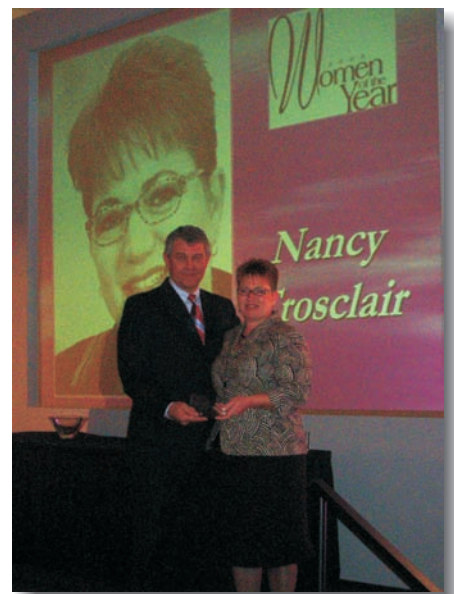


# **GSMPI member honored as one of New Orleans' 2005 Women of the Year**

By Rachel Vella

If there's one thing Hurricane Katrina has taught us, it is that adversity can bring out the best in people. During these difficult times true leaders show their character and earn their stripes. One such leader being recognized is MPI Gulf States Chapter's own Nancy Trosclair, DMCP, president of Destination New Orleans (DNO). On January 20, 2006 in the Grand Ballroom of the Sheraton New Orleans, Nancy was honored as one of New Orleans' 2005 Top 50 Women of the Year. The annual awards program sponsored by New Orleans City Business recognizes metro area women for their professional accomplishments and willingness to make New Orleans a better place to live. With recent honors including five 2004 HSMAI Adrian Awards, the MPI Gulf States Chapter 2005 President's Award and achieving status as a Certified Woman's Business Enterprise, it is no wonder Nancy has been chosen for this prestigious honor.



In a year, with so many challenges, this award takes on even greater meaning. "The landscape of the New Orleans hospitality industry has changed." Nancy says. "In turn, we must adapt to the challenges of marketing our city and be ready to serve the influx of meetings and conventions when they return." Faced with this changed landscape of the local meeting and event planning industry, Nancy's vision and forward thinking is giving her company hope for a bright future. Just three days after the storm, while in exile in St. Louis, she changed her company's slogan to "Destination New Orleans, Destined to Rebuild." This positive message and resolve to move forward was further shown with DNO being the first New Orleans DMC to produce an industry-wide event. Her "Hospitality Hospital" event took the proactive, first step in bringing the hospitality community together for some much needed healing and reconnecting in a city still crippled in the storm's aftermath. The event received coverage in local and national publications and on the world wide web. Proceeds from the event went to the New Orleans Tourism Rebirth Fund established by the New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau. It was one of the first positive signs that rebuilding of the local tourism industry had begun. Nancy's vision and forward thinking are an inspiration to all of us who are "Destined to Rebuild." When our industry returns stronger and better than before, it will be because of the leadership of people like Nancy Trosclair.



## **Supplier Spotlight**

By Donna Bailey

James B. Williams is currently the Director of Special Events for K-Paul's Catering Expedition. James has been a member of MPI since September 2001. James began his career in the hospitality industry with a catering company in Lafayette, outside his hometown of Morgan City, LA. From there, one thing led to another. With K Paul's Catering, James and his team have the pleasure of creating fun, food and festivities at the location of their clients' choice, creating an experience their guests will long remember. One of James' most unforgettable programs was a three day event in Cape Cod for a 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday party. The client's back yard was the Atlantic Ocean. Mardi Gras Productions, Rockin' Dopsie and Brennan's Restaurant were involved as well. It was truly a memorable experience as everyone worked together to bring New Orleans to the clients. James

began with K-Paul's in May of 2000 as the Production Manager for K-Paul's Catering Expedition where he developed the production department for K Paul's growing offsite business. In late 2001, he took over the offsite catering sales and local and national marketing, as well as production. James also handles some sales and production for onsite events as well. When asked, the "secret of his success," James responded "Efficiency has always been a professional aspect that I strive for. I also make a point to carefully consider every move that I make along with every word that I say to consider its effects on others and future business. I think the extension of this consideration has been helpful in my professional career." In his "free time," when he is not working, James enjoys traveling as often as possible.