

79th Annual Conference & Trade Show
August 29 – September 1, 2021
The Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center

2021 William H. Markus Award Recipient

This year's William H. Markus Award recipient is PMAA's own, Wendy W. Fonner.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics reports the average number of jobs a person has in their lifetime is twelve. I believe authority careers to be more stable than that number, but none-the-less it is still very rare that someone begins their first full time job, and then proceeds to dedicate the entirety of their career to that firm. Maybe more so in generations past, but not so much, at all, in today's world.

This year's awardee is the classic story of the person who learned the business from the ground up. Serving in a wide variety of administrative roles, they learned all aspects of managing the operations of the organization. Before the age of 30 they were placed in charge of all day to day financial, logistical and administrative functions of an entity with a large statewide membership. As the organization grew, they became increasingly involved in strategic aspects of that growth, overseeing the development of new and existing services doubling and tripling in size and scope. Spearheading change and modernization of operations, all while being an integral presence internally and externally within the organization and the broader association industry.

Many associations of their size have heads of finance, human resources, office management, and meeting planning. This individual wears all four hats and many, many more.

In recent years she has worked with her peers to promote women leaders in our industry by forming WIN, the women professionals' arm of the association. In just two years the organization has brought together over 200 women to promote, encourage and support one another as they assume greater leadership roles throughout the industry.

She holds a CMP, Certified Meeting Planner designation, the highest industry qualification for event management.

She has spoken at numerous professional association conferences on a variety of management topics. A leader who has served on the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Society of Association Executives, and currently serves on the board of the Pennsylvania Chapter of Meeting Planners International.

The award is to be conferred upon an individual who has exhibited distinguished service to the municipal authorities of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and outstanding personal service

to the Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association. I am not sure how you can give more distinguished or personal service than our award recipient.

As an active member of this association, you most certainly know her. She has been a voice of welcome, inclusion and friendship to so many for over 40 years. Hundreds and hundreds of municipal authorities over the years have been greatly benefited by having her on their team.

A leader in her community, she has chaired civic and school organizations and served many years as president of a pool association.

Her loyalty, work ethic, integrity and professionalism are only matched only by her heart and kindness.

Over the years when those qualities have been recognized, she has attributed learning them from her father. She has shared on numerous occasions, he would say, "be a leader, not a follower."a trait she has hoped to pass along to her own children.