PCMA

PCMA Foundation
Impact Report



Roy B. Evans
Scholarship Recipient

Jack Turner

Student, Temple University



The Roy B. Evans scholarship has had a profound impact on my education and career path. It has allowed me to complete my final year at Temple University, where I am pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Event and Entertainment Management. Thanks to this support, I am also able to spend my last semester in Orlando, where I will be interning at Universal Orlando Resort as an Event Management intern. This internship is a milestone I have aspired to achieve since the moment I applied to Temple, and with the help of both the university and this generous scholarship from PCMA, I am now able to pursue that dream.

My internships, from live event production at Rock Lititz to athletic marketing at Temple University, have shown me that this industry offers endless opportunities to grow, build meaningful relationships, and create memorable moments for others. If someone is passionate about bringing people together and thrives in a dynamic environment, the hospitality and events industry is an incredible place to build a fulfilling and impactful career.

The **PCMA Foundation Impact Report** is published each year to highlight the meaningful outcomes made possible through our programs and initiatives, while also recognizing the donors, partners, and scholarship recipients whose support and achievements make this impact possible.

Since 1985, the PCMA Foundation has been committed to strengthening and advancing the business events industry by funding research, providing scholarships, and delivering essential educational resources. Thanks to collective fundraising efforts, the Foundation has awarded more than 3,000 scholarships since its inception and now contributes nearly $1 million USD annually to initiatives that support the growth and evolution of our global community.

In 2025, the Foundation awarded over 200 scholarships—opening doors for students, expanding access to education, and fostering connections with industry leaders. We also invested $255,000 USD in research and educational projects that help the community navigate emerging trends and challenges. In addition, the Foundation provided $45,000 USD in charitable support to four mission-driven organizations.

This impact is only possible because of the generosity of our donors, members, and partners. Together, we empower our industry, uplift our community, and nurture the next generation of leaders.



Neil Brownlee

Head of Business Events, VisitScotland
Chair, PCMA Board of Directors & Trustees



Sherrif Karamat, CAE

President & CEO, PCMA & CEMA



Meredith Rollins

Chief Community Officer, PCMA
Executive Director, PCMA Foundation



JoAnn Bedrosian Ryan

Senior Director, PCMA Foundation

2025 Scholarship Recipients



Continuing Education Scholarship

Margaret (Maggie) Thompson
Student, New York University

How did the scholarship help you?

The Continuing Education Scholarship from PCMA has lifted a significant financial burden of pursuing my master's degree at New York University. I am so passionate about expanding my knowledge of this industry that I love, but this comes at a high cost, and I am so grateful for the funding from PCMA that made my dream a reality. With this support I have been able to pour my energy into studying as much as I can and take advantage of the opportunities NYU has for their students.

Not only did this scholarship support me financially, but it has allowed me to get more involved with this incredible organization and grow my network with industry peers and leaders. As a part of this award, I can attend Convening Leaders, which will be an enormous opportunity for me to step outside my comfort zone and experience everything this industry has to offer. I am truly so appreciative of this generous support in helping me achieve my educational and professional goals!



Legacy Society Scholarship

Nolan King
Student, Indiana University Indianapolis

How did the scholarship help you?

Receiving the PCMA Legacy Society Scholarship has made a huge impact on me as a student. It has taken a lot of financial stress off my shoulders and allowed me to focus on growing in the event and hospitality industry. Because of this scholarship, I will be able to attend PCMA Convening Leaders in 2026. Attending this conference has already played a major role in shaping who I am as a student and who I want to become as a future industry leader. The support from this scholarship has helped me stay involved in PCMA, build meaningful connections, and continue learning from the best in the field.



Foundation Scholarship

Isabella Whalen
Student, San Diego State University

How did the scholarship help you?

Receiving the PCMA Foundation Scholarship has taken a huge weight off my shoulders financially, but it also gave me something even more valuable: confidence. Being recognized by an organization I admire made me feel seen and supported in a way I didn't expect. Through the scholarship, I will be able to attend CL26 where I will meet people who have inspired me and learn so much about the industry, I'm looking to build a future in. It made me feel reassured that I'm exactly where I'm meant to be.

I'd encourage others by sharing what drew me in: the people. This industry is full of the most fascinating individuals I've ever met who are genuinely excited to connect with others. I'd tell them about how taking a chance in this field led me to opportunities, mentors, and a sense of purpose I'm truly grateful for. If someone loves connecting with people, solving problems on the fly, and being part of experiences that create lasting memories, there is no more rewarding path than hospitality.



Foundation Scholarship

Paige Vigiletti
Student, San Diego State University

How did the scholarship help you?

Receiving this scholarship has been an incredibly meaningful part of my time at San Diego State University. As a Hospitality & Tourism Management major, this support has lifted a huge weight off my shoulders. It has allowed me to devote more energy to my coursework and professional development opportunities that are shaping me into the leader I hope to become. More personally, it reminded me that people in this industry believe in my potential. Coming from a family deeply rooted in hospitality and events, this recognition feels like a step toward continuing that legacy with confidence and purpose.

Hospitality is a place for people who love people. It's dynamic, creative, and full of opportunities to grow into leadership roles that truly make a difference. If someone enjoys bringing joy to others, solving problems with heart, and being part of a community that thrives on teamwork and kindness, there is no better place to build a career than this industry.

Congratulations 2025 Lifetime Achievement Honorees, Professional Excellence Award Winners & Finalists!



Lifetime Achievement Honorees



Elliott Ferguson
President and CEO, **Destination DC**



Donald Getz, PhD
Professor Emeritus, **University of Calgary**



Lyn Lewis-Smith
CEO, **Business Events Sydney**



Carol McGury
Retired EVP of Event and Education Services, **Smithbucklin**



David Peckinpaugh
President and CEO, **Maritz**

Business Events Strategist of the Year

Lisa Astorga, CMP: Director of Meetings, International Society on Thrombosis & Haemostasis

Jennifer Ragan-Fore: Chief Experience Officer, International Society for Technology in Education and the Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development

Nneka St. Gerard, CMP: Chief Strategy Officer of Meetings, Membership & Marketing, Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine

Business Events Supplier of the Year

Carrie Ferenac: Co-founder & President, Convention News Television

Alison LaFollette, CMP: Director of Mid-Atlantic Region, Visit Seattle

Ronnette Phillips: Director of Hilton Direct, Hilton Worldwide Sales

Digital Experience Strategist of the Year

Sina Bünte, CMP, DES: Founder, DigitalMind.Events

Mahongany Jones, CMP, DES, HMCC: Founder & CEO, Event Specialists Inc.

Brian Zambotti: VP of Business Development, Association, & Societies, Conexiant

Experience Design of the Year

AAPA Team: Led by Anthony Maggiore, Senior Director of Conference & Meetings, American Academy of Physician Associates

RIMS team: Led by Stuart Ruff-Lyon, Chief Events & Sales Officer, Risk & Insurance Management Society Inc

Katie McCormick: Executive Director of Meetings, Events, & Convention, National Electrical Contractors Association

Groundbreaker

Jeffrey Fehr: Client Engagement Manager of Business Events, Destination Canada

Lori Jenaire, CMP, CDS, MBE: VP of Global Accounts, ConferenceDirect

Laurie Nelson-Choice, CGMP: Director of Diversity & National Sales, Visit Baltimore

Impact Award

Christine Cleaver: Associate Professor of Instruction, Event, & Entertainment Management; School of Sport, Tourism & Hospitality Management, Temple University

Mackenzie Loy: Founder & CEO, Homemade in DC

Visit Detroit Team: Led by Claude Molinari, President & CEO, Visit Detroit, and co-chair of the Detroit Local Organizing Committee for the NFL Draft

Outstanding Service to a Chapter or Region

Krista Cameron, DES: VP, Industry Relations & Business Development, Canada, Encore, PCMA Canada East Chapter

Sara McWilliams: Senior Director of Global Accounts, HelmsBriscoe, PCMA Greater Philadelphia Chapter

Annette Suriani: Principal & Chief Meeting Strategist, AMS Meetings Solutions, PCMA Capital Chapter

Research & Education

The PCMA Foundation proudly invested $255,000 USD in vital research and innovative learning programs—advancing our mission to equip the PCMA community with resources that inspire leadership, resilience, and industry-wide growth.



- Professional Meeting Management, 7th Edition
- Spark Lab Development
- Spark Certificate Program Micro-credential
- Onboarding & Training Program for Event Teams
- Spanish closed captioning for two certificate courses (EMA, TMEP)
- Sustainable Event Blueprint certificate course
- Technical Meeting & Event Production certificate course update
- Mastering Business Acumen for Events Professionals certificate course
- Leading Strategic Influence certificate course

PCMA Leading Class Chapter Education Program:

The “PCMA Leading Class” program is funded annually to support individual 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, continuing its mission to deliver exceptional educational experiences.

Spark Certificate Program Micro-credential:

The Spark Certificate Program empowers event professionals with AI mastery through five comprehensive modules covering everything from prompt engineering and logistics optimization to marketing automation and data analysis. This self-paced program, featuring hands-on applications with Spark Pro, enables planners to streamline operations, enhance creativity, and make data-driven decisions that transform how they plan, manage, and execute events.

Sustainable Events Blueprint Certificate Course:

The Sustainable Events Blueprint Certificate equips event professionals with comprehensive strategies for designing, delivering, and measuring environmentally responsible events through three modules covering sustainability fundamentals, advanced design techniques, and data-driven measurement. This on-demand program provides actionable frameworks aligned with SDGs and ESG criteria, enabling planners to minimize environmental impact while demonstrating measurable ROI and meeting increasing stakeholder expectations for eco-conscious events.



Dustin Arnheim

Senior Vice President, Sales and Services
Choose Chicago
Legacy Society Pillar Member

“My pledge is my way of paying forward — investing in the future of an industry and an organization that invested in me. PCMA doesn’t just prepare professionals to navigate change; it equips them to lead it. Supporting the Legacy Society ensures the next generation will have access to the same opportunity, mentorship, and inspiration that defined my journey.

This is my commitment to the industry that gave me my start — and continues to shape its future.”

Charitable Giving

The PCMA Foundation proudly invested $45,000 USD in charitable contributions to local organizations across Houston, Louisville, Austin and Tampa—cities that hosted some of our most impactful events in 2025—demonstrating our commitment to giving back and uplifting the communities we touch.



The Above and Beyond Foundation – Heroes of Hospitality Awards
Awarded to front line workers in Houston, Louisville, Austin and Tampa

Recognize front-line workers that demonstrate core values and embody the heart of hospitality through an extraordinary single act of service and/or consistent job performance that is truly “above and beyond”.

Backside Learning Center | Louisville, KY

Creating a community where every racetrack worker and their family can learn, grow, and thrive within and beyond the backstretch.

Bread of Life | Houston, TX

To fight against hunger and homelessness in Houston.

Texas Food Bank | Austin, TX

Assisting with the Texas flood disaster relief.



PCMA Foundation

Thank you foundation impact partners for your generous support in 2025.

Our foundation **champions** each committed over **$55k** USD in 2025 to foundation events, research and scholarships.

Our **guardian partners** each committed between **$35k** and **$55k** USD in 2025 to foundation events, research and scholarships.

Thank you to our sponsors

- Access
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- BMO Centre at Stampede Park
- Caesars Entertainment
- Choose Chicago
- Destination Cleveland
- Destination DC/ Events DC
- Destination Madison
- Destination Toronto
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- Discover Puerto Rico
- Dublin Convention Bureau
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- Louisville Tourism
- Maritz
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- Meet Boston
- Meet Long Beach
- Meet in Minneapolis
- Memphis Tourism
- MGM Resorts International
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- Nashville Convention and Visitors Corp
- New Orleans & Company/ Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
- New York City Tourism and Conventions
- Oak View Group
- Omni Hotels and Resorts
- Orange County Convention Center/ Visit Orlando
- Ottawa Tourism
- PCMA Convene
- Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Projection
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- Rosen Hotels and Resorts
- San Diego Tourism Authority
- Smart City Networks
- The Palm Beaches
- TMS
- Travel Portland
- United Airlines
- Virginia Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Visit Anaheim
- Visit Anchorage
- Visit Atlantic City
- Visit Austin/Austin Convention Center
- Visit Baltimore
- Visit California
- Visit Charlotte
- Visit Denver
- Visit Detroit
- Visit Fort Worth
- Visit Greater Palm Springs
- Visit Indy
- Visit Kansas City
- Visit Lauderdale
- Visit Milwaukee
- Vist Napa Valley
- Visit Oklahoma City
- Visit Omaha
- Visit Pittsburgh
- Visit Salt Lake
- Visit San Antonio
- Visit Savannah
- Visit Seattle
- Visit Tampa Bay



Abby Cantrell

Student, University of Nebraska – Lincoln
Legacy Society Scholarship Recipient

How would you encourage others to consider a career in the hospitality industry?

I'd encourage others to consider a career in hospitality by sharing how exciting it is to work in a field where your efforts genuinely make someone's day better. A simple smile or kind gesture can take you a long way and might even be the highlight of someone's day. This industry is full of creativity, teamwork, and passion for serving others. I'd tell them that hospitality isn't just about events or hotels; it's about people, stories, and creating experiences that matter.

During the pandemic, many hospitality businesses had to close, and I believe the response to those closures showed us that hospitality has truly become a necessity for many people. If they're someone who enjoys connecting with others, solving challenges with a smile, and being part of something bigger than themselves, hospitality is definitely the place for them.

A Legacy of Impact

Welcoming Our 2025 Legacy Society Members

New Members: Donna Bongiovanni, Christine Klein, Edward Koh, Anthony Maggiore, Robin Preston, Meredith Rollins, Kyle Short

New Pillar Members: Dustin Arnheim, Eduardo Chaillo, John Hawley, Kim Lambeth, Gary Murakami, Lauren Parr, James Rooney, Heather Seasholtz

The Legacy Society is a community of more than 180 dedicated champions of the PCMA Foundation, each committed to shaping the future of our industry. Together, these members leave a lasting imprint—building personal legacies that uplift and inspire the next generation of leaders.

The Legacy Society recognizes two distinguished tiers of giving:

Diamond Members

Supporters who make an extraordinary commitment of **$75,000 USD** or more, demonstrating exceptional dedication to the PCMA Foundation's mission.

Pillar Members

Donors who strengthen their impact by **adding an additional $5,000 USD to their initial $5,000 USD gift** or by **making a new gift of $10,000 USD.**

> "My pledge is an investment in the long-term strength, relevance, and excellence of our industry. By supporting PCMA at the Legacy Society level, I'm helping ensure that current and future generations of meeting professionals have access to the very best education, mentorship, and resources available. Strong industries don't happen by accident—they're built through intentional commitment. This is mine."



Kim Lambeth, DES

Senior Director, Global Accounts, **Encore**
NEW Legacy Society Pillar Member

Legacy Society Members

As of 12/1/2025

Diamond Members

*Tony Lorenz, CMM
*Brian D. Stevens

Pillar Members

Dustin Arnheim
*Martin D. Balogh
Johanne Belanger
*Eduardo Chaillo, CMP, CMM, CASE
*Jack Chiasson, CAE
*Mark & Kristen Coe
Colleen Donohoe, CMP
*Sue M. Dykema, CAE
*Liz Erikson
Ben Erwin
*T. John Folks
Michael Gamble
*Kristin Gibson, CMP
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Gay Holden
Leonard Hoops
*Susan Iris
*Sherrif Karamat, CAE
David Kliman
Kim Lambeth
Brian Landers
Darren Mendola, CMP, DES
*Martha Moores, CAE
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*Catherine L. Scheck
*Gary Schirmacher, CMP
Chuck E. Schouwerwou
Heather M. Seasholtz, CMP
*Deborah L. Sexton, FASAE
Charles Starks
*James H. Sweeney
*Nick Topitzes, CMP
*James H. Youngblood & Jay A. Marsh

Legacy Members

Reggie Aggarwal
Kim Allison
Deene G. Alongi
Terrence Arth, IOM, CMP
Cara Banasch, MBA
Doug Bennett
Tamela D. Blalock, MTA, CMP, DES
Donna Bongiovanni
Lisa Block
Ray Bloom
Tammy Blount-Canavan, FCDME
Francois Brunet
Adam Burke
Amy Calvert
Gregg Caren
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Dr. Amanda Cecil, PhD, CMP
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*Barbara Connell, CAE, CMP
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Laurie Knapp
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*Charlie M. Robinson, FASAE
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*Lynn O. Smith, CMP
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*Karin Soyster Fitzgerald, CMP, CAE

Butch Spyridon
*Sheila Stampfli
Tana Stellato, DES
*Lois Stratemeier, CAE
*Valerie M. Sumner
*Annette M. Suriani, CMP

Beth Surmont, CMP-Fellow, FASAE, CAE
*Gregg H. Talley, FASAE, CAE
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Mike Waterman
*Daniel E. Weber, CEM
Christopher J. Wehking, CMP
Tina M. Wehmeir, CMP, CAE
Heidi Welker

David Whitaker
Scott White
*David & Julie Williams
*Leigh Wintz, FASAE, CAE

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As of 12/1/2025

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Christine Melendes
Julia Chovanec
Sarah Braun
Catherine Mills
Brenda Dreier
Jaime Paton
Joni Opperman

Visionary (6) ($500 - $999)

Ann Marie Bray
Charles Starks
Stuart Ruff-Lyon
Eric Commodore
Angie Ranalli
Gary Murakami

Luminary (7) ($1,000 +)

Brian Landers
James Rooney
Mack Porter
Kelly Ricker
Terrence Arth
Visit Austin
Heather Seasholtz

Engage in 2026 - Save the Date

When you purchase a ticket for a PCMA Foundation event, it does more than get you into an incredible experience—it becomes a meaningful act of generosity. With every ticket, you're helping the PCMA Foundation open doors for students, fuel impactful research, and support the future of our industry. Your choice to show up, celebrate, and participate truly changes lives, one ticket at a time.



Visionary Awards

May 7, 2026, Washington, DC
foundation.pcma.org/visionaryawards



LIVING IN COLOR Fashion Show

May 6, 2026, Washington, DC
Fall 2026, Chicago, IL
foundation.pcma.org



GET FIT Events

- **CL26 and edUcon** | Puppy Yoga, Fun Run/Walk, Sound Bath, Elevate
- **Party With A Purpose** – CL26
- **Give Back Bash** – edUcon
- **Do Good Feel Good projects** – CL26 and edUcon

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