organization, where I can use strategic thinking and partnership-building skills to create equity for underserved populations.



Shizhen Jia
Student, University of Florida

CONTINUING EDUCATION
SCHOLARSHIP

Where are you in 5 years?

In five years, I envision myself as a professor of event management and hospitality management at a university, contributing to both academic knowledge and industry practice. I plan to develop a strong research agenda focusing on innovative approaches to business events and sustainable practices in the hospitality industry. I aim to be teaching courses that blend theoretical foundations

with practical applications, preparing the next generation of event professionals.

Additionally, I hope to be actively involved in industry partnerships, creating bridges between academic research and real-world event management challenges. This position will allow me to continue conducting meaningful research while shaping future industry leaders through education.





Visionary Awards

Congratulations 2024 Honorees
& Award Winners



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT HONOREES



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University



Stuart Levy MBA, PhD
Associate Professor of
Management
School of Business



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Retired CEO
Nashville CVB



Greg O'Dell
President Venue
Management
Oak View Group

PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

BUSINESS EVENTS STRATEGIST OF THE YEAR

Stuart Ruff-Lyon
Chief Events and Sales Officer, RIMS

GROUNDBREAKER AWARD

Beth Surmont,
FASAE, CMP Fellow, CAE
Vice President of Business Event Strategy
& Design, 360 Live Media

EVENT DESIGNERS OF THE YEAR

Jasmine and Tyra Dyson
Founders, The Brand Xperience Lounge

OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO A CHAPTER OR REGION

Marcus Eng CMP Fellow, DES
Director, Meeting Operations &
Technology, American Public
Transportation Association

SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR

Doug Bennett
Executive Vice President, Louisville
Tourism

COMMUNITY ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

Dana Johnston
Vice President, Client Partnerships,
EMC Outdoor

DIGITAL EXPERIENCE STRATEGIST OF THE YEAR

Shawn (Yih-Hsiang) Cheng
Regional Director of North America, ICCA

Research & Education



The PCMA Foundation invested \$300,000 USD in research and education programs to support critical learning initiatives that empower the PCMA community and advance the business events industry.

EVENT ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT ✓

An Event Accessibility Audit at edUcon was funded as part of PCMA's commitment to becoming a leader in event inclusivity. The audit, conducted by Made Welcome consultancy, highlighted both challenges and opportunities in creating accessible temporary event environments, offering actionable recommendations to enhance inclusivity for all attendees. This

initiative demonstrates PCMA's dedication to setting a standard for inclusive events, fostering a more welcoming environment for diverse audiences.

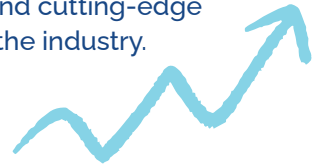
The insights have already informed event design for Convening Leaders and will be shared broadly to inspire and guide the industry toward greater accessibility.



PCMA BEST IN CLASS PROGRAM

The PCMA Best in Class Program is funded annually to support individual PCMA chapters in hosting educational events. These events feature highly regarded speakers recognized as 'best in class' within the business events industry, providing participants with top-tier knowledge and valuable insights on current trends and best practices in events.

In 2025, the program will be rebranded as the PCMA Leading Class Program, aligned with the Foundation's mission to inspire continuous growth, leadership development, and cutting-edge content across the industry.



OTHER RESEARCH & EDUCATION FUNDING

Enterprise Skills Assessment Framework Developed

Spanish Closed Captioning Translation for three Certificate Courses (AIES, AEDS, SED)

Quantitative Phase of the CEMA Customer Event Research

Crisis Management & Risk Mitigation Certificate Course

Communicating Across Generations: Building Connections for Cohesive Workplace Micro course

DEI Reimagined: Forging the Path to Sustainable Inclusivity Training Micro course

Special Event Design on-demand Certificate Course

Event Tech Test Drive Virtual Event

Trends to Truth: Designing for Belonging Workshop



Charitable Giving



The PCMA Foundation provided \$45,000 USD in charitable gifts to local organizations in the communities where key PCMA events are held, reflecting its commitment to giving back and creating a positive impact.

The Above and Beyond Foundation, Alternatives for Girls, Coalition on Temporary Shelter (COTS), Perkins Elementary School

Thank You

Foundation Impact Partners for your generous support in 2024.

FOUNDATION CHAMPIONS EACH COMMITTED OVER \$55K USD IN 2024 TO FOUNDATION EVENTS, RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIPS



FOUNDATION GUARDIANS EACH COMMITTED OVER \$35K USD IN 2024 TO FOUNDATION EVENTS, RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIPS



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Thank you to the Legacy Society



Thao Truong
Student, Georgia State University

LEGACY SOCIETY
SCHOLARSHIP

Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

This scholarship represents more than financial assistance; it's a powerful acknowledgment of the effort I've dedicated to my studies and my unwavering commitment to achieving my goals. Your belief in me fuels my passion for this industry, and I am incredibly excited to embark on a career in hospitality after graduation. In five years, I see myself combining my passions for event management, hotel management and travel into a fulfilling career that brings out the best of what this dynamic industry has to offer. I'm also eager to further my education and am aiming for a master's degree in Global Hospitality Management at Georgia State University.



The Legacy Society brings together over 170 passionate champions of the PCMA Foundation, all united by their dedication to shaping the industry's future. Members of the Legacy Society make a lasting difference, creating personal legacies that inspire and support the next generation of leaders.

Through the generosity of its members, the Legacy Society proudly funds a scholars' program that empowers undergraduate students in their final year of study. This initiative provides

crucial financial assistance to help students complete their education and successfully transition into the workforce, igniting their professional journeys with confidence and opportunity.

A special thank you to Brian D. Stevens, Executive Chairman, ConferenceDirect and Stephen Revetria, President, Giants Enterprises for hosting an evening celebrating the PCMA Foundation Legacy Society and raising over \$120,000 USD.

WELCOME 2024 NEW LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS



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Tammy Blount-Canavan
Bonnie Carlson
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Any contribution amount will help us pave the way to a bright future for the business events industry.

[FOUNDATION.PCMA.ORG/DONATE](https://foundation.pcma.org/donate)



FASHION SHOW

LIVING IN COLOR

PRESENTED BY



Over 450 professionals attended the 2024 "Living in Color Fashion Show. This PCMA Foundation fundraiser celebrates authenticity, pride, compassion, and living life boldly and in vivid color! The models walk the runway in their favorite Palm Beach inspired attire featuring designer Amanda Perna. Save the Date, April 9, 2025! For details visit:

[HTTPS://FOUNDATION.PCMA.ORG/GET-INVOLVED/FASHION-SHOW/](https://foundation.pcma.org/get-involved/fashion-show/)

Join the Legacy Society

One of the most generous ways you can give back to the industry you love is through a Legacy gift to the PCMA Foundation.

[FOUNDATION.PCMA.ORG/GET-INVOLVED/LEGACY-SOCIETY](https://foundation.pcma.org/get-involved/legacy-society)

GET FIT

Participate

During PCMA events, the Foundation hosts several fundraising events: GET FIT with the Foundation fitness, Hospitality Helping Hands, Party with a Purpose, Give Back Bash, as well as the annual Stepping Up Challenge. By participating, you are supporting the work of the Foundation.

[FOUNDATION.PCMA.ORG](https://foundation.pcma.org)

VISIONARY AWARDS

PRESENTED BY 

1,000+ professionals gather for this annual celebration recognizing industry trailblazers – Lifetime Achievement Honorees and Professional Excellence Award Finalists. Save the Date, April 10, 2025! For details visit:

[FOUNDATION.PCMA.ORG/VISIONARYAWARDS](https://foundation.pcma.org/visionsaryawards)

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