



Curriculum Vitae

Contact Information

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Brief Biography

Aaron Wolowiec is an award-winning learning strategist and meetings coach for leading trade associations and individual membership societies across the United States. Committed to the latest research and trends on learning, intentional networking environments and meaningful transfer exercises, he launched Event Garde, a professional development consultancy, in 2011.

Employment History

FacilitateMI

Founder & Group Administrator
January 2018 to Present

- Launched a relaxed and supportive community of practice ideal for learning and networking with fellow Michigan facilitators.
- Through monthly meetings and a vibrant online community, participants of all experience levels feel empowered with new resources and greater self-confidence.

Healthy by Association (HBA)

Founder & Group Administrator
January 2017 to Present

- Established the group's purpose, including the five HBA tenets, and drives strategic initiatives that support this mission, including outreach, marketing and partnerships.
- Recruits and supports nearly a half dozen moderators to deliver both inspirational and informational content, and to engage more than 300 group members via daily posts and weekly Facebook Live chats.
- Designed and launched HBApparel, a capsule collection of tanks, t-shirts, quarter-zips and socks, as motivation for association and hospitality professionals to live their healthiest lives.

LEARN. NETWORK. TRANSFER.

Event Garde LLC

Founder & President

December 2011 to Present

- Recruited and leads a diverse team of 13 thought leaders with expertise ranging from strategic planning, instructional design, meeting management and stakeholder coaching to project management, facilitation, learning audits and credentialing.
- This team actively subscribes to the power of three simple words: *Learn. Network. Transfer.*
 - *Learn.* We soak up the latest research and trends on learning then incorporate those methods and practices into the resources we share and the meetings we manage.
 - *Network.* We create intentional networking environments for clients and learners while also belonging to networks and organizations that result in our own growth and development.
 - *Transfer.* We believe that professional development adds value only if it is transferred through meaningful rehearsal and retrieval exercises and then applied on the job.
- When not traveling or engaging with clients (nearly 100 in six years), the Event Garde team designs actionable presentations inspired by learner needs and desired outcomes, and writes witty and relevant content for magazines, blogs and newsletters.

Health Care Association of Michigan (HCAM)

Director, Education & Associate Partnerships

June 2003 to October 2011

- Planned and facilitated the annual convention and expo; managed the production of all marketing and promotional materials; developed and monitored a budget to meet attendance and revenue targets; and solicited sponsorships from key stakeholders.
- Promoted professional development through in-person education programs; negotiated and executed program contracts; monitored licensure requirements for Michigan health care professionals; procured continuing education credits; and maintained accurate member records.
- Developed and coordinated all Web and audio conferences; managed technical support for all virtual education programs; produced electronic marketing and promotional materials; and conducted quality improvement evaluations.
- Liaised with members and vendors; cultivated trustworthy and respectful relationships to build client loyalty; collaborated with executive staff on recruitment and retention efforts; and strategized with the board to foster engagement in regional, state and national issues.

Education

Central Michigan University (CMU)

Class of 2009

Master of Science in Administration (MSA), Leadership

Through enhanced strategic planning, fiscal management and best practices, graduates learn to leverage group dynamics, organizational change, conflict management, negotiations, cultural diversity and communications to efficiently meet organizational objectives.

Lansing Community College (LCC)

Class of 2006

Certificate of Achievement, Sign Language Interpreter

Students learn about Deaf culture, including communication techniques and lifestyle. Additionally, graduates are specially trained to facilitate communication among the deaf, hard of hearing and hearing communities utilizing American Sign Language (ASL).

Michigan State University (MSU)

Class of 2002

Bachelor of Arts in Political Theory/Constitutional Democracy (PTCD) and Social Relations (SR)

Graduates share a common goal of addressing and examining the major political, legal, social and economic issues affecting the world. Each major within James Madison College (JMC) at MSU allows students the opportunity to examine a unique aspect of public affairs while developing strong communication, analytic and problem-solving skills.

Thesis

Affects of Communication Technologies on Client Relationships:

Recommendations for the Chairman of the Health Care Association of Michigan

The purpose of this study was to establish a relationship between communication technologies and client satisfaction. Should a correlation exist, the results of this study would then be utilized by both the board of directors and the executive staff to further evaluate the association's communication strategy and make deliberate adjustments to maximize its greatest asset: information management.

Professional Qualifications

Events Industry Council (EIC)

November 2017

Sustainable Event Professional Certificate

From understanding the business value of sustainability to practical solutions for improving environmental performance and effective methods for achieving corporate social responsibility, this program enables meeting professionals to implement their own sustainable events.

The Institute of Cultural Affairs in the USA (ICA-USA)

July 2017

Certified Technology of Participation (ToP) Facilitator (CTF) and Apprentice Trainer (AT)

This is one of the world's largest professional facilitator networks and has been at the forefront of creating the profession of facilitation since the mid-1970s. Through training and experience, certificants demonstrate the highest level of professionalism in using and teaching ToP methods.

Association for Talent Development (ATD)

August 2015

Master Instructional Designer

Students explore new approaches to instructional design with a focus on the latest and most effective techniques. Grounded in theory and focused on practice and application, this program helps graduates master their professional capacity for instructional design.

Association for Talent Development (ATD)

August 2015

Learning Transfer Certificate

This program increases the business value created by training and development. Graduates gain the resources necessary to improve the effectiveness of a training program through the application of the six disciplines of breakthrough learning.

Tourism Ambassador Institute (TAI)

January 2012

Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA)

This program strives to inspire and motivate volunteers to turn every visitor encounter into a positive experience. Graduates utilize their skills to make each and every visitor feel like they belong and to help make destinations like Greater Lansing, Michigan a home away from home.

American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)

January 2010

Certified Association Executive (CAE)

This program is designed to elevate professional standards, enhance individual performance and designate association professionals who demonstrate the knowledge essential to manage an association in today's challenging environment.

Events Industry Council (EIC)

January 2009

Certified Meeting Professional (CMP)

This program was designed to enhance the knowledge and performance of meeting professionals; to promote the status and credibility of the meeting profession; and to advance uniform standards of practice.

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Honors & Awards

Michigan Meetings + Events (MiME)

2018

Best Meeting Professional Award

The recipient of this award exemplifies the enthusiasm, know-how and desire to put clients and colleagues first. As a 2018 Hall of Fame inductee, the honoree leverages both listening and collaboration to create amazing experiences that achieve measurable results.

Michigan Society of Association Executives (MSAE)

2017

Supplier Partner Award

This award is presented to a supplier partner in recognition of the individual's exemplary service and support to the association/not-for-profit profession and to MSAE.

Events Industry Council (EIC)

2015

Top #CMP30 Influencer Award

This award is bestowed on CMPs who have made a substantial impact on their colleagues and communities, and whose contributions have left an indelible mark on the global meetings and events industry. Recipients exemplify professionalism, credibility and excellence.

Michigan Society of Association Executives (MSAE)

2013

Rising Leader

This program honors young professionals who are doing outstanding work in Michigan associations and in companies serving the association market. They are described as innovative, driven and bound for great things.

Michigan Society of Association Executives (MSAE)

2011

Emerging New Leader Award

This award symbolizes exceptional contributions to the association industry and the promise of future accomplishments within the association management profession, as well as distinguished service to MSAE and other professional organizations, the pursuit of continued professional development and participation in community and civic affairs.

American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)

2009-2011

Diversity Executive Leadership Program (DELP)

DELP supports individuals from under-represented identity groups to advance into the ranks of leadership in the association management profession. DELP scholars participate in an accelerated leadership program of education, mentoring and volunteer service in the association community.

Health Care Association of Michigan (HCAM)
2008

Chair Award

This award is bestowed each year to an individual who has positively impacted both the association and the long-term care profession.

Professional Memberships

National Speakers Association (NSA)

September 2017 to Present

Member

NSA is a collective of more than 3,500 members whose skills, expertise and experience power the most recognized and respected professional speakers organization in the industry.

ToP Network (ToPN)

July 2017 to Present

Member

ToPN is a professional association of Technology of Participation (ToP) practitioners that maintains training as a core competency, continually innovates ToP methods and curriculum, and supports members in their professional development journeys.

Association Forum

June 2017 to Present

Member

Forum advances the professional practice of association management in Chicagoland and provides members with essential learning, compelling experiences and powerful resources.

Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM)

December 2016 to Present

Member

SBAM is the only statewide and state-based association that focuses solely on serving the needs of Michigan's small business community.

Association for Talent Development (ATD)

November 2013 to Present

Member

ATD is a professional membership organization supporting those who develop the knowledge and skills of employees in organizations around the world.

Michigan Society of Association Executives (MSAE)

August 2009 to Present

Member

Past Chair of the ORGPRO Program Committee

Past Chair of the Emerging Professionals Committee (EPC)

MSAE is a not-for-profit membership organization whose mission is to ensure a knowledgeable, professional and successful Michigan association community.

American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)

August 2008 to Present

Member

Past Chair of the Professional Development Section Council (PDSC)

Past Chair of the Tours & Guest Activities Committee for the 2015 Detroit Annual Meeting

Past Chair of the Young Association Executives Committee (YAEC)

ASAE is the essential organization for association management, striving to help association professionals achieve previously unimaginable levels of performance.

Volunteer Service

NIGP: The Institute for Public Procurement

July 2015 to Present

Thought Leader on the Talent Council

The Institute's governance structure, known as NIGP 2.0, is comprised of four governing bodies and a number of committees and taskforces. The Talent Council is one of these governing bodies and is charged with ensuring the right volunteers are placed on the right bus in the right seats.

Michigan Meetings + Events (MiME)

May 2013 to October 2017

Member on the Editorial Advisory Board (EAB)

The expertise and insights of board members are leveraged in helping to shape a publication that best serves the meeting/event planners and suppliers in Michigan, as well as in selecting the annual Hall of Fame inductees.

Publications

Following is a sampling of major 2017 and early 2018 publications. Additional publications, including those older than 2017, can be viewed on the Event Garde website at eventgarde.com/blog and eventgarde.com/about/news.

Blog Posts (featured in both Alltop and Association Universe)

- Millennial Learners: Creating Connection in an Era of Disconnect
- Engaging Learners: A Guide to Successfully Designing Engaging Learning
- Results-driven Event Marketing for the Discerning Attendee
- ToP Certified Facilitation: What does it mean to be a "high tech" facilitator?

- Healthy by Association: A Personal Journey Powered by Intention
- Navigating Food Allergies While Retiring Banquet Chicken
- 9 Secrets to Building a Volunteer Surplus
- Exhibitor Outreach Success
- Successful Events Have One Thing in Common: A Solid Mission Statement
- 7 Steps to Successful Site Inspections
- Husky Kid Workout Reflections

Contributor

- Association Adviser
- Associations Now
- BizBash
- Meetings & Conventions
- Michigan Meetings + Events

eBooks

- Engaging Learners: A Guide to Successfully Designing Engaging Learning
- 8 Steps to Successful Mobile Activation

Magazine Articles

- How Inclusive Are Your Meetings? (PCMA Convene)
- An Inside Guide to Web Redesign (Michigan Meetings + Events)
- Audit Secrets: Leveraging Your Inner Entrepreneurial Spirit (Michigan Meetings + Events)

Newsletter Articles

- Results-driven Event Marketing for the Discerning Attendee (Association Adviser)
- Analyze Your Professional Development Offerings (Membership Management Report)
- Association Hunger Games: Victory or Defeat? (Association Adviser)
- An Inside Guide to Web Redesign (Association Adviser)
- Audit Secrets: Leveraging Your Inner Entrepreneurial Spirit (Association Adviser)

Radio/Podcast

- Diversity in Associations (Association Impact)
- Engaging Learners (Leading Learning)

Research

- The Meetings Report
 - A collaboration with Kevin Whorton of Whorton Marketing & Research
 - Nearly a dozen allied societies are participating in this national study focused on association professional development
 - Scheduled for release in early 2018

Presentations

Following is a sampling of major 2017 and early 2018 presentations. Additional presentations, including those older than 2017, can be viewed on SlideShare at [slideshare.net/aaronwolowiec](https://www.slideshare.net/aaronwolowiec).

American Alliance of Orthopaedic Executives (AAOE)

- Payoff Point: Transforming Ideas Into Action

American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)

- Annual Meeting & Exposition – Transform Your Professional Development Offerings One Picture at a Time
- Experience Design Project (XDP) – Team Leader
- Great Ideas Conference – Rethink Your Volunteer Approach; Telegrams to Tweets: Delivering News at the Speed of Culture

Association Forum

- Holiday Showcase – Savvy Sponsorship Solicitation
- Education Development Special Interest Group (SIG) – Under-Performing Education Programs: Seeking Out Hidden Pain Points

Association TRENDS

- Learnapalooza – Under-Performing Education Programs: Seeking Out Hidden Pain Points

California Association of Community Managers (CACM)

- High Rise Summit – Creating Community Identity: A Facilitated Guide to Defining Your Mission, Vision and Values

California Society of Association Executives (CalSAE)

- Innovation Thru Creation

Connect Meetings

- Connect Missouri – Engaging Learners: A Guide to Successfully Designing Engaging Learning
- Connect DC – Under Pressure: Navigating Extreme Association Trends

Dallas Fort Worth Association Executives (DFWAE)

- Association Day – Member-Centric Conference Experiences: 6 Insights from Disney's Approach; Savvy Sponsorship Solicitation; Under Pressure: Navigating Extreme Association Trends

Express Employment Professionals

- Staff Training – Values Consensus Workshop

Healthy by Association (HBA)

- Weekly Facebook Live chats

Illinois Society of Association Executives (ISAE)

- Summer Session – Evaluations That Matter; Valuing Content for Meetings & Events

Institute for Organization Management (IOM)

- Events: Strategy & Operations
- Sponsorship Solicitation

Meeting Professionals International – Michigan Chapter (MMPI)

- Michigan Event Industry Day (MEID) – Under-Performing Education Programs: Seeking Out Hidden Pain Points

Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

- Staff Retreat – Marketing & Communications Consensus Workshop

Michigan Society of Association Executives (MSAE)

- Academy of Association Management – Professional Development session
- CMP Prep Course – Lead instructional/curriculum designer and facilitator
- Meeting Planning Conference – Evaluations That Matter; Valuing Content for Meetings & Events
- ORGPRO – Five Ways to Motivate Your Speakers to Care About Learning Design
- Strategic planning – Three consensus workshops for board and staff
- Webinar – Emerging Practices for Optimal Content and Speaker Selection

Michigan Townships Association (MTA)

- Conference & Expo – Public Speaking Made Simple

The Image Shoppe

- Staff Training – Diversity & Inclusion Consensus Workshop

ToP Network

- Methods for Millennials: Creating Connection in an Era of Disconnect
- Social Media 101 for Trainers
- Technology of Participation (ToP) Facilitation Methods

Teaching Experience

Lansing Community College (LCC)

Adjunct Faculty and Student Organization/Program Adviser

August 2004 to December 2008

- Developed lesson plans, coursework and assessment activities for both basic and advanced American Sign Language (ASL) and fingerspelling courses.
- Supported student leaders in the design and implementation of many different on and off campus meetings and events throughout the school year.
- Advised students on course prerequisites and minimum program requirements, as well as partnered with students to develop a custom curriculum plan based on academic goals.

Civic & Community Affairs

- Regular donations to each of the following organizations:
 - American Cancer Society (ACS), a nationwide voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer.
 - APAC, ASAE's federal political action committee.
 - ASAE Foundation, an organization that invests in research, leadership and innovation to enrich the association community.
 - Children's Miracle Network, a non-profit organization that raises funds for children's hospitals, medical research and community awareness of children's health issues.
 - Ele's Place, a healing center for grieving children and teens.
 - Kalamazoo Strong, a non-profit organization that was formed as a result of the 2016 Kalamazoo mass shootings (the community Event Garde calls home).
- Volunteer and past chair of the East Lansing Relay for Life, a community-based fundraising event of the American Cancer Society (ACS).
- Annual promotion of the #GivingTuesday movement via the Event Garde blog, newsletter and social media platforms.
- Past member and Michigan District leader of both Circle K International, a collegiate service organization affiliated with Kiwanis International, and Key Club International, the oldest and largest student-led service program for high school students.

Professional & Personal Interests

Professional interests in the association and hospitality industries include:

- Designing learning strategy that results in workplace application and behavior change.
- Deploying innovative meeting management approaches to grow attendance and revenue.
- Jumpstarting the diversity and inclusion discussion relative to meetings and events.
- Coaching emerging professionals to become the next generation of thought leaders.
- Leveraging facilitation methods to quickly synthesize information and gain consensus.
- Supporting the health and wellness journeys of staff, members and learners.
- Engaging members through an intentionally constructed volunteer management program.
- Evolving the tradeshow model to improve member value and exhibitor return.

Personal interests include:

- Exploring local food and beverage scenes both home and while on travel.
- Transforming a 1912 Spanish Revival house into a tranquil and inviting home.
- Maintaining a healthy lifestyle through activities like running and yoga.
- Satisfying a true crime interest with books, podcasts and documentaries.
- Indulging in adult coloring books and paint-by-number canvases as creative outlets.

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