



CFaR: A History of Sharing and Gaining Knowledge

By Gary Reynolds

CFaR | Center for Facilities Research

APPA's Center for Facilities Research (CFaR) continues to support a number of exciting projects. Established in 2002 by APPA to promote, organize, and consolidate research in educational facilities management, CFaR's mission is to advance the body of knowledge of facilities management through research, discovery, and innovation. By providing mechanisms to promote and share knowledge in a coordinated manner, CFaR provides an important function for APPA, APPA members, and the facilities management profession.

The information and knowledge developed and disseminated by CFaR is an important part of our profession's and APPA's growth and prosperity. By staying current on the many technical, managerial, and leadership issues, APPA and its members maintain their credibility and

ability to communicate strategic issues with our stakeholders. Information and knowledge developed through CFaR's activities can be found in the Body of Knowledge (BOK) (now available to all staff at an APPA member institution), the Institute for Facilities Management, the Leadership Academy, the *Facilities Manager* magazine, and other APPA resources.

HOW IT WORKS

There are several ways projects are developed by CFaR. Most often, a member comes forward with an idea for a project. Their reasons for involving CFaR can vary, but often include being able to contribute to the profession, support for access to members as

part of their research, or to fulfill the requirements for APPA Fellow. CFaR also undertakes projects that the APPA Board feels are important, such as the implications of LEED and integration into a university's design processes, the study of the sometimes mutually exclusive goals of total cost of ownership and carbon footprint reduction, and an updated evaluation of higher education's deferred maintenance backlog.

Projects are categorized into one of APPA's four main domains of

- 1) General Administration,
- 2) Operations and Maintenance,
- 3) Energy, Utilities, and Environmental Stewardship and
- 4) Planning, Design, and Construction.

Upon acceptance of a proposal, a CFaR Advisory Council member familiar with the subject matter is assigned to support the project. When the penultimate report is completed, a select panel of peer reviewers is chosen to review the submission and make recommendations about acceptance of the project. The final product includes a final report and dissemination to our members through the various APPA venues.

Much of this information can be found at <http://www.appa.org/research/CFaR>.

REAPING THE REWARD

Having conducted a CFaR research project myself, I found it to be reward-



ing and ultimately provided insights that I did not imagine beforehand. One such advantage was being able to do it at my own pace and time, and knowing that there would be an outlet for sharing the information that I developed.

IN THE WORKS

As noted in my opening statement, we have several interesting projects underway. **John Morris** at Northern Arizona University is gathering information about various APPA region mentoring programs in order to find out what is working (and what is not working) and to suggest what elements of these programs are providing success. Look for John's report in an upcoming *Facilities Manager* magazine article.

Jerome Roberson at Howard University is completing a study on the

facilities management organization and its alignment with the business goals of the university. He is looking at the various aspects of a facilities management's communication processes, governance decisions, partnerships, and skills resources as they affect alignment. Jerome is working with APPA so that he can involve our membership in his research.

Joseph Han at Cleveland State University just contributed an article for the *Facilities Manager* magazine (March/April 2014) based on his research on the "key factors and conditions needed to initiate and sustain a culture of excellence on university campuses." He will receive his CFaR Research Award at APPA 2014 in San Diego.

A VITAL ELEMENT

The continuing examination of the

issues that affect our profession, the developing of concepts and ideas—and then providing a venue for sharing is a vital function of our organization. CFaR provides that function as an integral part of APPA's mission and strategic plan.

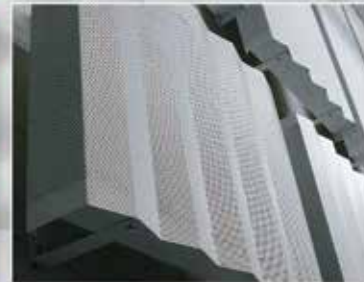
For those of you who have an interest and would like to contribute, visit the CFaR website. Our website makes it easy to submit, and I am sure you will find your research endeavor extremely rewarding. ☛

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