Convening Leaders 2019
Disrupt & Deliver From Two Perspectives

I attended Convening Leaders in Pittsburgh after a several year hiatus.

Being back in the saddle so to speak was invigorating and overwhelming at the same time. I wished I could have split myself into three (or ten!) to attend and see all I wanted to see, but as we planners say, that's a good problem to have!

The technology and use of open spaces, not just meeting rooms, was superbly creative and I liked that I could view some sessions on the screens in the Freeman lounge space. This saved me several times when faced with crowded sessions beyond standing room only. Equally innovative were the micro sessions presented on the Innovate and Elevate stages with mixed seating options and headsets – a genius way to present multiple sessions in a large space.

The Main Stage was amazing. Theater in the round is something I’ve always wanted to implement so seeing it used successfully was a bonus. The MC, Holly Ransom CEO of Emergent, was spectacular, and the speakers never disappoint. I was so inspired by all of them! Steve Pemberton, Nadya Okamoto, Billie Jean King and Geena Davis. Awesome!

Pittsburgh really rolled out the red carpet for us – as all host cities do – but their airport presence and hotel presence seemed especially outstanding. I also loved that registration was at the airport and I could get all checked in with credentials in hand as soon as I landed.

Feeling like I was reconnected with a long-lost friend, I was reassured that PCMA is a leader in the industry and I’m proud to be a member. Thank you PCMA for a memorable Convening Leaders experience!

Change can be difficult to see up close. Reflecting on my 15th CL experience in Pittsburgh, it’s hard not to focus on the one thing that brings me back year after year, the opportunity to strengthen existing and create new relationships. Looking through Amanda’s fresh eyes reminded me of some of the ways PCMA has evolved over the years, changes they’ve made and built upon that perhaps I’ve taken for granted. Amanda noticed the convenience of airport registration. Hard to believe it’s only in its 3rd year since Austin introduced it at CL 2017 and yet I know I’m not alone in feeling it’s always been this way!

Amanda’s observation of the use of open spaces for programming and the desire to clone herself reminds me there was a time when all programming was held in a meeting room, foyers were just for coffee breaks and all sessions started and ended at the same time. The one-size-fits-all approach certainly has disappeared over the years!

As PCMA has raised the bar for themselves, they have raised our expectations each year. Tough crowd to deliver to, yet they did not disappoint. Speakers this year were a WOW not only for who they are but for what they are doing in their own field to create change. Their messages aligned with PCMA’s own new vision of using business events to drive social transformation and change. Looking back from this vantage point now, I can see that PCMA has evolved from an inward focused organization looking to transform our industry to an organization with an outward focus looking to use our industry to transform the world. As Ghandi said, “Be the change you wish to see in the world.” PCMA is certainly doing their part and I’m excited to see where the year ahead takes us all!

Amanda Clark, CMP
Associate Director, Office of Meeting Management, National Governors Association

Kristen Parker, CASE
Director of Eastern Regional Sales, Visit Austin

The PCMA Capital Chapter is where “You Belong”!

Mission: The mission of PCMA and the Chapter is to be the leading organization for meeting and event professionals by delivering superior and innovative education and promoting the value of professional convention management.
Welcome to PCMA’s Capital Chapter for 2019! Here’s to a great year for YOU personally and professionally. Engaging with the chapter is the best way to get the most out of your membership. We say this all the time because it’s true! All participation is valuable! If you have questions or need introductions, the Capital Chapter Board contact information is included in this newsletter. Call or send an email to any one of us! We would love to have everyone’s input and would be glad to assist you in finding the best way to participate!

As always PCMA’s Convening Leaders kicked off the year! This year’s message: Disrupt and Deliver. Our own chapter has the same mantra. Disruption is everywhere. How to make it relevant and deliver is what we will explore all year. Change advances industries and humanity. Take a look around and participate in the change. When communities disrupt it is for the good! I encourage you to read on about the good and bad of disruption and the latest tech scoop!

For those who attended PCMA’s Convening Leaders in Pittsburgh, I hope you met new people, learned a new perspective, had a new experience and gave back at one of the many PCMA Foundation events. Hopefully too you joined us at the Capital and Chesapeake Chapter reception at PNC Park which was a great way to celebrate our two amazing chapters! Thanks to our sponsorship and membership committees for their hard work on this wonderful event!

With many of us spending time on the road we still must remember those who stay behind like our funny, furry family who make our lives whole just by being in it. Read on for more on our Capital Chapter members and their pets.

This newsletter is filled with great stuff!! Check out the article on Falling into the Industry! I sure did! However, I couldn’t be happier to live my life as part of this evolving, thriving industry. I continue to learn so much every day.

Your Chapter leadership encourages you to give back, disrupt in your own life and look at ways to deliver a fresh perspective no matter where you find yourself in your career. Please join us in 2019 in some way. Volunteer, attend, network...but most of all. Engage!
SoCal's Award-Winning Convention Event Space. Long Beach's latest experiential turnkey innovation, the Terrace Fountains, is surrounded by an expansive outdoor plaza which can accommodate anything from an intimate gathering of 100 up to 5,000 excited guests. A perfect after-meeting party space to lounge around or play around, this large reflecting pool with theatrical dancing water displays can be designed with your personalized colors chosen from hundreds of LEDs. Stylish furniture, professional light and sound design that can save you up to $100,000 in rental costs and set in a highly walkable downtown — it's the hottest new convention event space in the coolest beach city.
What I Thought I’d Do

Marilyn Atchue-Zuill,
Global Account Director, HPN Global

While other children played video games, Amy was busy with the National Jr. Honor Society. Her advisor was the JV Boys Basketball team’s coach and Amy LOVES sports. He offered service hours to work with the team so Amy volunteered. She became the team manager, doing stats, shot charts, helping with practices and more. Through this experience, she saw a potential career in sports management.

As she applied to colleges, she set her sights on Division 1 colleges with an established basketball program and coaches she could learn from. Her ultimate goal…a job in pro sports. She selected NC State where she was one of the Men’s basketball team managers. Her degree focus was the Parks, Recreation, & Tourism Management with a Sports Management concentration. Amy graduated and decided to explore a new city – Chicago! She was offered a sales job with the Chicago Bulls but sales wasn’t her passion so she turned that job down. She knew living in Chicago wasn’t long-term so she instead chose to work short-term jobs that paid the bills. When her mom got sick in NY, Amy went home to assist.

While taking care of her mom, Amy got a live-in position as Area Director with Teachers College, Columbia University. From event planning to staff management, facility operations to emergency management, Amy learned many life experiences she would later apply. Amy also got her master’s in Public Administration during this time. Upon graduating, she went to work for the USTA, wearing many hats. This included managing registration and awards banquets for USTA conferences. In 2016, the USTA moved positions (including Amy’s) to Orlando but Amy and her husband chose not to move. She decided that her next job would be solely in event/meeting management, the area of her past jobs that she was most passionate. She worked for a 3rd party company, got her CMP and went on to work for the National Governors Association as a Meeting Planner. Basketball Manager, Disney College Program, Special Olympics, NBA All-Star, Area Director, NC State Alumni Association Local Network Leader…they all led Amy to a career she loves!

If we conducted a survey of baby boomers who intentionally planned to join the events/hospitality industry, bets are the percentage would be low. It certainly wasn’t on B. Murphy’s radar but in hindsight, he sees that every twist and turn led him to what he’s doing today.

This amazing man started his journey singing in church and high school choirs in his NJ hometown. Taking his vocal gift to New York, he auditioned for Broadway’s The Wiz and a gig with the Platters. The Platters hired him and his professional career went on tour. B’s journeys landed him a recording gig with the Osmonds in Utah with radio DJ’ing on the side. It was a smooth ride until he and one of the Osmond brothers took a detour. So… rather than uproot himself, B got a job working for Utah State in Employment and Training, helping veterans find local jobs. This job morphed into a career in Utah’s Economic Development, helping businesses expand while fostering new relationships each step of the way. To mix things up a bit, B added banking to his repertoire and after the Olympics, Real Estate. In his spare time, he sang with Joe Muscolino’s Big Band and conducted choirs. Exposure to the Events Industry came by way of community involvement. County Commissioner Overson, as Chair of the County Council, asked B to join the Salt Palace Advisory Board. IAEM was B’s first Board Chair event. He worked regularly with the Salt Lake CVB and Utah State Office of Tourism until Modern Expo Services’ Executive VP recruited him. Working on the inside was huge compared to seeing Expos remotely. B was green but learned the ins-and-outs of working shows and in 2008 was recruited by Fern in DC as their Senior National Sales Manager. His only regret is that he didn’t discover this industry twenty-five years earlier.

B’s career path has been windy and checkered but it’s always been about relationships. He has one last goal… to be the oldest contestant on “The Voice”, to get a chair turn singing “For all We Know”.

Bravo B!
Leading into 2019
PCMA Scholarship Winners

“Followers choose Leaders. Leaders do not choose followers”. Words from the amazing Billie Jean King which are still playing over in my head from Wednesday afternoon’s Main Stage at Convening Leaders. As individuals I think we can all find a time in our career that we followed someone that might not have been the traditional leader. What did you learn? Did you reach outside your comfort zone? Did you in turn become a leader or mentor another?

Convening Leaders Pittsburgh was another opportunity to share ideas, learn from each other, rekindle friendships and meet new people. I continue to walk away each January inspired at what I have learned and how I can use this knowledge to better myself and my career in the coming year.

What do you want to accomplish in 2019? What is on your bucket list? We have amazing leaders in the Capital Chapter! If you have time in your schedule this year, consider joining us on a committee and sharing your talent. You will be glad you did as many of our volunteers get out much more than they put in.

Cheers to an amazing 2019!

Geralyn Krist, CMP
Global Account Executive, ConferenceDirect

When reflecting on Convening Leaders 2019, the first thing that comes into my reflections is MIND BLOWN! From the very start of the meeting, you knew you were in for something special when an ordinary exhibit hall was transformed into an elegant space. If one doubted what the city of Pittsburgh could do, there is doubt no more. The city, staff, and people shined!

This year’s meeting had some of the best programming in its history. Each and every day brought a new perspective and lesson to learn. For me the following thoughts, quotes, and statements were the most powerful:

Seth Godin, “What roots are we planting to allow us to transplant, to enable, to adapt, to evolve…”

Dan Sundt, “Design the journey, not the destination.”

Billy Jean King, “I don’t consider a fail, failure. I look at it as feedback.”

Molly Breazeale, “Conversation is the relationship. When the conversation stops, so does the relationship.”

Geena Davis, “You have to present the future YOU want to see.”

Words cannot fully express how grateful I am of the Capital Chapter for awarding me the Convening Leaders scholarship. Thank you for allowing me to continue my growth and have this amazing experience in Pittsburgh!

Diane E. Kovats, CMP, CAE
International Society for Computational Biology

DISRUPT & DELIVER
Change is difficult but this year’s Convening Leaders was all about disrupting and being the conduit for change.

Hospitality Helping Hands with charity “Beverly’s Birthday” changed lives of mamas by packing gift bags and hosting a mega baby shower for in-need families.

PCMA’s innovative meeting room set-ups made an impression. Oval tables surrounded by chairs and set perpendicular to the speaker allowed for great conversations. An elevated DJ at the reception spun music conducive to networking and pool and air hockey tables made socializing easy. Broadway’s “Hamilton” singers didn't hurt the evening’s ratings!

• Main Stage speaker, Steve Pemberton, shared how using our power and ability to bestow goodness on others changes lives.

• Marketing guru, Seth Godin, encouraged us to make change happen for people and in our meetings. Sell the story, how it makes us feel to be in the room, not breakouts.

• Andrew Sykes said that who we are and what we do in life is nothing more than the sum of our habits.

• Billie Jean King inspired us to wake up with fire in our bellies, to have a vision for what we want to do and work quietly to get it done. Do the right thing, even if it isn't popular.

• Actor, Geena Davis, shared her mission to bring gender equality into a male-dominated world. The key to bringing about change… have facts!

So many educational and networking opportunities made this CL priceless! I am so grateful Capital Chapter, for the opportunity to attend. Thank you!

Marilyn Atchue-Zuill,
Global Account Director, HPN Global
I was in search of a dog for companionship, comfort and protection after my husband passed in 2012. My friend in the Poconos invited me to her house for the weekend and while there we researched different breeds of dogs on the Internet.

We came across Cane Corso’s as it met my description of what I was looking for. Later on that year as I was standing in line to vote, I brought my iPad to search for Cane Corso’s, I found someone close-by and called. I was able to meet with them days later not knowing what to expect. I came in and I saw this little precious pup sitting by his lonesome while his 9 brothers and sisters were all cuddled up. I picked him up and as he laid his head on my shoulder I knew he was the dog for me. The breeder said he wasn't ready to take home yet and I'd have to wait a few more weeks. He asked if I picked a name so that they could get him used to it. I chose Bruno as my husband was a fan of Bruno Mars.

I anxiously went to Pet Smart and bought toys and pet supplies in preparation of Bruno coming to his new home. When I picked up Bruno the Saturday before Thanksgiving and brought him inside, he immediately made himself right at home.

Since the day I picked Bruno up, my home had been filled with joy, love and happiness. He loves food, treats, toys and his bone marrow bones. He is so spoiled and loves attention. I throw him birthday parties where 11 dogs from the neighborhood come to celebrate and the funniest thing is that the dogs actually watched him opened up his presents.

Bruno is six years old now and still welcomes me home everyday!

Have a pet? Tell us about you and your pet along with a photo to: dtparks2@gmail.com
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As Seen on PCMA Catalyst

On Catalyst, technology-related questions abound! Here are some highlights from our PCMA Community.

WHAT TO DO WHEN AN ATTENDEE OPTS OUT OF BEING PHOTOGRAPHED OR VIDEO-RECORDED

Many of us have a clause in our organization’s terms and conditions about photography at events, basically stating that, by registering, the attendee is giving permission to be photographed and/or video-recorded for use by the organization. Have you ever been informed by an attendee that they do not wish to be photographed and/or video-recorded? Robyn Jones, Conference Manager for the Association for Asian Studies in Ann Arbor, Michigan has, and several of our Catalyst posters have shared their ideas on how to manage this:

Cindy Y. Lo, DMCP, President & Event Strategist for Red Velvet Events, a Global DMC Partner in Austin, Texas writes, “We took their photo from LinkedIn and shared it with the photographer and videographer and made them understand that we cannot have the attendee’s photo/video taken during the event and definitely not shared on any public websites/social media/etc. We also took the time to explain to the attendee what we would do to protect their privacy. We have been educating our team to take the time to educate our photographer on what photos would be appropriate to take during the event.”

Kira Wisniewski, CMP, DES shares a similar experience. “When it’s happened in advance, I have looked for a photo of the person ahead of the meeting to share with the professional photographer so they could avoid taking their photos. On-site, the photographer asks to take a photo of the attendee to do the same practice.”

Caitlin Arnold, Manager Meetings and Expositions for Kellen has used the “different colored lanyard” technique. “The attendee appreciated that we took their concern seriously. It was easy for the photographer to spot, we could see it in photos and surprisingly not many people noticed.”

FACEBOOK LIVE STREAM OF BREAKOUT SESSIONS

On the topic of requests from a presenter who wants to Facebook live stream his/her session to his/her personal Facebook page, Simon Peter Buehrer, Conference/Events Manager at OCALI in Columbus, Ohio seeks industry colleagues’ policies and requirements. Kris Mayo, Convention Director of the National Flute Association in Chicago shared her organization’s policy document. Visit Catalyst to review this resource.

ELECTRONIC POSTERS

Lots of insight was shared about electronic posters as a result of a question posted by Beverly L. Johnson-Hampton, CMP, Conference & Meeting Coordinator for the American Chemistry Society in Washington D.C. Rachel Dillion, CMP, Sr. Director of Meetings & Education for Sentergroup in Chicago shares some insight:

• Great if you are tight on space. For example, we have 50+ posters at a show, but only use 5 LCD monitors. The show couldn’t support 50 poster boards from a space perspective.
• Added costs include the monitors, dedicated internet lines, show computers.
• Some people love them, but there is always a large contingent of people who cannot get past the digital aspect.
• Judging must be coordinated tightly onsite, it can also be done in advance which is very helpful.
• Eposters provide enduring content for your website, which is an added bonus and could be member benefit.
• Traffic seems to be great, especially among the younger crowd.
• Resolution will be very important so that you can read the posters on the digital screens.

Visit the thread on Catalyst for more information and electronic poster vendor recommendations.

HELP A FELLOW PCMA PROFESSIONAL OUT

One cool feature of Catalyst is that you can sort threads by least number of replies. Head to the Catalyst Forums to help an industry colleague out by providing feedback to questions/topics that have gone unanswered:

• Does anyone have any creative or flashy names for annual awards programs?
• Suggestions on how to offer power to attendees without breaking the bank.
• What are your Top Meeting App Favorites?

Visit this space as we continue to share advice and industry trends with colleagues across the globe in 2019 and beyond.

Tracy Blithe, CMP
Heart Rhythm Society
Make Your New Year’s Resolution Advocacy

Happy New Year! Each new year we’re faced with an opportunity to grow, change and challenge both ourselves and those around us. I’m not sure about you, but my New Years Resolutions are always things I never want to do, like, go to the gym more, eat less carbs, or stop playing games on my iPad until midnight. This year, my professional resolution is to be a better advocate for the meetings industry with the help of the Government Relations and Advocacy Committee.

If you’d like to join me in my resolution, here are a few tips to start your year as an advocate for the meetings industry on the right foot:

- Follow PCMA Capital Chapter on Facebook and @PCMACC on Twitter. Each month the committee will be sharing “briefings” that will cover hot topics, current events and policies that relate to the meetings industry and our attendees.
- Read the Advocacy Corner in the Chatter. If you’re reading this, you’ve found it!
- Take a 30 second action on the Meetings Mean Business webpage (http://www.meetingsmeanbusiness.com/advocacy) and then click around to review some of the excellent research they have shared about the meetings industry.
- Keep up with bills that we care about. Especially HR. 2495 & S. 1164- Stop Online Booking Scams.
- Spend 10-15 minutes a day staying up to date with industry experts such as Meetings Mean Business, US Travel, Brand USA, Exhibitions Mean Business, CEIR, Events Industry Council and Destinations International. An easy way to do this is following them on their various social media handles.

Most importantly, the best way to be an advocate is to join both PCMA-CC and MPI Potomac on April 4, 2019 for Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID). GMID 2019 will take more of an active front ompared to prior years. This year we will be providing attendees the change to dig in, engage and make their voice heard.

Make your professional New Years Resolution something that impacts the industry and allows you to your cake and eat it too! If you’re still committed to working out maybe you can take some time on the treadmill to talk to your #industryfriends about how we can leave the meetings industry better than we found it. Cheers to 2019!

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Kelly Ferrante, CMP, Senior Conference and Meetings Manager, National Association for College Admission Counseling
Disruption happens; be prepared

We all face them, disruptions, unexpected turns, confusing messages, changes in direction and many more disruptors that, at first glance, threaten to throw our delicate life balance off track.

This year, the Chatter will address the good and bad of disruptors from a variety of influencers in our industry. We look forward to sharing knowledge from our members and if you have a disruptive topic you would like to share, please send an email to pcma.capital.comm@gmail.com. Our amazing team of volunteers will seek to include you and your idea in one of our future issues.

The online dictionary.com defines disruptor: To cause disorder or turmoil. To destroy, usually temporarily. To interrupt. To break apart.

In my experience, the amount of influence the disruptor has will be determined by an individual or group response to it.

It is important for each of us to embrace the fact that life will have disorder, turmoil, or interruption and sometimes that is when the wheels come off of an idea or you have to scrap a plan and completely start over. The best approach I’ve learned is to accept this truth and take the time to plan for those disruptions. Contingency plans are not just meant for weather.

“But we have always done it that way”

It is often said that the most hated phrase in business is “but we have always done it that way” and yet, do we take the time to disrupt this idea in our own lives? How are you impacting other volunteers, colleagues, clients, family or friends? Are you opening your eyes to signals that the process, which seem so easy to you, might be difficult to others?

Things are sailing along, nearly on auto-pilot, with a set of processes in place and everything happens as expected. Suddenly, a new colleague enters the picture, you discover things have been great for you but not for everyone involved. It is explained that the process you thought was working is incredibly broken and it was never shared with you. BOOM, your world is suddenly disrupted.

Be the disruptor in your sphere of influence by asking questions regularly, making sure everyone agrees with the direction of things, and play the devil’s advocate. Sometimes the answers will come easy and other times it may cause a breakthrough to an easier process or approach. If you take steps to break apart common practice and make sure it is practical practice, you might save yourself from turmoil.

“The show must go on”

Twenty minutes before your General Session is slated to begin, you receive a text from the speaker that they have just landed and are sitting on the tarmac at the airport that is thirty minutes away. SMACK, disorder has entered your life!

This bit of disorder, is simply an interruption for you, because before you started preparing the conference schedule, you added buffers and have an alternate industry professional on-tap to speak. When preparing the slides, teleprompter and rehearsing you let the team know where there were opportunities to make changes in the event of disruption. The audio visual team is also provided the details of the alternate speaker in the event there are further delays.

Because you prepared these contingencies, you are able to calmly alert the team of the changes. Connect with the audio-visual provider to let them know the second half of your General Session will now be inserted in the first half and the speaker will come on at the end.

There will be plenty to do to pull off the details and it allows you the opportunity to shine rather than spinning your wheels about what to do. Look at you, pre-planning elevated your ability to turn disruption in your favor.

These are a couple of samples of how you can influence disruptors instead of disruptors destroying you.

I look forward to learning from you our members about the good and bad of disruptors and how we can make them a positive in our day-to-day life! Disruption is not going anywhere; let’s learn together about best practices for managing it.

Tanna Pearman, Business Development Director, The Row, Reno, NV
Gettin Techy With It

What’s new for 2019: PCMA Capital Chapter Chatter is excited to give you the lowdown on new technologies in the business events industry. Each issue will feature a different technology and how this technology can make your processes easier, provide better engagement for your attendees, and/or contribute to your bottom line. So let’s get techy with it!

On site at a meeting, there are a few essentials I don’t walk around without. In fact, you can find these items in my purse even when I’m not at a meeting. These essentials include, a doorstop, a removable arrow, a granola bar, and my iPad.

Long gone are the days of schlepping around giant binders full of copies of specs, floorplans, BEO’s and crisis communication plans. The planet and your arms are thankful for it.

Enter: Technology

In a world of movers and shakers, the tablet has become a necessity to the business events industry and although technology is helpful, without understanding how to properly utilize it, it can be as useful as the doorstop.

When it comes to staying organized, finding things quickly and taking notes, the mobile app Notability will be your new best friend. Of the many articles written about the top applications for meeting planners, I was surprised to find that Notability was never listed. An Unsung Hero.

With a 4 star rating in the Apple store and a top 5 application for productivity, Business Insider describes the app as, “Notability is like Google Docs, but on steroids.”

By uploading your documents into Notability, (the program is compatible with Google docs, DropBox and VPN) you are able to search and easily find any room, BEO, etc. in seconds. When that call comes in asking whether or not coffee should be refreshed in the Grand Ballroom A, you can answer back in no time. If a session is running over, you can easily search to see what is next in that room.

Not only can you search and write your own notes, you can also record conversations or voice memos, type notes, select, move and change sizes of any text or image, annotate PDFs, the list is endless.

“For me, it’s the ability to take notes directly on my specs during walk throughs and that they are searchable after that!” Cori Talbot CMP, Hospitality and Events and Sales Manager at the Occoquan Regional Park River View Venue.

“When I worked in a convention center, Notability helped me to stay organized by downloading every file and spreadsheet I created. Every morning when I was checking room sets, I was able to highlight what items were missing, scribble out a list of to dos to hand off to the set up manager and check off breaks that were set and ready!”

At first glance, you might say, “Woah! $9.99 for an app? That’s pretty steep!” But after the first day using it, you’ll be saying, “Totally worth it!” (and then just expense it anyway!)

If you’re interested in learning about a certain new meeting technology, or sharing a technology that you love, please send ideas to Ashley Sarris. (asarris@ascb.org)

Ashley Sarris,
Meetings Manager, American Society for Cell Biolog
Mark your calendar and check the capital.pcma.org website for updates regarding these upcoming events:

**MARCH 19, 2019**
**Mix N’ Bowl**
Pinstripes Georgetown

**APRIL 2, 2019**
Save the Date
**APRIL 2, 2019**
The Keynoters and the Capital Chapter have partnered for an exclusive, invitation-only networking event and speaker showcase. Email invitations will be coming soon!

**APRIL 4, 2019**
**Global Meeting Industry Day**

**MAY 16, 2019**
**May Education Leadership Program**

**JULY 18, 2019**
**Half Day Education Program**

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