Mahoganey Marcial

Events Specialists

Shauntay Grant

Paul Adams

Mahoganey Marcial

"Thank you everybody for coming to the wedding – however, this is by invite only."

Event planner Mahoganey Marcial smiles remembering one of many demanding scenarios she's had to deal with in her line of work.

"If you did not receive an invitation please kindly take the door. Thank you for coming."

Two years ago Marcial started Mahoganey Marcial Events Specialists, a company that helps people source the things needed to run an effective event – finding the best venue, the best pricing, putting together a work plan, etc. But when it comes to event management, Marcial says you never really know what's in store.

"You watch clients break down in front of you," says Marcial. "They cry, and they are stressed when they see the one or two things they have to do."

The resolution? "You do it for them – that's my job," she says.

Managing weddings and corporate events hasn't always been Marcial's career goal. "I always thought I was going to be a doctor – that was my goal since I was younger."

Marcial grew up in Saint John, New Brunswick. She moved to Halifax seven years ago. And while studying kinesiology at Dalhousie University, she organized events on the side.

"I've been doing events since I got out of high school in '97," says Marcial. "The first event I did was a fundraiser for the Saint John Regional Hospital – I was in charge of helping to tally the money, and bring in volunteers for the event. Then I started doing the university circuit – (organizing) events and information sessions, things like that. I just always thought that I had a cool job to pay for school. But I never thought you could actually plan events for a living."

But Marcial's knack for event planning seemed to follow her at every turn.

"I worked in disability management for the Public Service Commission my first year out of university, as a kinesioligist," says Marcial. "The majority of my role was case management and developing a program. I developed a program for people to get back to work, and planned events for the government – I did their IWK campaign, African Heritage Month events, Ecology Action … and (during that time) I also took a wedding consulting course to start planning weddings on the side. When it hit me that I don't care about blood cell counts and what I learned in kinesiology, but that I was more interested in putting together the perfect presentation for your client, I realized that I was obviously looking at the wrong (career)."

Marcial says planning weddings and corporate events is truly her calling.

"When it comes to weddings, I'm one of only (a few) wedding consultants in the city that have actually trained to become wedding consultants. And as an event planner, I have a state of the art system that will help manage tasks and timelines. I also have a high level of registration software that's not available everywhere – I can put your event online, help you generate tickets, and I also have the capabilities to generate e-mails to your potential guests and track who opens what, who checks what, who's decided to look for more information, and who decides to register for your event."

A lot to keep track of. But Marcial says having excellent organizational skills and great patience are crucial to this line of work.

"You have to have major patience, and great self-control. It doesn't matter what goes wrong – you fix it, and keep things on schedule."

And the bonus for her clients – they can relax and enjoy their own event.

"I like to say that they can be a guest at their own event," says Marcial. "Let somebody else do the work and you get the credit for it."

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