

Hope AND Optimism FOR THE NEXT



100 Years

By E. Lander Medlin

Since its founding in 1914, APPA has become a premier association serving its diverse membership of international educational institutions in all areas of facilities management. APPA understands the vital role of facilities professionals in both managing the facilities' assets, as well as pursuing proper organization alignment with the institutional vision and mission.

It is difficult to comprehend or even imagine the sheer numbers of people—fellow professionals, students, administrators, faculty and staff members, and campus communities—that APPA has touched over ten decades. APPA has impacted careers, influenced thinking, advanced research, and supported its member institutions in fulfilling their educational missions. APPA fully expects to do this, and more, over another 100 years.

With one eye on providing excellence in today's educational environment, and another always trained on adapting, enhancing, and transforming the facilities of the future, APPA seeks to create positive impact in educational facilities on three important levels:

- APPA transforms individual facilities professionals into higher performing managers and leaders, which...
- Helps transform member institutions into more inviting and supportive learning environments, which...
- Elevates the recognition and value of educational facilities and their direct impact on the recruitment and retention of students, faculty, and staff.

THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

However, this work cannot be done in a vacuum. As the association of choice for educational facilities professionals and their institutions, we must recognize and understand the rapidly evolving impacts of economic, financial, demographic, social, and technological change globally and locally.

From an economic perspective, Ian Davis, worldwide managing director for McKinsey & Company, stated, "It is increasingly clear that the current downturn is fundamentally different from the recession of recent decades. We are experiencing not merely another turn of the business cycle, but a restructuring of the economic order." We are indeed experiencing a "new normal." A world filled with heightened competition in the face of a convergence of fundamental changes in markets, member engagement preferences, and technology.

From the financial perspective, the opening statement of the Executive Summary of the 2014 Thought Leaders Series monograph *Leveraging Facilities for Institutional Success*, captures the financial situation succinctly: "Higher education isn't where it wants to be. North American colleges and universities struggle to focus on their mission of educating students and advancing knowledge in the face of (significant) distractions such as slashed budgets, ballooning costs, and increased state and federal scrutiny. Expectations are growing at the same time resources are dwindling." Indeed, it's all about less! And, given the global economic restructuring, that's not going to change moving forward. [Ed. Note: Read Part 1 of the 2014 Thought Leaders report elsewhere in this issue.]

As for both demographic and social shifts of the student populations we serve (or served in the past), the evolution of student expectations is aptly described by Richard Katz, president of Richard N. Katz & Associates, and writer/producer of a stellar video titled *Edifice Rex: The "Place of Place"* for APPA's 2014 Conference plenary session. (View the video at www.youtube.com/user/APPALeadership.) You'll want to use this video clip with your senior institutional officers and staff alike.

GI Bill students were soldiers. They reported for duty, had families to feed, and took orders (from their professors). Students from the '60s, demanded relevance through protest, but still hewed to the 50-minute

lecture and even loved alma mater (in their own way). Gen Xers had a different attitude toward authority and began to feel the pinch of student loans. They saw themselves as consumers and expected to be served. Today's students are fully consumers and they want value for money. They too want the people and place, but they are also products of the Internet age and want to learn in their way, where they want to learn, from whom they want to learn. Mobility is the air they breathe and everything is "social." It's a palpable tension between the enduring power of people, place, and space, AND the increasingly demanding, consumer oriented, mobile student. The "answer" lies in the "evolutions" of university or college as "campus" to university or college as "network" expanding student access to people, place, and space.

Katz delicately weaves these demographic/generational and social impacts into their collision with technology by stating:

Furthermore, while technologies are changing the places where learning happens and even how we learn, our colleges and universities must, can, and will evolve just as they always have. Our digital future extends the boundaries and expands the institution's role and reach as an outfitter. Now, as we come of age both on the ground and in cyberspace, we still come home to the Mother Ship—the place, the people, and the ideas that nourished us, inspired us, equipped us, and evolved with us. Now, as then, the campus transforms us, and we transform the campus. And, ultimately, the campus will endure, IF the campus continues to evolve.

So the "good old days" are gone...a time when we were just physical plant administrators—the blue-collar steam plant operators that provided heat in the winter, A/C in the summer, and electricity year-round...but that has become an outdated perception. Today, we actively manage the investment of more money every year (if not every day) than any other department on campus. That demands we be recognized and treated as professionals—leaders in education, not just buildings and grounds.

MORE THAN A PASSIVE BACKDROP

The buildings and utilities infrastructure we proudly build, operate, and maintain are a critical part of the educational enterprise. One important take-away from the 2014 Thought Leaders symposium monograph emphasized

this very point. “Higher education facilities can help colleges and universities achieve their goals. The campus built environment is more than a passive backdrop. Facilities contribute in meaningful, measurable ways to the mission of the institution. Successful campuses will be those that leverage their facilities and infrastructure assets and operations to maximize their potential.”

APPA has aided in this transformation of individual and organizational effectiveness for the past 100 years. However, some particularly noteworthy accomplishments over the past few years could best be codified against the four objectives of APPA’s Strategic Plan.

- **Engagement**—APPA has become an active and viable force in the purposeful and inclusive involvement of a diverse group of stakeholders. Some examples are:
 - The second delivery of the Emerging Professionals (EP) Summit was well-attended and positively nurtured the development of future leaders.
 - Local delivery of programs such as the business partner hosted Drive-In Workshops, the Leadership “Academy-on-Campus,” and Supervisor’s Toolkit are expanding their reach to staff not able to travel for such high-quality professional training and development.
 - Increased communication channels within and between International APPA and its regions and chapters are enhancing the smooth and consistent flow of information and use of programs, products, and services.
- **Market Share**—In order to touch 70+ percent of our diverse and targeted niche markets, we must ensure greater value to our stakeholders. We have done so lately in the following ways:
 - Implementation of an Integrated Institutional Membership effective this dues cycle (fiscal year 2014–2015 beginning April 1, 2014). Over the past three years, International APPA has been working with all six regions to achieve implementation of a membership integration and dues alignment strategy. This means that employees of a member institution (or for that matter interested individuals at a member institution) can now take full advantage of APPA and their respective region’s membership benefits. That’s right—this is an all-inclusive dues membership approach resulting in “unlimited Associate membership” for individuals at member institutions. Now that’s VALUE!
 - Engagement in a complete overhaul of our Credentialing Program to include updating the course and exam content,



online delivery of the exams and preparatory course (coming soon), and the Credentialing website.

- Useful and meaningful nuggets of information from APPA’s revitalized website, renewed FPI survey tools and reports, peer-reviewed BOK (Body of Knowledge), updated, revised staffing guidelines, a focus on TCO (Total Cost of Ownership), along with new publications (such as *Effective and Innovative Practices for the Strategic Facilities Manager*, two Critical Issues books on energy and sustainability, e-book versions of the Operational Guidelines Trilogy, and the book on *Strategic Capital Investment*).
 - Collaborative programming with regions and other associations/agencies to ensure content meets stakeholder needs.
 - Targeted career planning through our infamous “professional development continuum.”
- **Synergistic Relationships**—The perception of a single, unified entity across all levels of the organization is becoming more pervasive as we strategically align ourselves with the theme of “*We Are APPA*.” Certainly implementation of the Integrated Institutional Membership is helping to ensure this is well understood.
 - Increased collaboration with the regions—their boards and members—in a more intentional and integrated way is paying huge dividends for all of us. It’s one of the most important things we could be doing for the future of the profession and the association.
 - Engaging Mexico institutions as chapters within the regions has redefined International APPA as the association of choice for institutions across the North American continent.
 - The creation of a permanent Business Partner Advisory Committee will improve our collective channels of communication with all business partners.
 - Increased collaboration with external organizations and agencies from the NACUBO Energy/Sustainability benchmarking survey, to delivery of the Thought Leaders Series (TLS) monographs to NACUBO and SCUP, and continued article placement in allied trade journals is extending greater value to member institutions and increasing the awareness of the facilities profession with senior institutional officers.
 - Our international strategic alliance partnerships (AUDE, TEFMA, and HEFMA) have grown and are having a positive effect on the entirety of the facilities management industry.

- **Credibility & Influence**—Is being achieved throughout the educational enterprise in such ways as:
 - A measurable uptake of the FMEP (Facilities Management Evaluation Program) reviews.
 - A fresh, vibrant, and up-to-date BOK.
 - Credentials (CEFP & EFP) that are setting the standard for the profession.
 - APPA is becoming the “go-to” resource for educational facilities questions.
 - Increased efforts to develop, support, and publish new research.
 - Creating and delivering the strategic futures video by Richard Katz (*Edifice Rex: The “Place of Place”*).
 - Becoming the strategic voice on standards and codes affecting the facilities profession and the educational enterprise.

NOT ALL THINGS HAVE CHANGED

Yet in this fast paced, rapidly changing world, we cannot rest on our laurels. It is critical that we now move ahead with a diligent focus on the future to meet the continued, evolving needs of all educational facilities professionals and ensure the future

relevance of the association.

To that end, we are preparing to launch a General Membership Survey this fall along with several more focus group sessions at the fall regional meetings, the September delivery of APPA U, and additional targeted stakeholder groups by phone (beyond those we did at the APPA 2014 Conference in San Diego). All of this data and information along with an education industry environmental scan will be used to update the strategic plan to ensure we continue to deliver the best value for everyone.

As I reflect on where we’ve been, where we are, and where we’re going, I can see that in some ways everything has changed, and dramatically! But I know one that hasn’t changed—APPA is here to help members work less stressfully, more effectively, and more productively. To sum it up in two words, APPA will continue to provide “hope and optimism” for a better and brighter future for educational facilities professionals for the next 100 years. ☺

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