NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER 2026

www.azsae.org



PRESIDENT ELECT MESSAGE:

Debbie Rudd
2026 AzSAE President Elect

Dear AzSAE Members,

This time of year always inspires a bit of reflection for me. The beautiful fall weather brings a sense of fun, frivolity, love, and gratitude—a wonderful way to begin the final stretch of the year!

Being part of AzSAE is a meaningful and positive connection for me. In a world that can sometimes feel filled with negativity, AzSAE stands out as the epitome of professionalism, educational opportunities, and genuine friendliness. From the organization's leadership to every member involved, there is a welcoming spirit and a shared commitment to making a difference.

As we bring the year to a close, AzSAE celebrates the incredible people who make associations across Arizona so special with our annual Gala. But we can't shine a spotlight on these outstanding individuals without your help! We need nominations to recognize and celebrate the amazing accomplishments happening all around us.

Take a look around your office, your organization, and our association community. Who deserves to be recognized? Who has gone above and beyond, made a difference, or inspired others along the way? The nomination process is easy, but time is running out. Take a moment to nominate that special person today! Let's make sure these deserving individuals receive the recognition they deserve.

And once you've submitted your nominations, don't forget to join us for an evening of celebration and holiday cheer! Picture a Winter Wonderland filled with wonderful people, great food and drinks, a little merriment, and plenty of opportunities to make memories. You might even find a few Christmas gifts in our Silent Auction, capture a photo or two, or take home a raffle prize!



AzSAE is a Community for All Association Professionals and those who serve the association industry.
Join Us!
Learn | Grow | Connect

https://www.azsae.org/join

AzSAE Arizona Society of Association Executives

NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER 2026

www.azsae.org

President Elect Message cont.

What a lovely way to enjoy an evening together before the holiday rush begins. It's a chance to reconnect, celebrate one another, and appreciate the people who make our association community so special.

I am truly thankful for each of you and the connections we share through AzSAE. I look forward to celebrating with you at the Gala and ending the year on a joyful note. Let's celebrate our people, our accomplishments, and the spirit of AzSAE together!

Debbie Rudd
2026 AzSAE President Elect



REGISTER NOW

Thank you for hosting the AzSAE October Mixer

Hilton Garden Inn CHANDLER DOWNTOWN

Sponsored by:

CAESARS ENTERTAINMENT



AzSAE is a Community for All Association Professionals and those who serve the association industry.
Get Involved!

https://www.azsae.org/getinvolved

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Meeting & Breakfast



November Annual Meeting

Thursday, November 12, 2026

7:30 am - 10 am

NextSpace - Scottsdale

8399 E. Hartford Drive

Scottsdale, AZ 85255

Topic: Speaking Their Language: Understanding Personalities to Create Exceptional Member Experiences & Grow Membership

Speaker: Brad Anderson, Blueprint Training

EVENTS

www.azsae.org

Members: $45 | Nonmembers: $75

Approved 1.0 CAE credit

Annual Meeting Notice

The Annual Meeting of the Arizona Society of Association Executives (AzSAE) is scheduled as indicated below. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the November meeting. Participants that register for the meeting will automatically be registered for the Annual Meeting at no additional charge.

November 12, 2026
8:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.

Slate of Nominees for Board of Directors

The AzSAE Nominating Committee, chaired by Past President Pat Farrey, CAE, is pleased to announce that the following AzSAE Members have graciously n accepted a nomination to serve as a Director on the AzSAE Board of Directors beginning January 2027 through December 2028:

Pamela Frestedt, CAE, West and Southeast REALTORS® of the Valley (R)
Jenica Hickey, CAE, Arizona Multihousing Association (R)
Jessica Young, Discover Flagstaff (A)
Lisa Zarda, CAE, CNAP, US Swim School Association (R)

If elected, the above candidates will join the following Directors currently serving through 2027:

Tonya Deskins, CAE, West and Southeast REALTORS® of the Valley (R)
Patrick Farrey, CAE, Society of Plastics Engineers (R)
Feliz Leyba, Caesars Entertainment (A)
Deborah Rudd, Arizona Association of Community Managers (R)
Joanne Winter, MPI/HSMAI (R)

(R) Regular Member
(A) Associate Member

UPCOMING EVENTS



Approved 1.0 CAE credit



Now accepting SPONSORS

Now accepting DONATIONS-AUCTION ITEMS

Gala Tickets: Table of 8 for $650 - available to all member and nonmembers

Member and Guests of Members:
Early bird: thru 12/2 - $80
After 12/2 - $100

Nonmember
Early bird: thru 12/2 - $100
After 12/2 - $110

Lifetime Member - $65

REGISTER

AzSAE Gala 2026



AzSAE is proud to support the following charitable organization:
Audrey's Angels
Give the Gift of Joy This Christmas

Audrey's Angels
Enriching Lives Through Music

For 25 years, live musicians have brought joy and connection to seniors in small care homes throughout the Valley. Most of the seniors we serve have dementia, yet music can reach memories and emotions that words often cannot. A familiar song can bring a smile, a memory, a moment of recognition—and help them remember their joy

Book your hotel room





President
Tonya Deskins, CAE
West and SouthEast REALTORS of the Valley

President-Elect
Deborah Rudd
Arizona Association of Community Managers

Treaurer
Pamela Frestedt, CAE
West and SouthEast REALTORS of the Valley

Past President
Patrick Farrey, CAE
Society of Plastics Professionals

Secretary
Lisa Zarda, CAE, CNAP
US Swim School Association

Executive Director
Karolyn Kiburz, CMP

Meghan Hyatt, CAE
The National Elder Law Foundation

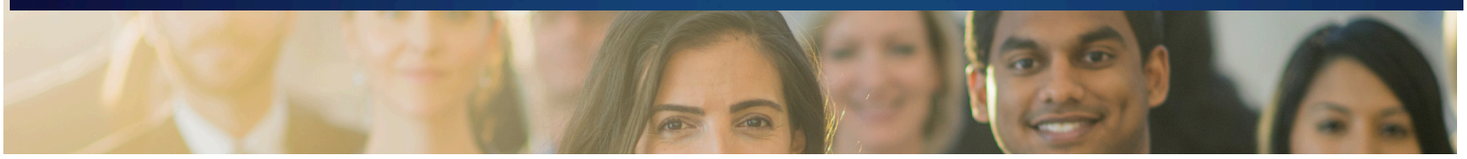
Feliz Leyba
Caesars Entertainment

Joanne Winter
MPI/HSMAI

Jessica Young
Discover Flagstaff

Of Counsel
Alexis Firehawk, Esq
CHDB Law LLP

Scholarship Opportunity



EXCLUSIVE SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR AZSAE MEMBERS!

THUNDERBIRD SCHOOL OF GLOBAL MANAGEMENT | ASU Arizona State University

AzSAE Arizona Society of Association Executives

Thunderbird scholarship opportunity for

Arizona Society of Association Executives Members (AzSAE)

For more information about programs reach out to:
Danish O'Habib
Associate Director, Global Recruitment Outreach | Student Success
Thunderbird School of Global Management | Arizona State University
o: +1-602-496-1734

Learn More

New & Renewed Members



NEW:
Adrian Rodriquez
Association Managers

Melissa Meza
WeSERV

Nikki Taylor
Discover Avondale

RENEWED:
Kevin Holt
Co.Innovation Consulting

Carrie Kolles
American Lighting Association

Debra Margraf
Arizona Chapter NECA

Professional Development

CAE CERTIFIED ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE PREP COURSES

Fall Course Registration

- CRAM Course - 1 week Intensive
- Fall 2026 Dates: Nov 10 - 13

The CAE credential is the marker of a committed association professional who has demonstrated the wide range of knowledge essential to manage an association in today's challenging environment.

With the highest success rate in the nation, MSAE has helped more association professionals become CAEs than any other entity

Use promo code AzSAE-CAE to save 20%
MORE ABOUT OUR COURSES>>



AzSAE's Commitment to Educational Growth

AzSAE collaborates with various SAE associations and industry experts to offer a rich array of educational opportunities for our members. This partnership ensures optimal growth and timely application in our constantly evolving landscape.

Visit our website for more information
Professional Development

ELearning through SeminarWeb

- **Live Webinars (2 per month)** – Access the latest trends & insights from top speakers nationwide.

70+ Self-Study Courses

WEBINAR **AzSAE Webinar Archives**

Exclusive Member Access
This valuable resource is available for our members to view our growing collection of recorded education webinars anytime!
(Must be logged into member account to access the recordings).
VIEW AVAILABLE WEBINARS

asae®
The Center for Association Leadership

CAE Study Resource

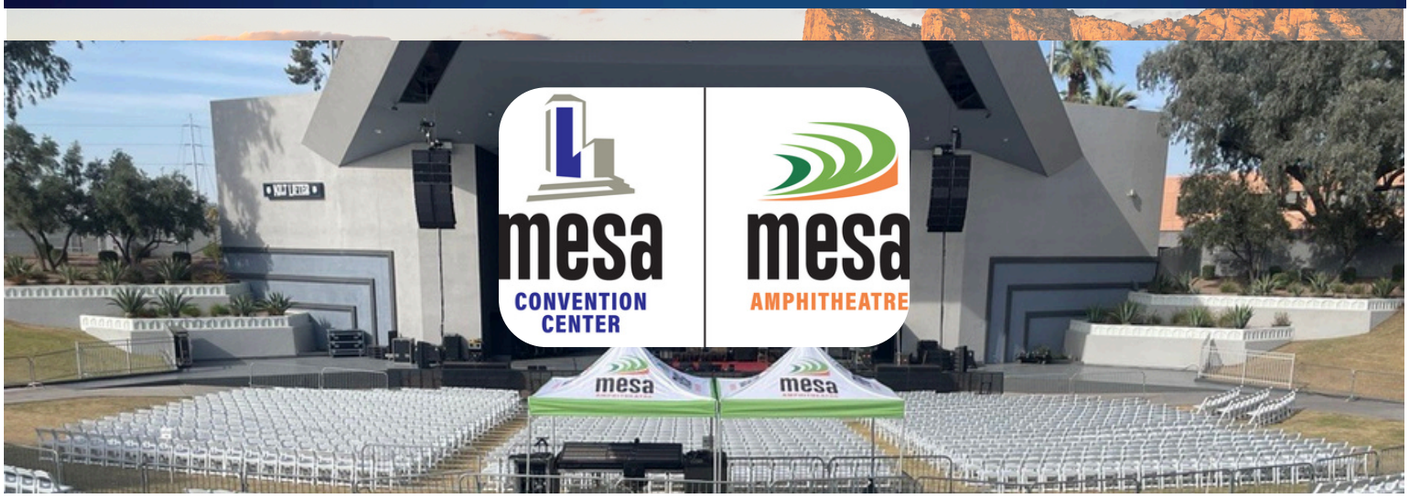
QAS 2.0 QUALIFIED ASSOCIATION SPECIALIST

Master the Fundamentals for Career Advancement in Association Management with QAS 2.0

QAS 2.0 - the Qualified Association Specialist (QAS) 2.0 Certificate Program provides anyone in the association industry, including CEOs, a broad base view of the key elements in running an association. QAS 2.0 is a refreshed and modernized version of the original program. With updated content, new speakers, timely topics, and an all-new design, QAS 2.0 reflects the current realities of association management and prepares professionals for what's next. **View Full Program**

AzSAE Coupon Code: AZQAS-SAE

STRATEGIC PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

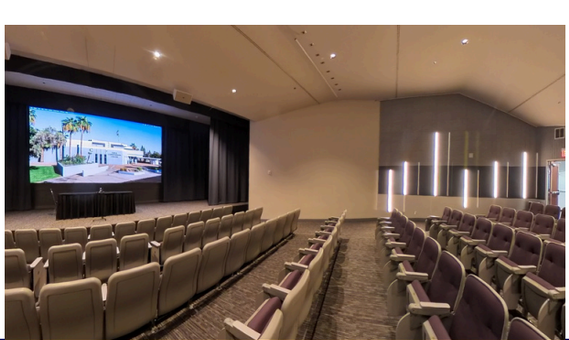


Discover Mesa: Meetings, Conventions and Live Experiences
Located in the heart of Downtown Mesa, Arizona, the Mesa Convention Center and Mesa Amphitheatre offer versatile settings for professional gatherings, conventions, trade shows, concerts, and special events. With a variety of indoor and outdoor spaces, convenient amenities, and access to the surrounding downtown district, these venues provide event planners with options for gatherings of different sizes and styles.

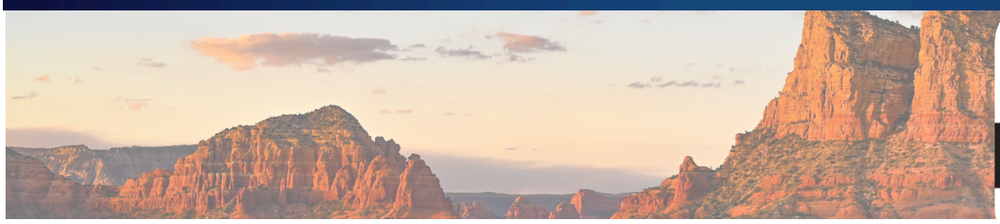
Flexible Spaces for Meetings and Conventions
The Mesa Convention Center offers nearly 40,000 square feet of flexible indoor meeting space, including an approximately 19,000-square-foot exhibit hall, a 169-seat theater, and multiple breakout rooms. From association meetings and educational sessions to large conventions, expos, and banquets, the venue offers adaptable spaces to accommodate a variety of event formats and sizes. An additional 40,000 square feet of outdoor function space provides even more possibilities for receptions, networking events, and social gatherings.

The range of spaces allows planners to organize different portions of an event in dedicated areas, whether hosting presentations, facilitating breakout sessions, welcoming exhibitors, or bringing attendees together for meals and networking. In-house food and beverage services offer a convenient way to coordinate catering as part of the overall event experience, from refreshments during conference breaks to meals and receptions.





STRATEGIC PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



Additional amenities include high-speed Wi-Fi, audio-visual capabilities, and convenient access to the adjacent Delta Hotels by Marriott Phoenix-Mesa for guest accommodations and additional meeting options. The Convention Center's Downtown Mesa location also puts attendees near local restaurants, arts and entertainment, and public transportation, offering opportunities to explore the area before or after scheduled activities.

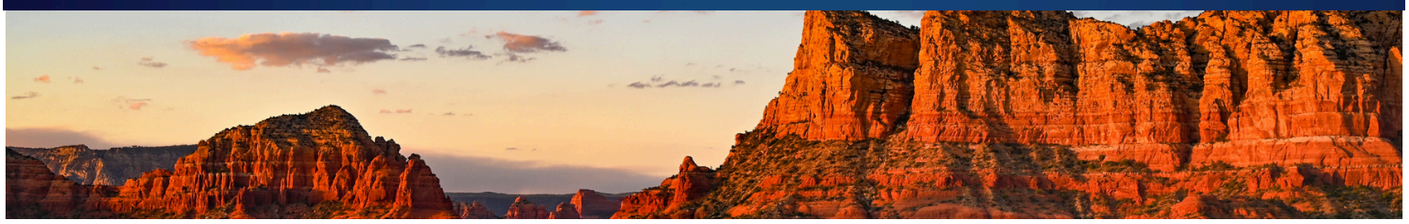
An Outdoor Stage for Memorable Experiences
Located on the same campus, the Mesa Amphitheatre provides a distinctive open-air setting for concerts, festivals, and special events. With tiered grassy lawn seating and a festival capacity of approximately 5,000 guests, the venue offers an inviting atmosphere for live entertainment and large outdoor gatherings. The Amphitheatre provides an alternative to traditional indoor event spaces, giving organizers the opportunity to create experiences centered on live performances, audience engagement, and the outdoor setting. Its location near Downtown Mesa adds convenience for attendees looking to enjoy nearby dining and entertainment as part of their visit.

One Destination, Many Possibilities
Together, the Mesa Convention Center and Mesa Amphitheatre offer complementary settings for a wide range of events. Planners can choose the professional atmosphere of an indoor conference or exhibit hall, the relaxed setting of an outdoor reception, or the energy of a live event under the Arizona sky. Their location within the same campus provides additional options when selecting a venue that best fits an event's format and goals.

Whether organizing an association conference, a trade show, a corporate gathering, or an outdoor festival, event planners can find a setting to bring their attendees together in Mesa.

Plan your next event in Mesa! Visit www.MesaConventionCenter.com or call 480-644-2178 to learn more about hosting an event at the Mesa Convention Center or Mesa Amphitheatre.

STRATEGIC PARTNERS



This newsletter is made possible by these fine partners

Gold Partners

Prescott Resort and Conference Center

Flagstaff discoverflagstaff.com Arizona's destination for all seasons

mesa CONVENTION CENTER | mesa AMPHITHEATRE

SECHLER MORGAN Certified Public Accountants, PLLC

i4a™

Avion Center

CHDB Law Condo | HOA | Defense | Business

SCOTTSDALE ARIZONA

Silver Partners

VISIT tucson

Sunwest Bank

Bronze Partner

Arizona's DJ ENTERTAINMENT

Discover Avondale DiscoverAvondale.com ARIZONA

Interested in becoming a strategic partner? Click on the button for more information!

AzSAE Arizona Society of Association Executives

4300 N. Miller Rd. #141
Scottsdale, Az 85251
Ph: 480-946-0119
Em: info@azsae.org