



APPA: Elevating Facilities Professionals

By Jerry Carlson, CEFP

It was the fall of 1990, and I had been recently hired by the physical plant department at Illinois State University to be an assistant director, and to create a “work control center.” This was my third facilities- or building-related job, but the first with the campus facilities management department. My degrees were in accounting and finance. What did I know about physical plant?

RELATIONSHIPS AND EVENTS THAT MOTIVATE

I was fortunate enough to attend a MAPPA regional meeting in Minneapolis/St. Paul. This was my first real introduction to MAPPA and APPA. I met a lot of great people there and at other regional meetings—people like Jim Christensen, John Harrod, Gary Reynolds, and Ron Flinn, just to name a few. This enabled me to network with facilities professionals with similar issues to mine, and I found that everyone was willing to answer questions and offer suggestions. These meetings shaped my career and made me want to learn and succeed in the facilities world.

While in Minnesota, I met Wayne Leroy, the executive vice president of APPA at the time. He spoke about APPA and the educational opportunities it had to offer. The following year I was able to attend my first APPA

Annual Meeting and Conference in Orlando, Florida. At that meeting I met Charlie Jenkins, Don Mackel, Jack Hug, and many others. The relationships you build by attending APPA

annual, regional, and chapter events are phenomenal—and you can call on these professionals when you need advice or guidance. Chances are they have experienced the same issues you have, or know someone who has. These relationships and events motivated me even more to succeed in the facilities world.

EDUCATION MATTERS

As I learned more about APPA, I also learned about the APPA Institute for Facilities Management and the Leadership Academy. Both are excellent educational programs that are now combined every fall and winter as APPA U. I have been fortunate to attend and graduate from both the Institute and the Academy programs—they are great educational programs supported by APPA staff and deans, who are always tweaking these offerings to improve their content. I would suggest that everyone attend the APPA Institute for Facilities Management and the Leadership Academy to better prepare them for the future.

ENTER THE BUSINESS PARTNERS

In addition to the networking and educational opportunities that APPA provided me, I was able to gain and build fantastic relationships with APPA’s Business Partners members. Our business partners are not here just to sell you something; they are also available to



assist with solving problems and they often have resources to save you money as well.

A LISTSERV THAT REACHES YOUR PEERS

You can also tap our membership via the APPAinfo listserv to ask questions and seek advice and knowledge from others. As George Wright once stated, "All of us are smarter than any one of us." We need to use the resources APPA offers to help us do our jobs and respond to our ever-changing campuses.

ELEVATING THE PROFESSION AND CREDENTIALING ITS MEMBERS

One of APPA's many goals is to elevate our profession, by helping us become leaders at our institutions. Getting "a seat at the table" and preparing us to dis-

cuss our issues and articulate the needs of our institutions is paramount.

To this end, APPA initiated two credentialing programs, the Educational Facilities Professional (EFP) and the Certified Educational Facilities Professional (CEFP). These programs add credibility to our profession and demonstrate that we are trained and qualified professionals.

A NEW MEMBERSHIP MODEL

This year APPA successfully launched an integrated membership model. This means that while each APPA member institution has a primary representative or contact, it is no longer necessary to pay additional dues when adding your facilities staff to the APPA associate membership roster. Your member institution can

add an unlimited number of associate members from its facilities staff, and may also include your college faculty, students, and administrators outside the facilities department.

Membership in APPA does matter—the benefits are amazing! Now more than ever, everyone at your institution can stand to benefit from the numerous services that APPA and its regions and chapters have to offer. 💰

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