

## PANELIST FULL BIOGRAPHIES

### SEPTEMBER 27, 2019 EDUCATION PROGRAM

#### “SUPPLIERS & PLANNERS LEARNING TOGETHER TO BUILD BETTER EVENTS”

##### **SAIRA BANU KIANES, CMP, HMCC**

Saira Banu Kianes, CMP HMCC is the President and Global Planner of Banu Event Solutions & Training (B.E.S.T) LLC. She married her husband Luis on her Birthday and he is grateful for the ease remembering dates. Whew!

With over 25 years being in the meetings, travel and hospitality industry, Saira's destination knowledge is vast and diversified. She has two more continents to cover, Australia and Antarctica. She travelled to eight countries in five months and completed an around the world trip in 12 days. Yes, this year. 2019 and all for work.

B.E.S.T Banu Event Solutions & Training does it all; Planning, Sourcing, Tour Operation, Incentive Groups, Corporate Events, Technology and IT conferences, Government Events, Fashion shows, Roadshows, Tradeshows, Training & Development.

B.E.S.T partners with several Medical Education Agencies assisting their meeting needs because of our expertise in pharma compliance. Saira also trains planners and paid interns and help them with job placement, Cooking (yup you heard it right, Saira is an award-winning Chef).

B.E.S.T is also introducing (you heard it first right here) Cooking with Saira – cooking show for your conference.

Plus – she is a Zumba instructor and can be hired for your health and wellness breaks at your events.

When you hire B.E.S.T, you are getting a package deal.

We take pride in giving you the world with white glove service, take a look at our logo.

Saira can be reached via email [saira.kianes@gmail.com](mailto:saira.kianes@gmail.com) or 908-507-4015

Mic Drop



## **JOSHUA BRAUNSTEIN**

After earning his B.S in Sport Management at Towson University in 2011, Joshua landed a role with the New York Red Bulls. He served as an Account Executive with the organization. Joshua would later become the Assistant Group Sales Manager with Legends at One World Observatory where he oversaw a team of 20 sales representatives.

Currently, the Sales Manager for iFLY Paramus, Joshua is tasked with engaging the local public to host different events at the iFLY Paramus facility where he oversees the sales efforts. iFLY Paramus uses state-of-the-art vertical wind tunnel to create memorable experiences for all of those who visit.



## **RICHARD GODFREY, CMP**

Richard is a Hotel Executive with 20+ years of experience in sales and operations with Starwood, Marriott, Hilton, IHG and Independent Hotels throughout the US. Positions have included Director of Catering Sales and Convention Services, and General Manager. Richard is currently the Complex Director of Sales and Marketing at the Crowne Plaza Princeton Conference Center & Holiday Inn Express Princeton Southeast.



## **DION MAGEE, PMP, GRCP, CSSBB, CMM, HMCC, SMPP, SSYB, CIS, CTA**

Magee hailed as an artistic visionary whose combined skill, creative talent and outstanding ability have made him a pioneer in the corporate events and social events arena. Mr. Magee, award-winning event professional, is a leading corporate marketing and social events/wedding industry expert and educator while serving as patient engagement and travel consultant in clinical trial management and hospitality services.

In 2018-19, Magee received the prestigious credential as Governance, Risk & Compliance Professional, Certified Six Sigma Black Belt (CSSBB), Certified Professional Project Manager (PMP) along with Certified Risk & Compliance Management Professional (CRCMP). Magee consults and directs patient travel services for #1 leading service provider and offers industry counsel for best in class strategies.

Magee leads high-end/celebrity weddings while creating strategic programs, meetings, event/branding campaigns, consolidated meetings programs, conventions, and trade shows. He serves as a corporate event/travel director, administering PHAMRA compliance programs and maintaining quality industry event standards for all programs.

As a successful entrepreneur and owner, Magee has generated and designed several marketing, branding and promotions campaigns. As an event and marketing account specialist, he designed unique promotional events, branding campaigns, managed administrative and database teams to exceed customer expectations and departmental goals. In his past role as Program Manager for Corporate Meeting Management & Sr. Manager of Corporate Programs & Events for Verizon Communications, Dion has created a name for himself by transforming mundane corporate events and conference programs into



brehtaking main attractions and successful promotions. As a Sr. Manager, Magee designed and implemented one of the country's largest and award-winning professional and recognition/incentive programs for the leading global, promotional telecommunications and electronic retail sales company worldwide.

In 2014, Magee expanded his expertise by providing clinical trial project management and patient logistics and advocacy services to leading pharmaceuticals on behalf of Clincierge.

Recently, presented the prestigious international award, 2017 "Digital Magazine Award – Finalist" by Digital Media Awards in the UK and "Educator of the Year 2009 by Temple University, Dion planned, executed and managed marketing, branding campaigns, strategic meetings, large-scale galas, international conferences, national events, trade shows and incentive programs, CEO and senior leadership, trustee's board, its employees, lines of business and signature programs across the Verizon enterprise. In addition, Magee planned several special events such as citywide conventions, trade shows, sporting events, retreats, and nonprofit dinners/galas. He has worked with some of the country's top designers, event partners, engineers and entertainers in the business while managing the entire creative process from conception through completion

Dion was voted Corporate Planner of the Year by Event Solutions Magazine and Young and Inspiring Event Professional in Industry, 2005 by Special Events Magazine. He's a contributing writer for Events Solutions Magazine that reaches a readership of 27,600 and teaches at event industry conventions and to students at Temple University. He currently holds certifications as a Certified Event Management Professional and Certified Wedding Consultant.

## **JENNIFER SENA, CIS, HMCC**

The art of networking comes naturally to Jennifer Sena. At two years old, she would go from one table to another saying hello to everyone while dining out with her family. Her career started as a H.R. Recruiter for financial services companies while she worked part-time for several direct marketing companies which recognized her skills in the art of relationship-based selling with several awards.

Jennifer further deepened her diverse capacities by taking her sharpened networking abilities into the hospitality industry where she quickly landed her first hotel sales position in 2003 for Wyndham Worldwide. Within a year, she was recruited by Marriott International and shortly thereafter was awarded the 2004 Northeast Sales Rookie of the Year. Her sales and marketing experience flourished in the New Jersey, New York and Philadelphia markets as she promoted a wide-range of hotel products – from airport hotels to large convention properties.



In 2010, the Puerto Rico Convention Bureau recruited Jennifer as a National Sales Manager where she focused on clients in New Jersey, the West Coast market, and Canada. Then in 2014, Jennifer had the courage to start her own business and founded SENA Sales & Marketing where she represented hotels and DMCs in the Caribbean who needed sales presence in the Northeast. After losing her top accounts due to Hurricanes Irma and Maria, Jennifer decided to close the business in 2018.

Currently, Jennifer is the Northeast Regional Sales Executive for Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau representing over 34,000 hotel rooms and a newly expanded Convention Center.

Jennifer attended Saint Peter's University where she pursued a major in Business Management and a minor in Psychology. She completed a certificate program at New York University in Meeting and Conference Planning and Event Marketing. She recently received her HMCC certification from MPI.

Jennifer loves being a member of MPI New Jersey and is currently Director of Recruitment for the Membership Committee.

## **HELENE WEIN**

Helene has been part of the hotel and events industry since she was a teenager. She worked her way up the ranks, from entry level at the front desk, to Executive Committee level positions, managing multiple properties as a Director of Revenue Management. From small upscale boutique, both airport and suburban properties to opening the world's first mega property the New York Marriott Marquis, her hotels have been diverse as the companies she has worked for including: Marriott, Affinia, Millennium and Hilton.



She has brought her knowledge of hotels to her clients, as she now serves as Senior Director of Global Accounts with HelmsBriscoe, where she is a top producer. Her clients benefit from her knowledge and expertise as she offers them site selection services, which include researching venues to best meet her clients' needs and budgets and negotiates and does contract review, acting as their advocate for their programs worldwide.

Helene is married, with a 21-year old son, who is a college senior. Her interests include photography, cooking and baking and of course, travel.

## **KIM COWPERTHWAIT, CMP**

Kim has been in the meeting and events industry for over 18 years, beginning her career working as a coordinator for online medical webinars before moving to planning dinner meetings for pharmaceutical companies. Kim was later a Meeting and Trade show planner for a spine company and then joined New Jersey Business & Industry Association where she has been for eight years. Kim started at NJBIA as an Event Coordinator Associate and was then promoted to her current role as Manager, Program and Events where she oversees 70 events annually.



Kim received an Associate's Degree in Marketing from Berkeley College, Certificate in Human Resources Management and received her CMP in August 2018. This year Kim was named to the 2019 Rising Star list by North Star Meetings Group.

When she is not planning events, Kim enjoys reading, reality TV and spending time with her husband, two kids and three dogs. She is passionate about finding cures for Diabetes and Alzheimer's.