

Reflections on APPA

By Sam Waymire

Unlike the many authors who have penned this column before me, this article may well be my final project as a member of the APPA community. I write this column now in my last week as an APPA staff member, and these final days in my position have presented a natural opportunity to reflect on my time within our organization, and what I learned as a part of this family. Looking forward to future opportunities, I could write about how I have personally grown during my time spent at APPA, or how APPA has prepared me for bigger and better things down the road, but what I'm most compelled to remark on is the amazing community I have had the privilege to be a part of for these last couple of years.

TWO WORLDS

When I joined the APPA staff in September of 2014, I was hired with the title of membership and standards council administrator, a role that placed me firmly in two very different worlds within the membership. Per my responsibilities to the APPA membership department, I served as the frontline support contact for general inquiries, and have probably spoken to many of you over the phone. Additionally, I supported our director of membership and outreach in developing member-facing informational and promotional materials for print and online distribution, and updating our website with new membership information. The standards and codes aspect of my job offered a uniquely different set of responsibilities, and placed me in an administrative role among several of our association's codes-focused work groups.

Over the course of my time at APPA, I also picked up the responsibility of creating content for our several social media profiles, and engaging with all the members who interact with us on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and more. Oh, and as the person sitting behind the reception desk, I buzzed many of you in during visits to the APPA offices. I share all this to give you some perspective on the many different hats my role at APPA required me to wear, and this diversity of experience has given me a peek into the average APPA member experience, as well as a view into how APPA functions across many levels.

THE APPA MEMBERS

Over my countless interactions with APPA members of all kinds—from phone calls with new members setting up their account for the first time, to exchanging e-mails with committee members, to speaking in-person with the Board during the annual meeting—I've been continuously struck not only by how reverent and gracious our members are to the staff, but by their desire to grow in their positions, their hunger for new and better solutions



Photo by Anita Desik

Holly Judd, Sam Waymire, Kristin Witters, and Karen Aguilar on their way to the APPA December Committee Meeting.

they can take back to their home campuses, and for their unwavering dedication to the educational facilities management profession itself. From the staff perspective, I can say that nothing empowers us more than to know that our work and support goes into creating successful opportunities for our members to learn and develop themselves professionally. It has been immensely gratifying to witness the power of the "APPA Advantage" firsthand.

STAYING ENGAGED AND INVIGORATED

To those of you who might be new to APPA, I strongly encourage you to let this association guide and support you as you progress through your career. Having worked so closely with many of our programs, I'm constantly reminded of the benefits they can bring members who are able to stay engaged and invigorated in their work. For members who have perhaps attended APPA U or achieved their EFP or CEFM certifications, and are unclear on what to do next within our association, I urge you to lean on staff and other APPA leaders.

We are an international network of colleagues and peers, and there are individuals within every level of the association who are here to help and eager to offer advice to anybody who aims to get more out of their APPA experience! Most members would be surprised by just how many of their challenges, questions, and experiences are shared by others within the APPA community, and by how much knowledge there is to be gained by engaging with these individuals.

Within APPA there truly is something for everyone, regardless of one's role in their organization or level of industry experience. I firmly believe that APPA membership can take you as far as you want it to, and I invite each and every one of you to explore a few of the

member benefits you may not have previously engaged with. ☎

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Sam Waymire was membership and standards council administrator with APPA, and is now exploring a music career in Asheville, NC.

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