



IRWA Staff Spotlight

In an effort to further increase transparency between IRWA Headquarters and the dedicated members of this Association, we are excited to bring you the **IRWA Staff Spotlight**. In each issue of Right of Way Magazine, a different staff member will introduce themselves and give some insight into their role at Headquarters.

“What is something on your bucket list?”

I would like to travel to all thirteen Caribbean countries to experience the food, culture and traditions that each country is known for.



What is your name and your job title at IRWA Headquarters?

My name is Dyemond Cooper, and I am the events coordinator.

Tell us about your background and why you chose to work at IRWA.

I graduated with a bachelor's degree in recreational tourism and management from California State University, Northridge. During my first year of college, I was hired as an events assistant at the student union, a nonprofit organization on campus. I quickly discovered my passion for event planning, especially after feeling the satisfaction of creating experiences that made people feel connected and engaged. After two years, I worked my way up to a leadership role before graduating. My passion for organizing events and delivering memorable experiences led me to IRWA, where I had the opportunity to plan a variety of events, including conferences, exhibits and educational sessions. Although I was initially unfamiliar with these types of events, I was eager to learn and embraced the challenges they presented, which further fueled my interest in the field.

How long have you been with Headquarters?

I have been with Headquarters for 2 years and 6 months.

Describe your role. What are your primary responsibilities?

My primary responsibility is overseeing conference planning, which includes a wide range of tasks to ensure the event runs smoothly. This entails booking the host site, whether it is a convention center or hotel, and collaborating with their team to secure appropriate spaces for various components of the conference, such as educational sessions, general sessions, the exhibit hall and designated areas for food and beverage services. I also work closely with the venue to confirm all logistics, including room setups, A/V requirements and catering options to meet the event's specific needs. In addition to conference planning, I assist with a variety of other event-related tasks. This includes coordinating Microsoft Teams meetings, scheduling webinars and organizing the annual IEC and IGC meetings. I also support staff outings, organize meeting owls (for virtual hybrid events) and coordinate promotional items for tradeshow.

**How has your career grown since you first joined the team? What have you gained?**

Since joining IRWA, my event planning skills have grown significantly. I've gained the knowledge and confidence to take on larger-scale events, including full conferences, from start to finish. This experience has not only enhanced my technical skills in event coordination but has also provided me with valuable opportunities to develop leadership abilities. Through my role, I've had the chance to build meaningful connections within the event industry that I would not have had the chance to build without being part of IRWA.

What are some of the reasons members typically contact you?

Members often reach out to me for a variety of conference-related needs, including registration assistance, hotel confirmation inquiries and the submission process for conference sessions. I also handle sponsorship and exhibitor inquiries in addition to requests for promotional items (swag) and meeting owls for virtual or hybrid sessions.

**What are the best ways members can reach you?**

The best way to contact me is via email at cooper@irwaonline.org or by phone at my extension x137.

What is your favorite part of working at IRWA?

My favorite part of working at IRWA is the opportunity to travel for work. I conduct site visits to help plan conferences and assess potential locations when Chapters submit bids to host. The chance to explore new places while fulfilling these important responsibilities is incredibly rewarding. Additionally, being part of such a supportive and collaborative team that provides me with the guidance and resources needed to succeed in my role is an invaluable experience.

What are some of your hobbies outside of work?

I really enjoy hanging out with my family, friends and partner. Whether we're grabbing some good food at a restaurant or just having a chill time together, it always brings a smile to my face. I also love treating myself to a manicure and pedicure, it's such a nice way to relax, decompress and feel pampered!

Tell us a fun fact about yourself or something that might surprise us.

I am the eldest of six siblings.

Where would you travel to for your dream vacation?

My dream vacation is to visit Japan during its iconic cherry blossom season. Aside from that, I would also love to eat authentic Japanese food.

What is something on your bucket list?

I would like to travel to all thirteen Caribbean countries to experience the food, culture and traditions that each country is known for. 🍹