

Staff Spotlight

Matthew Baran Executive Director of Communications

In my current position, I manage internal and external communications for the association. A key aspect of my job is to collaborate with other divisions, LLCs, the board and committees to ensure the association is communicating effectively to its player members and member clubs.

Our division also focuses on coverage of USPA tournaments to promote and grow the sport across digital and print channels. The main platforms I oversee are the USPA Polo Network, social media for the USPA and National Polo Center, website for USPA and NPC, This Week in Polo, branding and Polo magazine.

I am grateful to be leading a talented and passionate group of individuals who are like-minded and want to share the sport with the world.

I fell into the sport not knowing what a chukker was. I still can't ride a horse, but I love the sport and continue to be fascinated with the horses. I have to thank Susan Present (USPA CFO) and Bob Puetz (former USPA CEO) who brought me into polo and gave me an opportunity to be successful at the USPA. As purely a fan of the sport, it has allowed me to market polo to a wider audience, many of whom have never seen it outside of "Pretty Woman."

I grew up playing every major sport and was a Division I baseball player. I have a fervor for sports marketing and have applied it to polo over the past nine years. It's the most beautiful sport to watch live and has a rich history dating back thousands of years. The culture and connection to the horses are so unique, there is a never-ending amount of captivating



Matthew Baran
exploring the mountains
near Park City, Utah

content and stories to share with the world.

I grew up in the beach town of Jupiter, Florida, with one older brother and two wonderful parents. Summers were spent snorkeling, swimming and surfing at the beach and playing sports with the kids in my neighborhood. Starting at the age of 5, I focused on baseball and traveled all around Florida, competing in large youth tournaments. Through high school and college, I was fortunate enough to compete against the country's top players, some of whom are still playing in the major leagues.

I am very close with my family, who still live in Jupiter, and I have extended family in New Jersey. My father, Frank, was a big influence on my baseball career and business as well. I picked up my artistic side from my mother, Sandra, who has a master's degree in music and owned a successful music academy in Jupiter for many years. Sadly, I can't sing or play an instrument, but not many can make a better Spotify playlist.

I graduated from the University of North Florida in 2011 with a bachelor's degree in communications with a concentration in advertising. Out of college, my first full-time job was working in the Public Affairs Department for the Flagler Museum, promoting and executing the mission

of the historic house museum. It spurred my interest in art, design and photography, which are some of my favorite skills and passions to explore.

I do not have a shortage of interests or hobbies to keep me busy. I love to explore new countries, national parks and forests. I am currently up to 22 national parks in the U.S. and 16 countries. I chase the feeling of being fascinated by our planet and do my best to capture those memories in mere fractions of a second through digital or film photography. Other hobbies include hiking, camping, backpacking, cycling, reading, softball, snowboarding, surfing, board games, astronomy and volunteering for the Grace Notes Music Foundation.

I thoroughly enjoy high fantasy and science fiction books, movies and shows. I also play Dungeons and Dragons with a group of friends in Utah. It's a fun outlet to explore creativity, improvisation and hone my imagination.

Someday, I would love to visit all seven continents and U.S. national parks, get scuba certified, visit Italy with my family, hot air balloon ride, walk around Hobbiton in New Zealand, castle tour in the UK, dive with whale sharks and start a business focused on helping the planet.