

MPI
**TAMPA BAY
AREA**

CHAPTER

BE CONNECTED

I am MPI.
I Love What **We** Do.



#TellYourStory

Sara Melvin, CMP

Marriott International

Account Executive, US Account Sales

MPI Chapter: **Tampa Bay**

Membership in MPI: **4 years**

“ It was great to work with so many like-minded people to achieve a common goal and feel the gratification of completing a successful event. ”

Planning events is in my genes. I come from a long line of people who loved to host gatherings and make sure every detail was perfect. At the time, they just didn't know they could make a career out of it! I started my journey at the University of Central Florida (Go Knights!) where I majored in Business & Marketing but was quickly drawn to the tourism and travel industry. I earned an internship with SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment my senior year and was exposed to event planning like I had never experienced before. Park buyouts for 20,000 people, partnering with hotels, utilizing DMCs and the CVB to win the business – I was hooked! I worked my way up from an intern to a coordinator on the Convention Sales team and that's where I really began to learn about MPI and the opportunities it offered. I was mentored by the sales managers I worked with who were very involved in the organization and saw huge gains from being active members. They earned their CMPs, attended WECs, secured contracts, and created friendships from being involved and had nothing but great things to say about it. As my career brought me back to my hometown of Tampa, I knew I wanted to be involved with my local chapter and looked for opportunities to get involved. I jumped at the chance to join the Education Committee and plan logistics for our monthly programs. It was great to work with so many like-minded people to achieve a common goal and feel the gratification of completing a successful event. It was working with that committee that gave me the confidence to move forward with earning my CMP that year as well. I was honored to join the Board of Directors the following year as Director of Monthly Programs. It was great to lead an amazing team while honing my management and organizational skills. Since then, I've moved on to become President Elect and am eternally grateful for the friendships and experiences I've had since joining. The Tampa Bay chapter is a wealth of knowledge and always willing to help a fellow member!