



# Reach Out to a Newcomer

By Dan Park

Recently, there have been many discussions regarding APPA's upcoming 100-year anniversary celebration. APPA's international and regional officers are collectively planning an extraordinary event that will take place in San Diego, California in July 2014. There is no doubt that the APPA staff will provide exceptional educational programs and opportunities to interact with business partners who are willing to share their experiences and services to help solve relevant problems, offering a consistent balance of networking and entertainment.

## GETTING INVOLVED

APPA's 100-year anniversary is an impressive accomplishment particularly because it has been achieved primarily by APPA volunteers who are dedicated to the mission and goals of the organization. While Whitman College has been a member of APPA/PCAPPA since 1980, it wasn't until 1989 that I became actively involved. At that time, my boss urged me to join a professional organization dedicated to the improvement of the facilities profession. APPA was the obvious choice because she considered it to be the leading organization in this field based on its national reputation.

As of 2014, I will have been an active member of APPA/PCAPPA for 25 years. There are a variety of aspects that have kept me both interested and engaged with APPA throughout my career. The benefits abound and include great educational opportunities, a world-class annual conference, APPA U, *Facilities Manager* magazine, the Body of Knowledge, the *Inside APPA* newsletter, APPA's



annual awards and recognition program, and wonderful networking events.

## THE START

The first APPA conference that I attended was held in Ottawa, Canada in 1990. Having never attended a conference of this caliber, the experience was both memorable and overwhelming. I remember specifically leaving the daily educational session feeling intimidated by the magnitude of information.

When walking down the street following one of the sessions that first year, one of the APPA participants recognized me on the street by my conference badge. He extended an invitation for me to join him along with other attendees for dinner. His name was John Amend, who at the time worked for the University of Nevada Las Vegas, also a PCAPPA member. Following this interaction, I looked forward to meeting John each year at our regional conference. He encouraged me to get involved with various committees within PCAPPA. Over the years, I have met so many admirable individuals and fostered long-lasting friendships.

I have continued to expand my involvement with APPA/PCAPPA based on the continued benefits of membership, including the sharing of best practices, networking, educational training sessions, and collective problem solving. Along with these advantages members are able

to develop long-lasting friendships and peer support within the industry.

## REACHING OUT

As APPA celebrates 100 years of dedication to improving the facilities professional in 2014, I will celebrate 25 years of involvement with APPA/PCAPPA. I believe, as you do, that APPA is clearly the premier organization for furthering the goals of the professional facilities industry. I am fortunate that my boss encouraged and supported my involvement within the APPA organization so many years ago. In addition, I am thankful to John Amend for taking the time to reach out and welcome a newbie in 1990. That small, seemingly uneventful gesture provided me a warm welcome to the APPA family that attracted me to the organization throughout my career. This has made APPA my "professional organization of choice."

I encourage each APPA member to reach out and welcome new members. This small gesture can make a tremendous difference to newcomers and help develop friendships that will last for years to come, thereby strengthening our professional community. ☺

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