**Message from the President**

HAPPY NEW YEAR to FAPPO members!!!! It was great to see all of you and so exciting to have 40 first timers at the 46th Annual Conference & Trade Show in Daytona Beach. Congratulations to our award winners, Volunteer of the Year - Jane Dalrymple, City of Punta Gorda, Above and Beyond - Jason Ouzts, Citizens Property Insurance, Outstanding Educator - Warren Geltch, Retired and George H. Wolf Distinguished Service - Marian Pace, City of Punta Gorda. FAPPO continues to grow and be successful due to their and past awardees contributions to our association.

Next, congratulations to Carrie Woodell, FAPPO Immediate Past President, the membership, Committee Chairs and Committee members for making the 2013 Annual conference and Trade Show such a great success.

Your Board of Officers is already working diligently to make next year’s Fall Conference at the City of Port St. Lucie and the Annual conference in West Palm even better than this year. You will find the Fall Workshop information in this newsletter and on the FAPPO web site. The 47th Annual Conference program theme is “Challenged to Change”. So mark your calendars now for November 8, 2013 and April 13-17, 2014.

I’d like to thank everyone who volunteered to serve on committees this year. It takes a large team to accomplish the many tasks each year. Your contributions to the association help us to grow and continue to provide a service to all the FAPPO members. It is an honor and privilege to serve as an officer. I encourage all of you to volunteer and become involved in some capacity. FAPPO’S continuing success depends on members volunteering!!!

All the officers and I always appreciate your comments and suggestions so please feel free to contract us anytime. Remember, this is YOUR organization!!!!

Respectfully,
President, FAPPO
Cheryl Shanaberger

**Message from the Vice President**

It has been my pleasure to serve the FAPPO Family these past two years. My time with you all has provided me with many opportunities to not only learn and grow professionally but personally as well. I look forward to meeting and getting to know your thoughts on how we can work together to improve upon and maintain FAPPO’s status as the premier Professional Government Procurement organization in the country. I encourage all of you to volunteer and become involved in some capacity. FAPPO’S continuing success depends on members volunteering. Never forget that the best can only get better together!

Respectfully,
Vice President, FAPPO
David Bennett

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interested in publishing an article in the newsletter? Send it to mpace@pgorda.us
Message from the Treasurer

“What a great conference we had in Daytona. If you weren’t able to attend you really missed an awesome conference. I can’t say enough about the value of networking with our fellow Public Procurement Professionals in a first class organization like FAPPO, not to mention we had some fun along the way. I am honored and humbled to be nominated and elected Treasurer for 2013-2014. I am looking forward to serving the FAPPO Family as Treasurer this year, and I welcome your comments and suggestions for making this organization even stronger. Hope to see you in November at the Fall Workshop at the Port Saint Lucie Hilton Garden”

Respectfully,
Treasurer, FAPPO
Joe Benjamin

Message from the Secretary

Hello FAPPO members!! Welcome to the new FAPPO year! It sure was great seeing everyone last month at the 46th Annual Conference and Trade Show. It looked like everyone had a great time at the special event and the banquet. The Trade Show was awesome as always.

I am very honored to have been elected as Secretary for the 2013-2014 year. It is going to be a terrific year and I am looking forward to this experience as I serve on the board.

Respectfully,
Secretary, FAPPO
Diane Wetherington
## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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<tr>
<th>DATES</th>
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<th>LOCATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>08/24-28/2013</td>
<td>NIGP FORUM</td>
<td>ORLANDO, FL</td>
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<td>11/07/2013</td>
<td>FAPPO BOARD MEETING</td>
<td>PORT ST. LUCIE, FL</td>
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<td>11/08/2013</td>
<td>FAPPO FALL WORKSHOP</td>
<td>PORT ST. LUCIE, FL</td>
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<td>02/21/2013</td>
<td>FAPPO BOARD MEETING</td>
<td>WEST PALM BEACH, FL</td>
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## CARREER OPPORTUNITIES

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<td>CITY OF PORT ORANTE</td>
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<td>MECHANIC II</td>
<td>PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE</td>
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<td>PROPERTY CLERK II PURCHASING</td>
<td>PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE</td>
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<td>DIRECTOR OF PURCHASING</td>
<td>FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>07/27/2013</td>
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<td>PROCUREMENT AGENT</td>
<td>THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY</td>
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<td>PROCUREMENT MANAGER</td>
<td>CITY OF VENICE</td>
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<td>PURCHASING MANAGER</td>
<td>CITY OF ORANGE CITY AND DELAND</td>
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Last                      First                      M.I.

Previous Last Name, if any: ___________________________________________________________

Certification: □ CPPO □ CPPB □ C.P.M. □ A.P.P. □ Other: ___________________________________

Title: ______________________________________________________________________________

Agency: ______________________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________________

City: _____________________________________________________, FL      Zip: ___________________

Telephone: (________)_______________________  Fax: (________)______________________________

EMail: ________________________________________________________________________________

Website: _______________________________________________________________________________

Include Entity’s Purchasing Home Page, if applicable

Type of Membership: $50.00 (Re/Assoc)

☐ Renewal ☐ New Member                      ☐ Regular ☐ Associate ☐ Honorary

Late Fee (after Sept. 1) $10

To Renew your membership online, please visit www.fappo.org, log in and select “Renew Your Membership” from your membership page.

For New members, visit www.fappo.org, and select “Membership Information/Membership Application” from the menu on the left.

For multiple renewals, or if you need assistance, please contact us at execdirector@fappo.org

To Join or Renew by check, please complete this form and return with your check payable to Florida Association of Public Procurement Officials, Inc. (FAPPO Inc.)

Your annual copy of the Membership Directory will be available in December from the FAPPO website as a downloadable PDF file.

Payment for membership fees must be received prior to September 1, 2013 for your information to be included in the membership directory.

www.fappo.org - FAPPO’s FEIN: 59-2615678

MAIL CHECK AND APPLICATION TO:

FAPPO 8875 Hidden River
Parkway Suite 300 #3059
Tampa, FL 33637

Internal: ☐ Entity Check ☐ Personal Check - Check Number ________________ Date Received __________
FAPPO is accepting proposals for presentations for the 2013 FALL WORKSHOP to be delivered to the membership on November 8, 2013. The deadline to submit proposals, bio, and summary is August 5, 2013.

Topics for presentation should motivate, educate and challenge our members. Every presenter is invited to share experience, expertise, knowledge, and transferrable capabilities with colleagues to offer solutions for future success.

Presentations should have high interest, quality content and delivery design. Length of presentations will be determined by the scheduling requirements. The conference will provide members with a dual track format due to its previous years.

Presenters will be required to submit their final presentations in PowerPoint format to the Program Director no later than October 11, 2013. This deadline is crucial to ensure proper format of material and FAPPO will upload the presentations on-line for members to download materials prior to the conference.

Presenters must provide their own laptops. FAPPO does not have multiple laptops available for individual use. If needed, presenters are responsible for making arrangements for this equipment.

Proposal/Application Guidelines:

- Complete application
- Summary of presentation is limited to one paragraph of up to 150 words
- Biographical information must be limited to 150 words and include a picture (.jpeg format, head-and shoulders)
- Proposal/Application shall be submitted via email

Benefits of Presenting:

- FREE Registration to the FAPPO FALL WORKSHOP
CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS - 2013 FALL WORKSHOP
APPLICATION

Name: _______________________________  Certifications: ________________

Entity: ______________________________________________________________

Phone: (_____) ____________________ Fax: (_____) ________________________

Email: ______________________________________________________________

Number of Proposals Submitted: _______________

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Proposals will be reviewed by the Program Director and recommendations will be submitted to the FAPPO President for approval. The Program Director will notify all selected presenters of the outcome of submitted proposals.

To be completed by FAPPO:

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
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EMAIL BIO, SUMMARY & PROPOSALS TO:
Gina Jolly – gjolly@cityofpsl.com
Fall Program Co-Chair
121 SE Port St. Lucie Blvd. Port St. Lucie, FL 34984
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<td>Ethics: A Survival Kit for Public Procurement</td>
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<td>Forum 8/24-28/13 (Orlando)</td>
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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT—LEGEND

DMS: State of Florida Department of Management Services  
website: http://dms.myflorida.com/business_operations/state_purchasing

CFL-NIGP: Central Florida Chapter 
of NIGP  
website: www.nigp-cfc.org

FAPPO: Florida Association of Public Purchasing Officials  
website: www.fappo.org

SEFL NIGP: Southeast Florida Chapter of NIGP  
website: www.nigpsefl.org

NFLPA: North Florida Procurement Association Chapter of 
NIGP  
website: www.nf-pa.org

NIGP: National Institute of Governmental Purchasing  
website: www.nigp.org

MIDFL: Mid Florida Chapter of 
NIGP  
website: www.midflnigp.org

TB NIGP: Tampa Bay Chapter of 
NIGP  
website: HTTP://www.nigp-tampabay.org/

GMC: Greater Miami Chapter of 
NIGP  
website: www.nigpmiami.org

GCAGPO: Gulf Coast Association of Governmental Purchasing Officers  
website: www.gcagpo.org

NCFCNIGP: North Central FL Chapter of NIGP  
website:

SBAC NIGP: Sarasota Bay Area Chapter of NIGP  
website: http://204.193.113.204/PurchasingPartners/SarasotaAreaChapterNIGP.aspx

TAC NIGP: Tallahassee Area Chapter of NIGP  
website: 
www.tacnigp.com
How to Become a Host Site

If your agency is interested in hosting a FAPPO sponsored seminar, this document will provide you with the process guidelines.

Requirements:

Must be a current FAPPO member to host a FAPPO sponsored seminar and serve as site coordinator. A local agency or NIGP chapter is eligible to host one (1) class per fiscal year. The site coordinator is eligible to attend one (1) seminar per year.

Responsibilities:

1. Provide a seminar facility, at no cost to FAPPO, which will accommodate up to 30 attendees, as well as any equipment that is required by the instructor (i.e. easel pad, markers, projector, screen, etc.).

2. Submit request to host in writing to FAPPO ProD Chair. Provide seminar dates in request. Each seminar requires a minimum of 8 attendees for the seminar to be held. Plan seminar dates accordingly to allow enough time to reach minimum requirements. Host requests should be submitted a minimum of sixty (60) days prior to seminar date(s).

3. Provide a completed Seminar Logistics Form to the FAPPO ProD Chair when requested. This form will provide details on local hotel including address, contact number, rates and proximity to nearest airport.

4. Correspond with assigned instructor and ProD Chair to ensure proper flow of information to all parties.

5. Provide light refreshments each morning and afternoon for the duration of the seminar. FAPPO will generate a check in the amount of $200.00 to the site coordinator to cover the cost.

6. Receive and secure all books and materials for the seminar. Upon receipt of shipments, confirm receipt of correct materials and communicate that to ProD Chair. Receive NIGP toolkit and provide to instructor at start of seminar.

7. Distribute required forms each seminar day, including registration forms, sign in sheets (each morning and afternoon), and evaluation sheets.

8. Provide attendees with a listing of nearby restaurants and be available to assist with any inquiries to ensure a positive training experience.

9. At end of seminar, ship unused materials back to NIGP within 2 days; may use portion of funds provided by FAPPO. Return required forms ONLY in pre-paid UPS envelope within 2 days.

10. Mail all receipts and unused funds back to FAPPO Executive Director for reconciliation.

In exchange for serving as the site coordinator and performing all aforementioned duties, FAPPO will pay the cost of registration for that designee.
FAPPO Launches New Website

As part of the annual review of FAPPO’s strategic plan initiatives in November 2012, the Board gave direction to upgrade the website to achieve an updated look as well as greater functionality for our members. On June 15, 2013 the new and improved website was launched. In addition to the updated look and feel, enhancements to the website include a central repository for all FAPPO documents in the “Document and Forms Library”, a header dedicated to Exhibitors and Sponsors of the annual Conference, and an expansion of the “Awards” section to recognize our annual individual award winners for their achievements.

A HUGE thanks to the Website Task Force, Zulay Millan, Mary Combee, Craig Rowley, and our webmaster, Geoff Swartz for ALL of their hard work in the development and implementation of the new site.

Please take the time to explore the site (www.fappo.org) and let me know your thoughts. Your feedback is important to ensure we are providing valuable resources to our membership. You can email your comments to me at carrie.woodell@ocfl.net

Carrie Woodell, CPPO, CFCM, C.P.M., FCPM, Technology Chair
2013
AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT WINNERS

BROWARD COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
PURCHASING DIVISION

CITY OF BOCA RATON
PURCHASING DIVISION

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA
OFFICE OF PURCHASING & WAREHOUSE SERVICES

CITY OF MIAMI GARDENS
PURCHASING DIVISION

CITY OF LAKE LAND
PURCHASING & STORES DIVISION

ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PROCUREMENT SERVICES

CITY OF ORLANDO
PROCUREMENT & MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DIVISION

CITY OF PORT ST. LUCIE
OFFICE OF
MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

THE CITY OF PUNTA GORDA
PROCUREMENT DIVISION

SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
PURCHASING & CONTRACTS
DIVISION

SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT

ST. JOHNS RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

CITY OF WINTER PARK
PURCHASING DIVISION

Florida Association Of Public Procurement Officials, Inc.
2013
BEST PRACTICE AWARD WINNERS

CITY OF BOCA RATON

Winner of Best Practice Award for Innovations in the Purchasing Process for their entry titled “Year End Training for End Users”

BROWARD COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
PURCHASING DIVISION

Winner of Best Practice Award for Cost Savings for their entry titled “Innovations in Technology and Web Design: RLI/RFP Supporting Documents Repository”

SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
PURCHASING & CONTRACTS DIVISION

Winner of Best Practice Award for Contribution to the Advancement of Community, your Entity, or the Public Purchasing Profession for their entry titled “Procurement Ethics Guide for Vendors”

THE CITY OF PORT ST. LUCIE, FLORIDA
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

Honorable Mention for their entry titled: “Swap Shop – Economic & Environmental Stability”
It is with very mixed emotions that I am writing to you today. (RELAX! This is not an announcement of a virtual 50/50 drawing!) Almost 5 years ago I showed up at my very first FAPPO conference and I believe Denise was the President. If I had only known what it would mean when she asked me at the special event if I would get involved during the next calendar year and assist in volunteering with FAPPO. Needless to say, I agreed and it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Many of you have grown with me and become a second family to not only me but my wife and kids. I am telling you this because it is important to me. FAPPO has a special place in many of our lives and has created a network of friends and colleagues stretching from deep in south Florida all the way to Pensacola.

I write to you today to let you all know how special you are to me and to FAPPO. The organization would not be what it is without the many countless volunteers and can do attitude of all that are receiving this email and many others I am sure I left out on accident. Recently some changes have happened at my place of employment and I have made the very difficult decision to accept a new position outside of procurement. This decision was much harder than I ever dreamed as I will have to give up my FAPPO membership (but NOT my FAPPO friendships!) My last day at Citizens Property Insurance is 5.31.2013 at 2:00. I will still be in Tallahassee and would love to hear from you if you ever get up this way. My personal email and cell phone number will be listed below and if I can ever do anything to assist you personally or FAPPO in general, I will not hesitate to do it. FAPPO is strong and has made me a better person, worker, and friend because of my involvement.

This is NOT the end, but the beginning of a new chapter for me and my family and I wish you all nothing but the best! I have been honored to be a part of such a class organization and I encourage you all to stay the path and keep striving and promoting FAPPO in your daily activities. The leadership of FAPPO is second to none and I want to send a special thanks to the Officers I have served with and also to the Executive Director, Craig Rowley. This man does more behind the scenes to help this organization than many, many people realize. His tireless efforts have taught me that mountains can be moved and that obstacles are only opportunities for improvement. FAPPO is blessed to have his vision and leadership. It may sound cliché but I truly believe that I will forever be a part of FAPPO and FAPPO I know will always be a part of me!

All my best- Jason Ouzts
2013 FAPPO AWARD WINNERS

I am pleased to announce the 2013 FAAPO Award Winners:

5th Annual Essay Contest (pg 15 of Newsletter) — Mark Lovell, Daytona State College
1st Annual Diversity Essay Contest (page 18 of Newsletter) — Joe Benjamin, Hillsborough County
Volunteer of the Year — Jane Dalrymple, City of Punta Gorda

Above and Beyond — Jason Ouzts, Citizens Property Insurance

Outstanding Educator — Warren Geltch, Retired

George H. Wolf Distinguished Service — Marian Pace, City of Punta Gorda
“Did you always plan to make purchasing a career?” That clichéd question usually produces a joke response because let’s face it – very few if any of us started our careers with a goal to retire as a Purchasing Agent or Manager. That’s where my personal story begins (and stay tuned: it has a happy ending!)

My procurement career path might be similar to yours. I started at the second lowest-paying position (Clerk Specialist) in State of Florida Career Service. Eventually I was promoted to Accounts Payable (Florida Highway Patrol and DMV), and there I worked hand-in-hand with the Purchasing Department to resolve P.O. and invoice issues.

A Purchasing Agent III position was available, but required two-years’ experience. This was my first (of many!) lucky breaks. Their Purchasing Director (Russ Rothman) agreed to downgrade the position to P.A. I, and I was selected.

Fast forward to five years later. After several promotions, I interviewed with DMS/State Purchasing. By this time I had completed my CPPB (Certified Professional Public Buyer), which was a requirement for the job. I accepted this position, and stayed there for nearly ten years. In addition to working with challenging, high-spend contracts, my new job became an outstanding training opportunity for career advancement. That’s because the 2006 Florida Legislature completed an extensive upgrade to the State’s contract and procurement training program and allocated $1 MM for the first year.

Two of the new certifications were prerequisites for negotiating contracts: Florida Certified Contract Negotiator (FCCN) for contracts that exceed $1 MM per year, and Project Management Professional (PMP) for $10 MM+ contracts. Again I was fortunate since DMS was identified as the first agency to conduct this training and my contracts fit into that spend category. I took all the classes, completed the exercises, passed the exams and got the certifications. I was (and still am) particularly happy with the FCCN – Certificate #001!
On the other hand, PMP training was the most rigorous exercise and longest month of my life - including military basic training! Before being accepted to start the process, applicants have to document (in detail) 4500 hours of Project Management experience. Fortunately, formal solicitations and contract management projects qualified. After my application was accepted…pre-class homework! Over 75 hours of online training was required, even before the first day of class. I was happy to see that our instructor for the next five days was a sweet, little old lady from Greenville, SC. That image ended for the entire class when she gave us the schedule: 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM every day for the entire week, with nightly, four-hour homework assignments. Needless to say, my ‘regular’ job was not placed on hold for this period, and sleep was not really an option…

I passed each of the 10 knowledge area portions of the examination and successfully completed the program. My ‘reward’ was a bunch of new solicitations (ITN’s) to develop since the program was new and Florida Statutes on PMP participation were now in effect. One of my first post-PMP assignments was to be ‘loaned-out’ to negotiate another agency’s infamous project – the FCAT!

Not that I’m complaining. On the private market, training, certification and testing would easily cost over $10,000. Indeed, we saw a number of newly-minted PMP’s take their initials to the private sector for the Big Bucks! I appreciated the training and opportunities, and use the tips and methodology for any large projects, whether it’s an ITN for our College’s new ERP system, or researching a large expenditure of my own.

Think of it this way – your college degree may not have been in procurement – or even supply chain management, but it proved that you can complete a long-term project. So the specific coursework isn’t as insightful to your knowledge and work habits as the fact that you sacrificed your time and energy for several years to better yourself and your family. That demonstrates character, maturity and ‘stick to itiveness’ to potential employers.

At that point I had three certifications: PMP, CPPB and FCCN. The next step as a Lead Purchasing Analyst was the other UPPCC certification, Certified Public Purchasing Officer (CPPO). Unlike the CPPB, the “O” focuses more on supervising employees and strategic sourcing concepts, and was a great introduction into Public Sector Procurement Management.
There are the three ‘other’ Florida-specific certifications (FCPM, FCPA and FCCM). These were all excellent courses with professional facilitators, but were either a refresher course of CPPB/CPPO subject areas or focused on statutes and rules specifically for the Sunshine State.

Finally, it’s not all about the ‘book learnin’ alone. Put yourself out there; network and volunteer. FAPPO and Tallahassee NIGP were great examples, but you can certainly find your own opportunities to demonstrate your commitment and desire. Don’t just limit yourself to purchasing-related groups either. Get involved with your community, then you can discover which organizations are a good fit, are well run and offer mutually beneficial advantages.

Let’s tie this back to “Reaching for Success”. Many of us can learn, grow and advance our careers without even moving offices. As a Central Florida resident for 14 years prior to moving to Tallahassee, I was looking for a new challenge and change of scenery. It was a revelation to update my résumé after all these years. The added certifications and experience made it easy to tailor my skills to reflect the employer’s desired KSA’s. I did NOT get the first job where I interviewed, but I DID find my dream job at Daytona State College!

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Lovell, PMP, CPPO, CPPB, FCCN, FCPM, FCPA, FCCM…M-O-U-S-E!!!

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I, Mark Lovell am the author of the attached essay, and grant the Florida Association of Public Procurement Officials (“FAPPO”) unlimited rights to use, publish, distribute and otherwise publicize my entry.

Mark Lovell, Associate Director – Daytona State College
1st Annual Diversity Essay Contest Winning Essay

DIVERSITY; WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?

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“Diversity: What Does It Mean To You”

The most powerful letter I’ve ever read is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s, “A letter from a Birmingham jail”. Dr. King’s letter was written from a jail cell, in response to a public statement signed by eight white clergymen from Alabama that ironically they titled “A call for Unity”. The trouble with their call for unity was that the unification that they sought, only included those they chose to unite with, essentially those that would agree with them. It was a display of cowardice on the part of these eight men that called themselves men of God, as they concluded their statement with the notion that equal rights in a diverse society was ultimately the sole decision of the courts. Their statement also labeled Dr. King as an outsider, a troublemaker, and extremist, to which Dr. King replied in his letter with this question, “So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be, will we be extremists for hate, or for love?” Ouch. I think we know who was who in Dr. King’s answer.

A modern definition of diversity in its broadest form “includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, gender expression, disability, nationality, language, religion, and socio-economic background”, while inclusion is basically defined as; “the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity in people, and in communities, whether intellectual, social, cultural, geographical with which individuals might connect in ways that increase one’s awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions.” I wanted to be contextual about these definitions and Webster’s was a bit generic, so we must give the credit for these illustrative definitions to the University of Arizona’s statement on the subject of diversity and inclusion.
Being diverse in our thinking as Public Procurement Professionals, is called for and is appropriate because the members of our society are diverse, so diversity is a state of the populace, and diversity is something to be embraced in this context, with avoidance of the fact of a diverse community is ultimately the source of problems in our industry. We’re all different and these differences are what should cause us to be stronger and should never be the source of division. Inclusion is a purposeful, decided action when we embrace our diversity.

Embracing diversity and purposefully practicing inclusion cannot simply be legislated by laws and guidelines. These principles are born and cultivated in our character. The principle of embracing diversity and being inclusive must be believed in and practiced because they are the right thing to do, and not simply because it is the law of the land. Unfortunately we will always have opposition from those that are extreme in their thinking, holding to exclusionism and despising the state of our diversity. It is this opposition that creates the need for legislated solutions and can lead to hyper-legislation with the establishment of laws and requirements that further complicate the issue. Legal solutions that address the symptoms are not a cure for the problem and often create new problems and burdens on those that we seek to help.

Disadvantaged Business programs in the public sector are necessary and well meaning but requiring certification at every single agency that one of these businesses would seek to do business with, often with a long cumbersome process and stacks of paperwork that must be renewed annually, makes one rightly question whether or not this is truly going to help or discourage. Regional agency standardization of forms and certification reciprocity are badly needed.
On the other side of the coin, our various legislated attempts at assuring that all are included in the process and will have a fair shot at competing can easily become an expected entitlement rather than education of those who are disadvantaged, on how to successfully compete. Comprehensive regional training and education along with the aforementioned standardization of requirements and certification reciprocity are the ticket.

Legal precedence in America calls for race and gender neutral programs. (City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co., 488 U.S. 469 (1989) and Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña, 515 U.S. 200 (1995), both landmark U.S. Supreme Court decisions) Both Croson and Adarand cases addressed the hyper-legislation issue, yet many programs around the country still operate as M/WBE programs, instead of Small Disadvantaged (race and gender neutral) Programs. Disparity Studies with sound methodology with the right consultant are extremely valuable tools. All agencies should adopt what the Supreme Court has established as the law of the land which is a race and gender neutral SBE Program but each should also measure for disparity across all procurement categories at least every three years. Study results revealing disparity then allow for addressing the issues through expansion of the agency SBE Program, to cure the disparity.

That is what the courts have said, but embracing the diverse state of our society, and practicing inclusion are part of who we are as a country. “Give us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses longing to be free.” We are, and always have been, “the great melting pot”. Embracing diversity means that it matters and you actually care.
Inclusion is deciding to help those that may be different than you, and may be at some disadvantage, because it matters and you care.

The principles of embracing diversity in all facets of the Public Procurement and practicing purposeful inclusion are ethically and morally correct. Ethical professionalism is the foundation of all Public Procurement. As the gatekeepers and police of the taxpayer dollars, we have an ethical obligation to not only promote robust and fair competition but also to teach those who are willing to be taught, “how to compete” for public tax dollar contracts. The principles of embracing our cultural diversity and being inclusive should cause us to go beyond what we are tasked with as Public Procurement Officials. It also goes to how we treat our customers within the public, the vendor community, the internal departments that we serve, as well as our co-workers and peers. Negative perceptions of the dreaded “government employee” abound and are often perpetrated by the media. It is our duty to vigorously fight to crush those perceptions with truth. What we do as Public Procurement Professionals and especially as members of the Florida Association of Public Procurement Officials, Inc. will always be under the microscope because of the ethical declarations that we have made and pledge to stand by and what we do for our individual agencies is important. With that being said, up and coming buyers, purchasing agents, and contract administrators need mentors to demonstrate that to them. Ethical professionalism can’t be taught in a training class, it must be cultivated as the foundation. We have plenty of training programs, and they are very important too, but mentoring is needed to engrain sound moral and ethical professionalism. You are not practicing true ethical professionalism without embracing the fact that America is a diverse society and that Florida is a diverse state.
The realization of just how diverse we are requires the Public Purchasing professional to go beyond the definition of inclusion and the programs of your agency and our equal opportunity statements. It calls for us to be teachers of navigating the red tape, encouraging the defeated small business to keep pressing on and exposing unfair practices or conflicting guidelines. Many don’t realize that the American economy is made up of about 75% of the private business community being considered small business. We could go on and on in the debate of the tangible, factual reasoning on either side of this issue but it is the intangible, ethical, principled stance that is required for what we do, to be right and good at what we do.

The eight Alabama clergy who took a public stance against Dr. King and the equal rights movement, and titled it a call for unity was the proverbial lipstick on a pig. They also simply kicked the can down the road citing that these decisions are better handled by the courts. Responsible ethical professionalism in the field of Public Procurement can’t simply be mandated by laws and procedures. It is not only called for in the arena of Public Procurement because of the source of the funding, or because a policy document states that is the way it is to be done, but because it is simply the right thing to do.

My favorite quote of Dr. King’s and arguably the most famous quote from Dr. King’s “a letter from a Birmingham jail” is “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Embracing our diversity and being decidedly inclusive are important, not only in our profession, but in our lives and in our society because it is simply the right thing to do. Anything else is a threat to injustice being imposed upon us in many other forms.
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