

MPI
**TAMPA BAY
AREA**

CHAPTER

BE CONNECTED

I am MPI.
I Love What We Do.



#TellYourStory

Jennifer L Smith, CMP

R&R Healthcare Communications
Senior Project Director
MPI Chapter: **Tampa Bay Area**
Membership in MPI: **2 Years**

“

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In the 2 short years that I have been an MPI member, the ROI on my membership has been incredible both professionally and personally.

I kind of fell into the industry by chance. I was working for MetLife in 2007 and looking to change jobs within the company. The AVP of meeting planning was adding a planner and asked if I was interested. I didn't have any experience in the meetings industry but did have the skill set needed and quickly realized that I had a natural affinity for planning. After being a planner for 6 years I became the team manager with 5 planners reporting to me.

I joined MPI in 2015 after some discussions with my supervisor around professional development for my team. I'm a "lead by example" manager and knew that I needed to join MPI in order to encourage them. At the new member orientation it was stressed that you get out of MPI what you put into it and to volunteer as much as you are able. That day I signed up to help out at SEC which was being held in Tampa. At SEC I met some great people that I keep in contact with and look forward to seeing at every chapter event.

Last year I knew I wanted to finally get started on my CMP. I went to the August education luncheon which focused on the exam and it really helped me understand what I needed to do and how long it would take. I immediately started working on my clock hours and figuring out my study strategy but got side tracked by a layoff at work. While I was looking for a new job I decided to join the Meeting's Academy Marketing Committee. This was the best decision I ever made! Not only did I get to know the best team of ladies who did a phenomenal job planning the 2017 Meeting's Academy, but it lead me to my current job. My experience working on Meeting's Academy was so fulfilling that I am now the chair of the 2018 Meeting's Academy.

Once I had a new job, I was able to focus on studying again and took the exam in May of this year. It was a major accomplishment for me and my career and I highly recommend taking that giant step and getting it done, I wish I had done it sooner.