

# PALMETTO FOCUS

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## SOUTH CAROLINA

UNITED POSTMASTERS AND MANAGERS OF AMERICA



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## CHAPTER PRESIDENT: HOWARD BROWN



**A**s we have approached the beginning of FY 25, let's pause and examine what we can do differently. One thing that comes to mind is negativity. Let's leave that in FY 24. I would like to employ each of you to focus more on positivity.

**What can you do?** Well, I'm glad you asked. Be supportive of your brothers and sisters in the UPMA. Not just by mouth but with deeds. That's what I observed at the National Convention and the SOC. Yes, people were giving advice and suggestions on how to do this and do that. It was more impressive to observe members being shown how to

and what to do in the training sessions that I attended. People were engaged, and I attribute that to great facilitation. The facilitators were very involved with the attendees, understood the audience, and did not talk or teach over anyone's head. Instead meeting them where they were knowledgeable. Their control of the class allowed for more participation. So often, we end up with one or two attendees monopolizing the time, leaving the majority with heads down and eyes rolling. This year's National Convention and SOC training displayed everything but that. The facilitators not only presented the data; they explained the data and engaged us willingly and not forcibly. As we move into FY 25, let's **STAY POSITIVE, STAY SUPPORTIVE, and STAY FOCUS.** Without one of these three, we risk division and failure. However, with all three, we are truly united and successful. Let's Do This UPMA!!



HAPPY NEW YEAR



## CHAPTER EXECUTIVE VP: LYLE BELCHER



President Biden is greeted by Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, as he prepares to sign the Social Security Fairness Act on Jan. 5, 2025. Kent Nishimura/Getty Images

This month I was on a telecon along with Howard and Steve concerning the Legislative Summit coming on March 17 – 19, 2025.

The new board is starting to work on the agenda for the Summit. They started by saying congratulations to everyone and their tireless efforts in getting the Social Security Fairness Act HR 82 (WEP and GPO) signed into law by the President on January 5. As a reminder, the previous policy barred employees from collecting their full benefits under the federal retirement program and reduced benefits for surviving spouses and family members. Originally the bill passed the House with a 327 – 75 -1 and then the Senate by a 76 -20 vote. They continue to give thanks to many people especially our retirees for all the letter writing and phone calls. In addition to everyone for doing their part to include the money donated to PAC.

Tony Leonardi our UPMA President provided his thoughts concerning this year's issues. As they are continuing to define, he did indicate the top priority will be US Code Title 39 which outlines the role of the United States Postal Service to include Postal Policy, Organization, Finance, Rates, Services, and Transportation of Mail. Tony did touch on the Delivery for America Plan and some of the frustrations and issues with it. Also, he talked a little about the new 119th Congress and the education awareness of what our organization does. Tony did say a key issue for the fight will be on our non-career and career employees getting credit for service as an RCA, PSE, etc.





## CHAPTER VP AND PAC CHAIR: SUSAN O'NEAL



Another great convention – National was held in Orlando Florida this year. We had many great speakers that shared a plethora of information on the future of the Postal Service.

Doug Tulino our Deputy Postmaster General and Chief Human Resource Officer spoke on Wednesday August 28th. He praised our outgoing President Edmund Carley on his service to us.

Mr. Tulino spoke on the S&DC's and how hard start-up was in Atlanta and that we are trying to learn from each move we make to not repeat mistakes. He told us about creating more opportunities and change to Postmaster duties. He discussed pay talks, change and transformation. He talked about Dr Jays vision and the necessary changes being made. He said we are focused on putting proper infrastructure in place to provide service to all people.

Mr. Tulino said dignity and respect is a priority and he does not condone people being treated in a detrimental way. Mr. Tulino said changing culture, minds and hearts takes time and we want to do it the right way. We are looking at things to try and stabilize our workforce – by possibly raising pay level for new hires and acknowledging that the mindset/mentality of the people we hire is not like that of the past when we felt “It was a privilege to work here” to the potential new hire thinks now “that it is a privilege to be in front of us.”

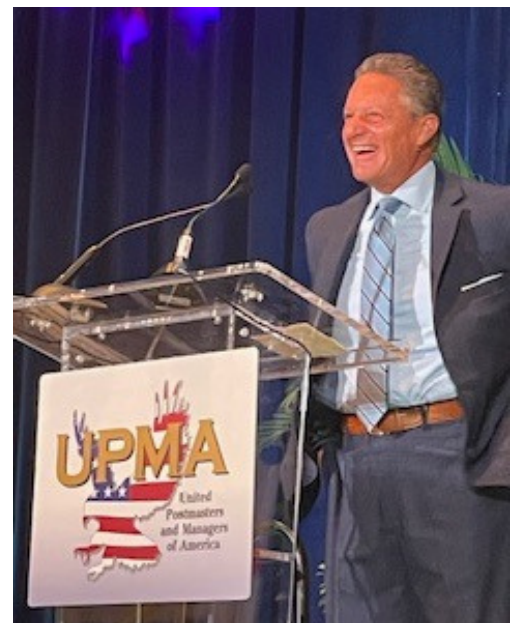
I appreciate the opportunity to attend these conventions and learn valuable information about the future of the USPS. Until next time stay safe.



Doug Tulino, Deputy Postmaster General and Chief Human Resource Officer

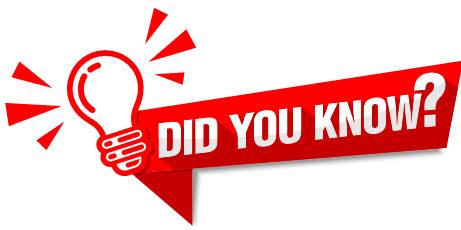


National Convention Stage in Orlando, Florida.



Doug Tulino, Deputy Postmaster General and Chief Human Resource Officer





## JUST CAUSE

Just cause is the standard that management must adhere to when disciplining or discharging an employee. It means that in union settings, the employer must have a reason to act in disciplining an employee and the reason must be just and fair.

1. **Notice.** Was the employee adequately warned of the consequences of his/her conduct? This means that the employer must have clear rules of conduct at the workplace that are either written or oral, including the consequences for violating such rules. Some cases however may not warrant such a requirement because they are commonly understood, such as: drinking on the job; patient abuse; theft; or insubordination.
2. **Reasonable Rule or Order.** Was the employer's rule or order reasonably related to efficient and safe operations? The employer's rule must not be arbitrary, capricious or discriminatory and must be related to the employer's stated goals and objectives.
3. **Investigation.** Did management investigate before administering the discipline?  
The employer must investigate before imposing any discipline. The burden is on the employer to gather all the facts, documents and witnesses.
4. **Fair Investigation.** Was the investigation fair and objective? The employer must conduct a fair and timely investigation. It must respect the employee's rights to due process and to union representation. The investigation must be made objectively and without a rush to judgment.
5. **Proof.** Did the investigation produce substantial evidence or proof of guilt? The investigation should produce substantial proof of a violation. The conclusions of guilt must be supported by the evidence.
6. **Equal Treatment.** Were the rules, orders, and penalties applied evenhandedly and without discrimination? The rules must be applied consistently to all the employees. The application cannot be discriminatory or selective. If other employees who commit the same offense are treated differently there may be evidence of discrimination or what is referred to as "disparate treatment". Also, if enforcement of a rule has been lax in the past, management cannot suddenly reverse course without first warning employees of tighter enforcement of the rule.
7. **Appropriate Discipline/Penalty.** Was the penalty reasonably related to the seriousness of the offense and the past record? The degree of discipline must be related to the seriousness of the violation. For instance, an employee generally cannot be terminated for an isolated instance of tardiness. Mitigating circumstances must also be considered as well as the employee's past record. The concept of "progressive discipline" is recognized as an integral part of just cause. This means that the employer issues increasingly serious penalties for repeated violations (such as- verbal warning, written warning, suspension, termination). However, some serious violations in fact may require harsher discipline from the outset.

Provided by: Lyle Belcher, UPMA Chapter Executive VP





# CHAPTER TREASURER: STEVE LENOIR



On October 10th, I had the privilege of attending the Southern Offices Conference (SOC) in Louisville, KY. Thanks to the Kentucky branch for all their planning and hospitality. Many of you remember South Carolina hosted last year's SOC so we can appreciate all the work they did to make it successful.

The primary purpose of the SOC is for officer training. We also get updates from our UPMA officers at the national and area level. This year we were fortunate to have a USPS HQ speaker, Bruce Nicholson, Director Labor Relations, Policies and programs.

Normally when we see Bruce at National Conventions and our Legislative Conf., he is accompanying the PMG, Deputy PMG, or other HQ. officials speaking to our group. Bruce acts as a Liaison between UPMA and Postal HQ. He is well respected amongst UPMA leadership. Having known Bruce for many years, this was my first time hearing him speak.

Bruce told us he comes from a Postal family. His father worked for the Postal Service and his brother is currently a City Carrier. He said his father reminds them that the 18 & 8 standard for letters and flats that still holds today was established in 1929.

He talked about the delivering for America Plan. He stressed that no Postmaster would lose their job. He stated they are exploring "other duties" for level 18 Postmasters. He went on to say the 15 hours Bargaining work being performed by level 18 Postmasters will not go away.

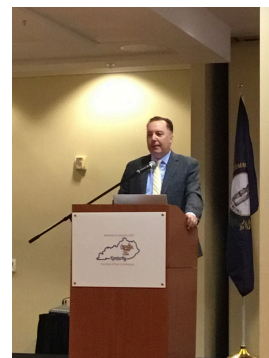
He discussed the RCA position. They realize it is a thankless job and are working with the NRLCA to improve the position.

He told us labor relations is hiring "discipline writers" at the district level. The idea is to assist the field in issuing letters of warning (LOW) and issue timely discipline. He said it is still a working progress. Last year we paid 297M in grievance settlements. That is a 17% reduction from the previous year, but we must do a better job of complying with the labor contracts.

Bruce also took time for all questions in the audience. At our National Convention this year our PMG, Deputy PMG, and CHRO all took questions from convention delegates.

Q & A sessions present a great opportunity. While many speakers stick to the script, questions from our members reveal our issues and are a time to get unrehearsed responses. Zoom meetings are the flavor of the day, but there is power being in the room. Sincerity, body language, and voice tone all tell a story.

Join us in Dallas for national convention and Little Rock AR for the SOC. Next year make it a priority to "be in the room".



Bruce Nicholson,  
Director Labor  
Relations, Policies and  
programs, USPS.



## CHAPTER VP AND MEMBERSHIP CHAIR: KELLY STANCIL



Postmaster General Louis DeJoy was a guest speaker at this year's national convention in Orlando. He spoke with us on several different things but mostly on his delivering for America plan. At the beginning of his speech, he made sure to tell us as postmasters and supervisors we are the leaders in our communities. We are the frontline, the faces that people look for, the ones the customers know, the leaders of our offices and for that he appreciates all that we do. He understands our frustrations he believes there is great strength, and leadership within the organization. With all the changes we have adapted very well.

Postmaster General DeJoy then started talking about his 10-year plan and how we have progressed in the last 4 years. Some have accepted his plan with open arms and others have been skeptical and judgmental, but it is starting to come

together. The postal service is still at this time showing that we are losing money, but it is not as much as it could have been. We have converted more people to regular positions, got rid of jobs that were no longer beneficial, and started the restructure. There have been hiccups along the way such as the ones in GA with the new P&DC, but they were acknowledged and fixed as quickly as possible. As with any new change you can't predict everything that will go wrong, you just must make it right.

We are no longer flying any packages on FedEx planes we are doing the movement of the mail and packages ourselves. We are getting rid of the partial truck loads coming into the office and plants. Instead of running trucks at a 30% load we are now running full trucks which has been another savings for the organization.

Within the next few years, he plans to have a full fleet of vehicles. Oshkosh defense has already started manufacturing the new age vehicles. The fleet will be roughly 28,000 vehicles 10,000 of which are electric and the other 18,000 will be gas. This also will save the organization money and help retain employees. He understands that it is one of the biggest reasons we have a hard time getting and retaining employees. Especially the rural employees that come in and must purchase a vehicle and do all repairs. Even with the EMA they receive he sees that it can be a hardship on the new hires.

Mail volume overall is down from the last years and package volume is up. After the covid pandemic most of America uses the internet for everything. From ordering their groceries, to paying bills, to buying anything they want so it can be delivered to their door. Package delivery just became a way of life. As times change so must the postal service to keep up. There are 167 million delivery points that we service daily from the cities to the most rural points of the United States. The number of delivery points go up daily and we do it as a whole and overall do a fantastic job getting it to where it is supposed to be. Mr. DeJoy stated that 50% of packages are now delivered a day earlier than expected, most packages are within 24 hours of arriving the estimated delivery day. It is all due to the great employees that we have working from the first mile to the last mile.

Overall, I enjoyed Mr. DeJoy's speech and appreciate the time he took out of his schedule to come talk with us at the convention. Knowing that he talks and listens to our UPMA leadership about our concerns with what is happening on smaller scales. Hearing the changes coming and the changes that have been happening and the impact they have already had. I am excited to see where this continues to go.



Postmaster General Louis DeJoy addressing UPMA at the National Convention





# CHAPTER RETIREE PRESIDENT: EDITH BRADSHAW



SC retiree luncheon with national retiree President Charlie Peters.

Hello, all retirees and those who are soon to join our elite club. I thank God for allowing me to see another Fall Season. I really love the fall with the cool weather and changing of the leaves. Also, it is time to get ready for the most important holiday of the year, Christmas.

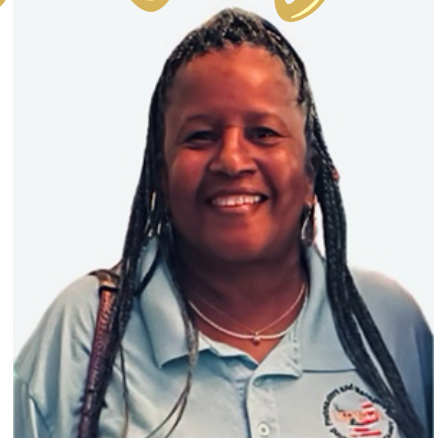
Your Executive Board is trying to make sure that we have three meetings a year. A spring meeting, a meeting at our state convention; and a fall meeting. Our fall meeting which was held in Santee, South Carolina.

Our Fall Meeting was November 23, 2024, at 12:00 Noon. The location was Clark's Restaurant, 114 Bradford Blvd., Santee, SC. We had the pleasure of our National Retiree President, Charlie Peters, in attendance with us. What an honor to have him come and speak to us on PSHB, which has been on the minds of all retirees and active members. Lunch was provided as always.

I hope you will try to attend in the future if you didn't make this one. Please contact our Secretary/Treasurer, Roy Brown to RSVP for retiree meetings. He can be reached at 843-441-2127. BRING A FRIEND.

Your Executive Board attended the 7th UPMA National Convention in Orlando, Florida. It was great seeing old friends and making new ones. We were in attendance each day for the General Sessions, and we attended all Retiree Meetings and any class that we were interested in attending. I encourage every retiree to attend at least one National Convention, and you will become hooked and will never miss another one. Looking forward to seeing each of you at our future meetings. Also, wishing everyone a happy holiday season. Always remember Jesus is the reason for the season.

HAPPY  
*New Year*



# CHAPTER WEBMASTER: ROBERT EDWARDS



## Good Computer Tricks

Even if you possess years of experience with computers, there are numerous ways to refine your skills on the PC and boost your productivity. These subtle yet lesser-known tips and tricks can significantly impact your workflow and help you save a considerable amount of time along the way.

### 1. Bring Back that Tab

If you accidentally shut a tab, fear not! Just hit Ctrl + Shift + T and voilà, your digital masterpiece is back on stage, ready for action!

### 2. Multiple Monitor Control

If you're rocking multiple monitors, just hit the Windows Key + Arrow Keys to make a window do the cha-cha right to the side of any screen! Want to send it on a little field trip to the next monitor? Just throw in Shift + Windows Key + Arrows! And if you're ready to roll with a second display or projector, simply hit Windows + P for a quick setup. Boom! Display magic!

### 3. Undo Everywhere

Did you know you've got a magical "undo" button in the Windows realm? Sure, you're familiar with Ctrl + Z zapping away those typos, but it's like a superhero for everything! Moved a file to Narnia or accidentally hit delete? Just smash Ctrl + Z, and poof! It's back in its cozy spot. And if you ever change your mind about that, Ctrl + Y is your trusty sidekick to redo any of those sneaky moves!

### 4. Minimize All Windows

If your screen looks like a window factory exploded and you're too lazy to minimize each one, just hit Windows key + D! Poof! They'll vanish faster than your motivation on a Monday. Want them back? Just press Win + D again, and voilà—your digital chaos returns!

### 5. Rename Files Sequentially

Got a mountain of files begging for a new name? Fear not! Renaming them in Windows is as easy as pie. For all you Windows wizards, just grab all the files you want to spruce up, right-click on the first one like a boss, select Rename, and type your snazzy new name. Voila! The rest will magically follow suit, tagging on (1), (2), and so forth like a quirky little parade!

### 6. Lock Your Computer

When you're not glued to your screen, it's a must to lock your computer! Otherwise, a sneaky snoop could swipe your passwords, filch your files, or even impersonate you online—yikes! The simplest way to keep those digital intruders at bay is to lock it up while you take a break, all without closing your work. Just type in your password when you're back, and voilà, you're right where you left off!

Need to lock it fast? Just smash that Windows Key + L combo on any Windows version to lock the screen quicker than you can say "security!"

**Unleash your inner tech wizard and sprinkle some magic on your PC experience with these epic computer hacks!**





## CHAPTER EDITOR: TAMMY JO POWELL

As we conclude 2024 and anticipate 2025, we're excited about the many changes ahead for the Postal Service and UPMA! We have a new president at the national level, Tony Leonardi, along with some wonderful updates to our national staff. Jim Dunlap from Colorado will step in as our executive director, Earl Husbands from Illinois will take on the role of National Membership Director, and Mari Beth Kirkland will serve as our executive assistant and office administrator. We wish them all great success and want to extend our heartfelt thanks to our past president, Edmund Carley, and our former executive director, Dan Heins, for their fantastic work.



We have some exciting things coming up, starting with our Membership Academy on January 17, 2025, right in the heart of Dallas, Texas! I'm thrilled to be part of the National Membership Team, and it's truly an honor to collaborate with such an amazing group of individuals. Not only are we kicking off the year with our annual membership training academy, but we're also overjoyed to introduce a new team dedicated to supporting our members with KSA and eCareer development. I feel so privileged to be part of this five-person team from the beginning, and we can't wait to share more about this at the Membership Academy in Dallas.

Communication will be vital as we team up with our new National President and office staff. Mr. Drew Martin from North Carolina will be leading our podcast, and you won't want to miss his first interview with our National Membership Director, Earl Husbands, available at the following link: [https://youtu.be/SQ9w3jHP2\\_c](https://youtu.be/SQ9w3jHP2_c)

We will also be changing our communications method regarding this newsletter. To be more economical we will be distributing it online so updating all your email communications is quite important. We will still mail out one copy annually.

Have an awesome New Year and I look forward to seeing more of you in the new year at UPMA events!



Tony Leonardi, President UPMA



Texas showing out for next years national convention



Tammy and John Powell



# UPMA NATIONAL MEMBER REPRESENTATIVE: ROY SHAFFER



## Ramblings of an Old Man

Through the Consultative Process UPMA and Postal Headquarters agreed even though the ELM doesn't require investigative interviews with EAS employees, investigative interviews will be conducted prior to the issuance of any discipline.

Also, if you're still spending excessive time on daily telecoms, please reach out to President Becky or myself.

Every person who works for a living has the same three options when dealing with their boss. Follow the instructions from your boss, don't follow your boss's instructions and suffer the consequences, or find a new boss. As a CMR (Chapter Member Representative) I see EAS employees who, in my opinion, have no business managing employees. EAS should always be held to a higher standard. The higher the level, the higher the standard. You

must lead by example, and you must always show respect to employees and superiors. Ask anyone who knows me, and they'll tell you I address everyone by ma'am or sir. I show respect to everyone, and I expect respect in return.

### As an EAS employee you MUST:

- Lead by example. Many of your employees look to you as a role model.
- Always conduct yourself in a professional manner.
- Report to work early every day.
- Dress appropriately for work.
- Remember nothing that happens at work is personal, it's only business.
- Hold yourself accountable for your actions and hold employees accountable for their actions.
- What happened in the past is gone. You can't change previous bad decisions. Learn from them and don't make the same mistakes.
- No one you supervise is your friend. Don't socialize with employees outside of work.
- Sick leave is an excellent insurance policy for times when you really need it.
- **REMEMBER YOU'RE NOT ALONE. UPMA IS HERE TO HELP**
- Always remember these two questions when you get that call from your boss.  
**Do I need representation? If the answer is no, may I bring representation?**

If I can ever be of any assistance, please call,

Roy Shaffer

404-357-9596

Semper Fidelis

"Honor is doing the right thing no matter the cost or consequences to oneself."





# UPMA NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR: EARL HUSBANDS

I am thrilled to introduce myself as the new National Membership Director of the United Postmasters and Managers of America (UPMA). It is both an honor and a privilege to step into this role and serve this wonderful organization. I look forward to working alongside all of you as we strive to enhance our organization and support each member's journey in their professional development.

My goal has always been to be an active leader in an organization where individuals can learn, grow, and thrive together. I am excited to bring that passion to my new role as National Membership Director. As we navigate this journey together, I can't emphasize enough the importance of meaningful communication. I believe open lines of communication are vital to anything you plan on being successful in. I will be working to ensure that all members feel heard and valued and that will start with my communication to all our Chapter Presidents. I want everyone to know that I have an open-door policy to help facilitate meaningful engagement. I have already started reaching out to many of you through individual personal phone calls and I will continue to do so. So, if you haven't heard from me yet, you soon will.

National Membership Chair, Katie Evertsen, National Membership Board Advisor, Jeff Jarrett, and I have been meeting once a week and working very hard on providing the best possible membership training at the UPMA 4th Annual Membership Academy and Kickoff Meeting in Dallas, TX on Saturday, January 18, 2025. The Membership Academy will focus on recruiting, developing, and engaging new members. I hope to see representation from all 52 UPMA Chapters at this year's Academy. If you have not already registered for this event and plan on attending, please do so ASAP by clicking on the link below. Also please share this link with anyone interested in attending within your respective chapters.

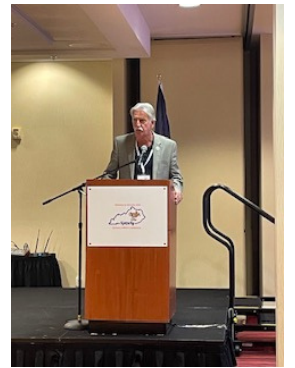
4th Annual Membership Academy and Kickoff Meeting | United Postmasters and Managers of America

I am genuinely excited to embark on this journey with all of you. The UPMA family is strong and vibrant, and together, we can further enhance the value of our organization. Please feel free to reach out with any questions, ideas, or feedback. I look forward to hearing from each of you!

Thank you for welcoming me into this important role. Let's work together to build an even brighter future for UPMA.







All pictures were taken by the SC UPMA Chapter unless otherwise sited under the picture.



# UPMA SECRETARY-TREASURER FINALIST: LORI TRINH

LORI'S OUTSTANDING DEDICATION AND PERFORMANCE AS THE INTERIM SECRETARY/TREASURER IN 2022, AND HER SUBSEQUENT NOMINATION AND SUCCESSFUL ELECTION, HAVE BEEN TRULY COMMENDABLE. SHE EXEMPLIFIED EXCEPTIONAL ATTENTION TO DETAIL AND FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP BY SUCCESSFULLY ORGANIZING AND BALANCING THREE SETS OF BOOKS UNDER CHALLENGING CIRCUMSTANCES. LORI PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN ENSURING THE ACCURATE COMPLETION OF VOUCHERS AND SENDING OUT WELCOME PACKETS TO NEW UPMA MEMBERS, ALONG WITH THEIR INCENTIVE PAYMENTS. HER EXCELLENT AUDITS AND METICULOUS VERIFICATION OF FINANCIAL RECORDS HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER'S SUCCESS.

ADDITIONALLY, LORI INVESTED EXTENSIVE TIME AND EFFORT INTO PREPARATIONS FOR OUR STATE CONVENTION, HANDLING TASKS SUCH AS SENDING OUT REGISTRATION FORMS, SECURING DOOR PRIZES, AND ORGANIZING GUEST BADGES. SHE ALSO MADE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO VITAL ASPECTS SUCH AS VENDOR RECRUITMENT, ACCOMMODATION ARRANGEMENTS, AND MEAL PLANNING FOR CONVENTION ATTENDEES. FURTHERMORE, THOROUGH AUDITING OF THE BOOKS DURING THE CONVENTION, ALONG WITH HER METICULOUS PROVISION OF ALL NECESSARY TAX DOCUMENTATION, FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS HER CAPABILITIES.

LORI'S DEDICATION AND HARD WORK ARE ALSO EVIDENT IN HER PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2023 SOC CONVENTION IN OCTOBER. WITH OVER 200 REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS, LORI METICULOUSLY COVERED ALL THE DETAILS TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL EVENT. FROM MANAGING REGISTRATIONS TO COORDINATING VARIOUS ASPECTS SUCH AS GUEST SPEAKERS, MEALS, ENTERTAINMENT, VENDORS, PUBLICITY, AUCTION, TRANSPORTATION, EDUCATION, AND IT, LORI'S LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS HAVE BEEN SINCERELY INVALUABLE.





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