

# Iowa Hospital Foundation Professionals/Healthcare Marketing and Public Relations Conference

June 5, 2025



## CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Effective marketing, public relations and foundation support are vital to the success of any hospital. The Foundation Professionals for Iowa Hospitals and the Iowa Society for Healthcare Marketing and Public Relations aim to support hospital communications and foundation development professionals by sharing ideas and fostering networking. This year's conference highlights the health care story and how to use AI in your daily operations.

## INTENDED AUDIENCE

- Fundraising roles, hospital foundation advancement professionals, senior leadership, and foundation board members in hospitals and health systems
- Hospital marketing and public relations professionals, including digital marketers, social media managers and leadership

## CONFERENCE AGENDA

**8:30 a.m. Registration and breakfast**

**9 a.m. Welcome and introductions**

*Angela Budnik, ISHMPPR President and Director of Marketing and Community Relations, Great River Health, West Burlington; and Lorrie Erusha, FPIH President and President, Mercy Medical Center Foundation, Cedar Rapids*

**9:30 a.m. Iowa Hospital Association Advocacy Update**

*Erin Cubit, Vice President, Federal and Regulatory Affairs, Iowa Hospital Association, Des Moines*

Legislative and regulatory advocacy is a vital function of the Iowa Hospital Association and an essential duty of health care stakeholders. Understanding and addressing these issues is crucial in today's complex health care environment. This session will provide updates on legislative and regulatory matters, as well as other policy developments.

Learning objectives:

- Discuss updates about legislative and regulatory issues facing the Iowa Legislature and U.S. Congress, and their impact on hospitals
- Explain how to get involved with IHA advocacy efforts
- Outline components of IHAs' state and federal legislative agendas

**10 a.m. General Session – Telling the Health Care Story**

*Eileen Wixted, Principal, Wixted and Company, Des Moines*

"If we don't tell our story, who will?" Organizations often consider this thought-provoking question, and the answer can be sobering. Many are eager to tell your story from their perspectives, but no one has the insight of those on the inside of a health care organization. The context, details and examples shared can significantly affect the impression of a health care organization and help foster a deeper understanding.

Learning objectives:

- Cover the power of the net impression
- Discuss how to analyze the audience and use that information to build trust and connection with them
- Practice the 90-second opening statement that kicks off any presentation and meeting with strength

**11 a.m. Break**

**11:15 a.m.**

### **FPIH Breakout – What's Changing in Fundraising and How to Keep Donors Engaged in a Noisy World**

*Chad Barger, CFRE, Owner, Productive Fundraising, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania*

Fundraising is evolving, and so are donors. In this session, Barger highlights the latest donor trends, academic insights and real-world success stories to reveal what's changing in philanthropy today. You'll explore the shifting landscape of donor behavior and learn how to adapt your strategies for greater retention and deeper engagement. This session addresses two significant challenges facing nonprofits: staying ahead of fundraising trends and cutting through the noise to connect with donors. Attendees will leave with practical tools and examples of how organizations successfully identify, cultivate, solicit and steward donors in today's crowded communication environment at no or low cost.

Learning objectives:

- Analyze examples of successful donor engagement efforts and adapt them to your organization
- Apply adaptable strategies to help your organization respond effectively to the evolving fundraising landscape
- Identify key shifts in donor behavior and fundraising trends based on recent data, research and real-world insights
- Implement simple, budget-friendly tactics that increase donor attention, connection and retention
- Recognize common barriers to donor engagement in today's noisy communication environment and how to overcome them

**11:15 a.m.**

### **ISHMPR Breakout – Navigating Media and Crisis Communication**

*Eileen Wixted, Principal, Wixted and Company, Des Moines*

This presentation will address the art of communicating in the court of public opinion. It begins with a definition of what constitutes a crisis. The mindset is that in the absence of information, audiences will assume the worst. This is especially true during a crisis. A hospital representative's "no comment" response to a reporter's question will not prevent the reporter from covering the story. But communicating early, often and well can help create a positive net impression when a reputation is at risk.

Learning objectives:

- Cover the importance of audience analysis and the benefits of developing a media holding statement
- Examine how the media functions in 2025 and the importance of building healthy media relationships
- Learn what you can say and how to develop a succinct message during times of elevated stress

**12:15 p.m.**

### **Lunch**

**1:15 p.m.**

### **FPIH Breakout – Staffing Your Fundraising Operation: Structure, Attract and Retain**

*Chad Barger, CFRE, Owner, Productive Fundraising, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania*

Barger will explore the diverse options for staffing your organization's fundraising operation, including how to structure a fundraising job description. He will also provide tips for structuring the position in a way that's most likely to attract top talent in today's challenging job market. Additionally, Barger will focus on strategies to keep your fundraising staff happy and engaged, ensuring they serve your organization for the long term.

Learning objectives:

- Design compelling fundraising job descriptions and roles that attract high-quality candidates in a competitive hiring environment
- Evaluate different staffing models to effectively structure a fundraising operation based on organizational size and goals
- Implement proven strategies and tools for retail fundraising staff and support their long-term success in your organization

**1:15 p.m.**

### **ISHMPR Breakout – Networking Roundtable**

*Moderated by ISHMPR board members and IHA staff*

Participants will break into small groups and share marketing and public relations strategies, as well as any methods that have proven successful. Participants can present topics to their peers and learn from one another.

**2:15 p.m.**

### **Break**

**2:30 p.m.**

### **Boost Your Productivity With Copilot**

*Chris Porter, Director, Artificial Intelligence Program, Associate Professor and Co-chair, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, Drake University, Des Moines; Chris Snider, Associate Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Drake University, Des Moines*

This session will provide an overview of how Microsoft 365 Copilot integrates the power of generative artificial intelligence with your work data to spark creativity, boost productivity and foster new skills. You'll learn how to use Copilot within the Microsoft 365 Suite, including popular applications such as Teams, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint and Excel.

Learning objectives:

- Identify Copilot entry points and core capabilities in Teams, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint and Excel
- Understand how Copilot integrates with your work data

**3:30 p.m.**

### **Adjourn**

## **FACULTY**

**Chad Barger** helps nonprofit professionals fundraise more efficiently and effectively. He is the chief strategist and owner of Productive Fundraising, a firm that brings research-based fundraising tactics to small and mid-sized nonprofits. He is a top-rated speaker and presenter, as well as a master trainer of nonprofit boards that often resist fundraising efforts. He teaches fundraising at Temple University and Messiah University and is one of only 117 fundraisers worldwide to hold the Advanced Certified Fund-Raising Executive credential. Barger is also a strategic adviser and coach for nonprofit fundraisers, executive directors and board members.

**Erin Cubit** is the Iowa Hospital Association's vice president of federal and regulatory affairs. She works on federal and state lobbying activities as well as regulatory policies. Outside government relations work, Cubit is a staff liaison for IHA's Foundation Professionals for Iowa Hospitals. She also leads the Hospice and Palliative Care Association of Iowa. Cubit graduated from the University of Northern Iowa with bachelor's and master's degrees in public policy.

**Christopher Porter, Ph.D.**, is the director of Drake University's artificial intelligence program and an associate professor of computer science. Before joining Drake in 2016, Dr. Porter held postdoctoral positions at the University of Paris Diderot and the University of Florida. He received a joint doctorate in mathematics and philosophy in 2012 and an undergraduate degree in mathematics from Gonzaga University in 2003.

**Chris Snider** is an associate professor at Drake University. He teaches social media and digital media courses to undergraduate and graduate students. Before joining Drake, Snider was a journalist in Baltimore, St. Louis and Des Moines. He moved to Des Moines in 2005 to start Juice magazine. Snider teaches workshops and presents on topics ranging from social media strategy and personal branding to generative AI. He also writes a weekly email newsletter about new developments in social media.

**Eileen Wixted** is the Principal of Wixted and Company and is nationally recognized in strategic communication and crisis management. Wixted helps clients effectively manage potentially brand-damaging issues and prepares them to face media interviews, shareholder meetings, presentations and government investigations. With over three decades of experience, she possesses a keen understanding of the issues affecting health care. Several hundred of the nation's hospitals depend on Wixted for counsel, media support, training and drills. She spent a decade as a broadcast journalist and anchor, during which time she received an Emmy Award, and her health segments were nationally syndicated. Wixted was also interim senior vice president of communications and government affairs for Advocate Health Care, Illinois' largest health care system. She was a guest speaker for the Executive Education Programs at the Center for Homeland Defense and Security at the Naval Postgraduate School. The Des Moines Business Record named Wixted a 2016 Women Business Owner of the Year. A native of Brooklyn, New York, she graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in Mass Communications.

## **REGISTRATION**

Register online at [www.ihaonline.org](http://www.ihaonline.org).

- ISHMPR/FPIH member — \$50
- Associate member — \$175
- Non-IHA members — \$350

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Full participation in the Iowa Hospital Foundation Professionals/Healthcare Marketing and Public Relations Joint Spring Conference is applicable for X points in Category 1.B-Education of the CFRE International application for initial certification or recertification.

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TO BECOME A  
MEMBER OF FPIH  
OR ISHMPR!**

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

IHA Conference Center, 100 E. Grand Ave., Suite 100, Des Moines.

- If you have dietary restrictions or allergies, email [iharegistration@ihaonline.org](mailto:iharegistration@ihaonline.org).
- Dress for the conference is business casual. Layered clothing is recommended for your comfort.
- This is a paperless conference. IHA will email conference materials when available.

## LODGING

IHA offers a discounted corporate rate for attendees to use for overnight accommodation. IHA offers a discounted rate to attendees on “non-last room” availability, meaning that this rate may not always be available because of high demand.

Book early if you think you may need arrangements. When calling, reference the corporate ID:

### Staybridge Suites Des Moines

Corporate rate: \$139/night plus taxes

515-280-3828

Corporate ID No.: IXNR

### Downtown Des Moines AC Marriott

Corporate rate: \$177/night plus taxes

515-518-6060

Corporate ID Code: 3QR

## CANCELLATION/REFUND POLICY

- Cancellations and substitutions are welcome anytime. Email cancellations and substitution requests to [iharegistration@ihaonline.org](mailto:iharegistration@ihaonline.org).
- IHA will refund cancellations received 10 or more business days before the conference.
- IHA will charge a \$50 administrative fee to cancellations received six to nine business days before the conference.
- IHA will not refund cancellations received five or fewer business days before the conference.
- IHA will calculate refunds by the date received and the IHA business days remaining before the conference.
- IHA may cancel the conference because of low enrollment. If so, IHA will notify preregistered participants and provide full refunds.

## ADA POLICY

IHA does not discriminate in its educational programs based on race, religion, color, sex or disability. IHA wishes to ensure it does not exclude, deny services, segregate or treat anyone with a disability differently from others because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services. If you need auxiliary aids or services identified in the Americans With Disabilities Act to attend this conference, call IHA at 515-288-1955 or write to the IHA Education Department.