

APPA Membership = M³

By Patty Smith

Magnificent, marvelous, and meaningful! There you have it. In my world, those three words best describe APPA membership. I hope to convince you that these words are indeed true.

If you are reading this article, you are most likely already a card-carrying APPA member. Why does it matter, you might ask? Why belong? If you joined because you are on the college, university, or school facilities payroll, it might behoove you to explore the many leveraging opportunities that APPA has to offer.

LET'S START WITH *MAGNIFICENT*

I like the word *magnificent*. It signifies grand, impressive, and superb. Using such a strong adjective to describe the initiatives, programs, and opportunities that come with APPA membership may seem like too big of a stretch. However, I would boldly state that by belonging to APPA, one can benefit from impressive programs that initiate, sustain, and grow our institutions through offerings that are at the forefront of the industry. For example, the newest APPA initiative, Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), is a significant tool, developed, tested, and soon to be fleshed out by members like you and me. The fact that it will be published as a viable tool for future facility professionals is both momentous and critical to APPA's success. Score a big point for APPA being magnificent!

FOLLOWED BY *MARVELOUS*

But without another component—people—these programs could not be developed. Are you investigating ways to improve yourself, your institution, or your local chapter through APPA's educational offerings?

Membership is where *marvelous* enters my APPA vocabulary. It is our people who make the greatest difference. Where are all of the wonderful, excellent, and awe-inspiring APPA members? Put this magazine down and go look in the mirror. With your APPA membership card and by virtue of working in the educational industry, you are a great contributor to a team that offers students, faculty, and staff a clean, safe, and well-maintained campus in which learning

is the number one priority. Review your accomplishments and remember the last time you or your team did something that made a student smile or solved a facilities problem. That makes you very special.

APPA has remarkable members who, in addition to their regular jobs, teach, learn, and share experiences in the most professional manner. Without APPA members sharing their amazing talents, there would not be a Body of Knowledge, a Supervisor's Toolkit, an APPA U, etc.

These programs were created by APPA members for members, and they are constantly refined for future members. Are you leveraging your APPA membership by seeking opportunities to pursue new ideas, learning new strategies, and positioning yourself to share with others? What are your APPA experiences?

Membership at any APPA level yields good experiences. At the local chapter we gain knowledge of APPA at the grassroots level. We attend programs, partner on discussions, and lean on each other for "how to" feedback. Hopefully you are one of the lucky members who has or wants to step up and do more. Getting more involved leads you to greater regional and national experiences.

There are times when we need "super strength" at the local and regional level, such as what we experienced when hosting the 2014 ERAPPA Regional Conference. Under the leadership of Andrew Christ of the New Jersey Institute of Technology, along with recently retired Mark Showers of Rowan University, our state chapter hosted the 2014 regional meeting, which was fraught with more than a few obstacles. But, under the leadership of our professional development leader Dianne Gravatt, we provided record-setting educational offerings from the American Institute of Architects to conference attendees. This is just one simple example of APPA members performing amazing feats.

Looking forward, our NJAPPA (New Jersey APPA) chapter is cultivating membership and developing members who should rise to the task of APPA leaders. I ask you to look at what your current APPA



membership affiliations are. Have you volunteered for anything lately? Have you reached out to your state, regional, or national APPA colleague to get an answer to a question? Or looked at program offerings for those in your organization who are ready for an APPA offering from talented teachers? Are you volunteering for anything in your region? That should be both your privilege and your duty as an APPA member.

AND WRAP IT UP WITH MEANINGFUL

Meaning matters, and APPA has a *meaningful* purpose. APPA membership epitomizes this concept and is best exhibited by the manner in which our association maintains a steadfast stream of consistency in the midst of rapid change (take, for example, code compliance.) Our industry faces changes. Our membership in the association gives us the lead on facing these changes through publications and webinars.

Membership in APPA gives each of us at any level the opportunity to rub shoulders (real or virtual) and learn from the best and the brightest. Because of these experiences, we are able to maintain standards that represent the profession. With this representation and

maintenance of membership, we, the facility leaders and APPA members, advance the ideal of volunteerism.

A PRIVILEGE

As APPA members, we seek both to exemplify and to leverage the knowledge that will most benefit the facilities profession. Do we do this for our own benefit? Yes and no. As APPA members, we certainly have the privilege to advance ourselves through continued education from APPA through any venue we choose. But in doing so, we improve not just ourselves, but our institutions and our communities as well.

So be proud of your APPA membership card—membership makes you “M³”: magnificent, marvelous, and certainly meaningful. ☺

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