

Inside

.....

A message from the President	1
Circle of Excellence 2007 Award Winner at Hilton Americas-Houston	2
Top Ten Changes in the Event Industry Over the Last 10 Years	2
Welcome New Members!	3
2008-09 Houston Chapter Board of Directors	4
Save the Date: 3 Courses of Networking	4
New Member Spotlight	5
The Return of Chic: Houston's First Annual Crystal ICON Awards	6
What is Certified Special Events Professional (CSEP)?	6
Communications Committee 2008-2009	
Heather Hamilton-Sims, VP Simply Jubilee Events, Inc	
Lori Kaufman Courtyard on St. James	
Rayford Mitchell II Student	
Jasmine Torres Biz Radio Houston	

Welcome to the New 2008-09 ISES Houston Chapter



Deborah Elias, CSEP, CMP

I am so excited to be serving as your President for 2008-2009. I have served on the board for the past eight years in various roles and am up for the wonderful challenge of growing and expanding this networking and education-driven association. My goal is that each member realizes the

significant value of being a part of this chapter, by attending the meetings and becoming involved in a committee. My philosophy has always been you get what you put into something and in the case of this organization, that couldn't be a truer statement. I have gained so many valuable friendships and clients because of my association with ISES.

Deborah Elias, CSEP, CMP
Elias Events, LLC
2008-09 President, ISES Houston Chapter

Circle of Excellence 2007 Award Winner at Hilton Americas-Houston

Matthew Finnan, Assistant Director of Catering for the Hilton Americas-Houston, was recently named as a 2007 Hilton Hotels Corporation Circle of Excellence Winner.

The Circle of Excellence represents the very best of Sales, Catering and Event Services team members within the world-wide Hilton Hotels Corporation. Winners of this prestigious award are considered among the best in the industry and are chosen for the award based on annual achievement of individual revenue goals.

Recipients of the Circle of Excellence Award are among the top 10% of Hilton Hotels Corporation's sales, catering and event service professionals. Matthew Finnan, chosen for the award in the Individual Catering category, is among the elite group of winners who continue to set the benchmark for others to attain.

Finnan joined the Hilton Americas-Houston team in February 2004, as Senior Catering Manager and was quickly promoted to Assistant Director of Catering later the same year, handling large local corporate and social groups and events. With over 20 years experience in the catering business, he was also part of the opening team for Enron Field (now Minute Maid Park) as the Premium Services Division Manager for ARAMARK. Prior to his arrival in Houston, Finnan worked in New Orleans for the Louisiana Superdome and multiple hotel properties.



Matthew Finnan



Top Ten Changes in the Event Industry Over the Last 10 Years

By Deborah Elias, CSEP, CMP

I am celebrating a milestone this month, my company - Elias Events has been in business for 10 years. This is a great time to reflect on the past and plan for the future. In the ten years since I started Elias Events, I have noticed many changes in the event planning industry. Following are the "Top Ten Event Industry Changes", I have witnessed.

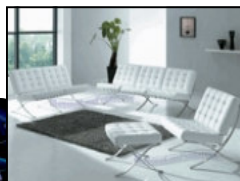
Advances in **TECHNOLOGY** have seen significant changes. Gone are the days when you had to use slides and an awkward projector for displays. Now we can project images into thin air if we have to and the use of LCD projectors can make any presentation a more visually appealing experience. LED lighting has played a big part in affecting the overall feel of events. The use of special effects has also served to enhance events with items such as the amazing rain curtain, or gobo technology and even the mood-setting fog machines that are not affected by fire codes.

I remember when creating an **INVITATION** to an event only allowed for a few selections of paper, fonts and styles. Now the sky is the limit and really you are only limited, if at all, by your own imagination. We are doing some very unique and innovative event invitations from "messages in a bottle" to custom dvd's. Since the US Mail will send anything out as long as it has a stamp, you can really have fun with this part of the event.

The **ENTERTAINMENT** at events has evolved from the cover band or DJ to getting the actual singers or entertainment to an event. Lately, it seems that clients are spending a lot of money flying in top performers, like U2 or Elton John. Also, with the advent of reality television, we are planning with a greater selection of entertainment ideas; from American Idol-like contests to fun game show hosting.

LINENS have evolved from small selection of polyester blended linen to a large selection and variation of fabrics and colors. We are seeing a

huge importation of fabrics and textiles from India, Egypt and other nations. The invention and now the selection of flame retardant linens have also become more popular with the fire marshal.



Innovative décor: lighted tables and lounge furnishings (inset) elevate events.

The **DECORATIONS** used at events are more over the top than ever. With the invention of many new and exciting products, the use of décor can change a plain boring ballroom into a fairytale setting or crisp clean corporate environment. Lighted tables, lounge furniture and inventive centerpieces are just a few of the new décor trends. The use of other non-conventional items, such as ice sculptures is also playing a big role in the event's atmosphere.

The **BRAND MESSAGE** has become more directed since 9/11 and even with the recent slight downturn in the economy. Companies are using events as a vehicle to give clear cut message, whether it is a launch of a product or re-introducing themselves to their client base. More events are used to educate rather than to entertain, although they are using entertainment and the other aspects of the event to get their message across.

The **THEMES** used at events have changed along with the times as well. It used to be that you had just a few themes to choose from when planning an affair. Now thanks to many changes in television, movie and our social awareness, many of themes are becoming for imaginative and even off the cuff. The introduction of the "Green" theme is quickly becoming a crowd pleaser and is also better on the economy as well.

The **FOOD AND BEVERAGE** industry has done its fair share to keep up with the client's and industry demands for more selection. We have all been to many a black-tie affair with the infamous and maybe not so delectable "rubber chicken" plate. Chefs are becoming innovative and using all sorts of tasty products to delight their guests. The once boring seated dinner is

(Continued on page 5)



MEMBER NEWS



ISES Houston Welcomes New Members!

Christian White, Owner
Showcase Entertainment, LLC
(713) 530-0111
christianwhite@yahoo.com
www.ThrowARealParty.com

Tracie D. Bryan-Craig, Director, University
Reception Centers
Lamar University Reception Center
(409) 880-8136
tracie.bryan@lamar.edu

Marissa Sellers, Special Events Assistant
Lamar University Reception Center
(409) 880-7734
Marissa.Sellers@lamar.edu

Carol L. Bumstead, Director
Katy Banquet Facility
(713) 240-5253
carolbumstead@aol.com

Reinaldo A. Smith, Executive Producer
Round Rock Entertainment & Special Events
(866) 209-7625
info@roundrockentertainment.com
www.roundrockentertainment.com

Stefani Twyford
Legacy Multimedia, LLC
(281) 381-9550
stwyford@legacymultimedia.com
www.legacymultimedia.com

Claudine Smith, Client Services Manager
Papercraze
(713) 461-2730
claudine@papercraze.com
www.papercraze.com

Teresa C. Hernandez, President
Cindy's Palace Banquet Hall
(281) 633-9886
terem2003@yahoo.com
www.cindys-palace.net

Adrienne S. Wagenheim, Owner
Ideal Party Decorators
(713) 661-1113
ipd@houston.rr.com
www.idealparties.com

Diana Taub, Events Coordinator
Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council
(713) 292-0358
dtaub@sjgs.org

Christina Acosta
Karl's Event Rental
(713) 466-7222
cacosta@karls.com
www.karls.com

A. Ballback, Owner/Manager
First Class Rentals LLC.
(281) 389-6551
sales@firstclassrentals.net
www.firstclassrentals.net

Vik Day
vik_day@weddingshouston.com
www.weddingshouston.com

Cecilia Kammer, Owner/Manager
Capitol Beverage Service
(713) 526-5321
ckammer@pdq.net
www.houstonbeverage.com

Larry Kelley, GM
Venue
(713) 286-8150
www.venuehouston.com

Michael F Little, Owner
A Finer Event
(713) 699-9911
mlittle@afinerevent.com
www.afinerevent.com

Evangelia McCarthy
Houstonian Hotel
(713) 685-6898
emccarthy@houstonian.com

Jennifer Kay Schafer, Owner-Publisher
Alpha One Publishing, LLC dba Premier Bride
Magazine
(281) 330-7311
jennifer@premierbride.com
www.premierbride.com

Lori Kaufman, Catering and Sales Manager
Courtyard on St. James
(713) 621-0555
lori@courtyardonstjames.com
www.courtyardonstjames.com

Erin Guenzel, Marketing Manager
ACME Party & Tent
(713) 729-2424
erin.g@acmerental.com
www.AcmeRental.com

Abraham Hakakian, Owner
Plants N Petals
(713) 840-9191
weddings@plantsnpetals.com

Kimberly Stoilis, Executive Director
Art Colony Association
(713) 521-0133
kim@bayoucityartfestival.com
www.bayoucityartfestival.com

Mary Rodriguez, Assistant, Constituent
Relations and Special Events
University of Houston-Downtown
(713) 221-2765
RodriguezMar@uhd.edu
www.uhd.edu

Jade G. Devereaux, Owner
Prop Rock, Inc.
(713) 829-0703
info@proprock.com
www.PropRock.com

Anthony Gutierrez, President
Crewstaffing
(713) 526-2739
anthony-gutierrez@crewstaffing.com

Elizabeth H. Stone, President
The Stone Kitchen Catering & Special Events
(713) 521-3500
elizabeth@stonekitchencatering.com
www.stonekitchencatering.com

Valerie J. McSweeney, Business Manager
Catering By
(713) 524-2337

Karen S. Brown, Master Bridal Consultant
(713) 532-8100
kbrown@karenforyourmemories.com
www.foryourmemories.com

Erica Rodriguez, Senior Catering Manager
Hilton Americas-Houston
(713) 577-6059
erica.rodriquez@hilton.com

Francisco J. Gonzalez, Corporate Sales Man-
ager USA
The Villa Group
(832) 630-6590
figonzalez@villagroup.com
www.villagroupresorts.com

Anita M. Makselon, Owner
The Party Perfectionist
(713) 775-3758
amakselon@thepartyperfectionist.com
www.thepartyperfectionist.com

Jasmine Torres, Private Planner
Private Planner
(832) 526-0036
torgon47@sbcglobal.net

Lance B. Currey, Sales Associate
AVTS
(281) 319-6200
lcurrey@avtsgroup.com
www.avtechnicalsupport.com

Join ISES and gain access to ever-expanding educational and networking resources.
Join today at www.iseshouston.org.

MEMBER NEWS



2008-09 Houston Chapter Board of Directors

President

Deborah Elias, CSEP, CMP
Owner, Elias Events, LLC
713-334-1800
president@iseshouston.org

President-Elect

Mia Monroe, MTA
Development Associate—Special
Events
Society of the Performing Arts
713-632-8103
vicepres@iseshouston.org

VP, Membership

Tiffany Johnson
Distinguished Events Manager
High Plains Division
American Cancer Society
Houston Metro
713-706-5685
membership@iseshouston.org

VP, Communications

Heather Hamilton-Sims
Chief Event Officer
Simply Jubilee Events
713-443-2588, ext. 250
communications@iseshouston.org

VP, Education and Programs

Haley Hughes
Owner
En Vogue Events
281-414-0844
programs@iseshouston.org

Immediate Past President

Debra Bellinghausen
General Manager
The HESS Club
713-627-2283
debrab@hessclub.com

Directors

Sharlene Barris
Events Coordinator
Hidden Oaks Bed & Breakfast/
Dreamworld Events
713-640-2457
sharlenebarris@sbcglobal.net

Matthew Finnan
Assistant Director of Catering
Hilton Americas- Houston
713-577-6054
matthew.finnan@hilton.com

Craig Howard
National Sales Director
Corporate Incentive Travel, Inc.
713-320-7234
rdidow@catchthemoment.com

Lori Kaufman
Catering Manager
Courtyard on St. James
713-621-0555
lori@courtyardonstjames.com

Veronika Millstid- Levine
Owner
Bailey Connor Catering
713-932-8335
vmillstid@sbcglobal.net

Jasmine Torres
Marketing Coordinator
Biz Radio Houston
713-773-2378
jasmine@bizradio.com

Adrienne Wagenheim
Owner
Ideal Party Decorators
713-661-1113

SAVE THE DATES

ISES Houston Upcoming Events

October Chapter Meeting

October 1, 2008

Details to follow

November Chapter Meeting

November 5, 2008

Details to follow

January Chapter Meeting

January 7, 2009

Details to follow

The Special Events 2009

San Diego, CA

January 26-30, 2009

www.thespecialeventshow.com

February Chapter Meeting

February 4, 2009

Details to follow

March Chapter Meeting

March 4, 2009

Details to follow

April Chapter Meeting

April 8, 2009

Details to follow

Share your company's accomplishments, the latest trends in the industry or your cutting edge ideas. Get published in Soiree, ISES Houston's publication. Submit your articles to communications@iseshouston.org for consideration.



New Member Spotlight: Stefani Twyford - Legacy Multimedia, LLC



Q. What is your position with the company?

A. Founder and President

Q. Provide a brief description of what your company does in the event industry.

A. We create multimedia presentations for special events; tribute videos that honor a person, a business or an idea

Q. Any specific accomplishments you would like to highlight? (Limit 2 please)

A. We were featured in the Houston Chronicle Business Section on July 20th. Additionally we won the ISES ICON Award for Best Videography/Photography for 2008. Finally, (I have to take 3!) an essay I wrote has been accepted for broadcast on KUHF National Public Radio's "This I Believe" show. It will be recorded in late September. I don't have a current air date. It is on the value of personal history.

Q. What would you most change about yourself?

A. I'd probably ask for longer legs.

Q. How do you unwind?

A. Retail therapy can do it quickly, otherwise exercise and making jewelry.

Q. Describe your favorite dining experience?

A. My family and I stayed on an estate in Italy for two weeks. We had access to fruit orchards, flower, vegetable and herb gardens. We ate all our meals outside on a

wrought iron table and chairs, everything either just bought at market or freshly picked in the garden. It was entrancing.

Q. What did you most want to be when you grew up?

A. I wanted to be a forester

Q. Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

A. I am the 'go to' person in Houston for personal history and tribute videos. Regularly sought and quoted in the media for my knowledge on the value and benefit of preserving and documenting your memories. My company, Legacy Multimedia, is definitely on the map as a key production company.

Q. What tips would you give to others entering the events industry?

A. Get connected and involved in an aspect of leadership as soon as you can. No matter what your experience level, your contributions make a huge difference. People who selflessly give to their community build a network of loyal advocates who will continue to refer them for years.

Q. What's the most important lesson life has taught you?

A. My dad used to tell me to never take no personally. To keep asking for what you want and when you've asked for too much, someone will let you. I have found that to be so true. For every 10 nos, there is 1 yes. After awhile, the yeses add up and you have something formidable.



(Continued from page 1) being replaced by imaginative buffets with an assortment of items for even the pickiest of eaters. Libations at events have changed too with the introduction of flavored liquors and other trends, like Martini or Champagne Bars.

Over the years, the **FACILITIES** at which events take place have received a drastic overhaul. The days during which hotel ballrooms were the only option to hold an event are in the past. Many smart investors and developers have designed and built venues exclusively to house events with state of the art amenities, which only serve to entice the client. Even hotel ballrooms have received their share of enhancements and renovations in an effort to keep up with the changes.

I think the most significant change and certainly the one that has affected me the most is the actual evolution of the **EVENT PLANNER**. Ten years ago, there were less than a dozen independent Event Planners in Houston, where I operate my business. Event Planners working for corporations and organizations were never called Event Planners, they were usually Administrative Assistants pressed with the task of planning events. There certainly weren't any degree plans or college courses related to Event Planning. Now, a number of universities have dedicated degree plans where the aspiring Planner can actually earn a Bachelor of Event Planning.

Yes, the industry has come a long way! And I for one am very excited to see what the next ten years unfolds.





The Return of Chic: Houston's First Annual Crystal ICON Awards

By Heather Hamilton-Sims



Stage Décor Tiles – Moss; Chairs – Ducky Bob's; Staging and Pipe and Drape – Fashionable Events; Screens – Stage Directions; Lighting and Sound - LD Systems

Omni Houston Hotel, which hosted over three hundred special events industry professionals and guests. The guests were in awe of the remarkable concept tables, lavish food stations and trendsetting entertainment.

The Houston Chapter of the International Special Events Society is pleased to announce the 2008 Crystal ICON Award winners:

Best Event Design / Décor / Floral:

Candice Clayton, Sullivan Group

Best Technical Production:

Debbie Meyers, CSEP and Nicole Bernardi, Bravo Productions Entertainment and Sports Marketing & Entertainment, Inc.

Best Corporate Event Planning:

Alex Rasmussen, Sullivan Group

Best Social Event Planning under \$100,000:

Matthew Finnan, Hilton Americas- Houston

The Houston Chapter of the International Special Events Society awarded the best and brightest in the local special events industry on Sunday, July 27, 2008. This year's mistress of ceremony, ABC-13's Miya Shay, eloquently led the audience through an evening of Emmy-styled laughter, musical acts and surprise guests.

The accomplishments of the 2008 Crystal ICON Awards honoree Susan Christian, Deputy Director, Mayor's Office of Special Events, were reprised by Mrs. Elyse Lanier, former First Lady of Houston. Mayor Bill White also attended to honor Susan Christian for her vast accomplishments during her 23 years with the City of Houston. Commending Susan on dedication and commitment, Mayor White designated July 27th as Susan Christian Day.

The 2008 Crystal ICON Awards was the first event to be held in the newly constructed ballroom at the Omni Houston Hotel, which hosted over three hundred special events industry professionals and guests. The guests were in awe of the remarkable concept tables, lavish food stations and trendsetting entertainment.

Best Event Photography/ Videography:

Stefani Twyford, Legacy Multimedia, LLC

Best Event Produced for a Non-Profit:

Maggie Collum, Sam Houston State University

Best Entertainment Production:

Candice Clayton, Sullivan Group

Best Houston Team Effort

Deborah Elias, CSEP, CMP, Elias Events, LLC

Scott Justis, LD Systems

Victoria Barclay, Best Entertainers

Tony Smith, Round Rock Productions

David Postma, Genesis Photographers



What is Certified Special Events Professional (CSEP)?

The CSEP designation is the hallmark of professional achievement in the special events industry. It is earned through education, performance, experience and service to the industry and reflects a commitment to professional conduct and ethics.

The CSEP designation is awarded by the International Special Events Society (ISES) and its Certification Committee. ISES is the only international umbrella organization representing professionals in all disciplines of the special events industry. To find out more about the CSEP designation, visit www.ises.com/CSEP.

