

The Tampa Bay Area Chapter of NIGP (Chapter) has continuously strived to promote the chapter to our members and the procurement profession. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic brought several obstacles to chapters and procurement professionals throughout the country. Just like everyone else throughout the Country, the Chapter had to look at new ways to conduct outreach to our members and provide professional development opportunities.

You will see below some of the ways the Chapter adjusted, changed, and enhanced our outreach to engage our members and promote the procurement profession.

Chapter/NIGP Meet and Greet

In FY2019/20, our Chapter President was looking for ways to increase engagement by its members. The Chapter has approximately 230 active members, however, only about 60-70 participate in chapter meetings/luncheons and events. The question really came down to...why...why do they pay their membership, but don't participate in anything? Maybe it's because they don't understand what it means to be part of the chapter and what the added value is.

The Chapter President put together a short PowerPoint presentation on the "Value of Membership". The presentation included things like pictures of the Board members and the different agencies they work at, what it means to be on the Board, ways to volunteer and receive scholarship points, why it is important to attend events such as trade shows, training opportunities, and the different types of memberships.

As the Chapter President was putting together the slides, the thought popped in her head to ask the Chapter Ambassador to present on the value of membership at the national level also, to try and bridge the gap between the two.

The Chapter President started the process by reaching out to the Chapter Ambassador to see if they were willing to participate. Then, the Chapter Manager began looking through the list of active members and their agencies. The Chapter President then began reaching out to active members with the agencies that have not participated in a while through an email, just introducing herself and asking if it would be possible to schedule a 1 hour session to present to their team on the "Value of Membership" for the local chapter and nationals.

When we started the program, we anticipated the meetings would be face-to-face and we would bring snacks as an additional incentive, however due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that portion quickly ended, however the outreach continued through a virtual forum.

The Chapter has received very positive feedback about the presentation and we have completed four (4) presentations through 2020. Most of the feedback received has been that they didn't understand that the chapter and nationals had so much to offer.

The Chapter has seen an increase in members attending the free study group offered by the Chapter and slight increase in participation through email surveys and trainings.

The key to this presentation is the upbeat attitude during the presentations, highlighting the benefits of membership...even the small ones.

Lessons Learned: Be willing to do the presentation to just one member. Some members may be interested in learning more about the chapter even if the agency as a whole is not. Also, continue reaching out, just because an agency doesn't respond to your first request, doesn't mean they won't respond to your second request for the meet and greet.

Study Group

Early in 2020, the Chapter President decided to start a Chapter Study Group for members that were planning on taking their CPPB or CPPO. The Chapter President sent out an email to determine the interest from members. Once the members had responded that they were interested, the Chapter President then tried to determine the best date and time to accommodate those that showed interest. As you can imagine, this was not an easy task.

Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit and things went crazy. This was the perfect opportunity to move these study groups to a virtual environment, which provided more flexibility with time for our interested members. The study group was then set-up for one day a month and the Chapter President sent out the meeting invite to all interested parties.

Now...how do you conduct a study group? The Chapter President has a database, in which it holds hundreds of sample test questions for the CPPB and/or CPPO. The questions have been obtained through various trainings that were attended, prep guides and various other resources. The questions were copy and pasted into PowerPoint slides with 30-40 questions per study group. The Chapter President shares the screen with each question and allows the participants to answer the questions in the chat. The participants then have a short discussion on the correct answer and move on. The Chapter President then places the question and answer slides into a "Box" folder for review and download by the participants.

We have had approximately 5-6 people participate in each session of the study group and have had a 99% pass rate of the participants that have tested.

Lessons Learned: Put the questions into a Powerpoint presentation with the answer to each question on the slide behind the question. Also, add speaker notes for yourself as far as why the correct answer is the correct answer and ask participants to talk through why they may have chosen an incorrect answer.

Virtual Educational Symposium

Our Chapter has always strived to provide our members with professional development opportunities in various ways. For example, in the past, we have had speakers present at our quarterly Chapter Meetings/Luncheons on various topics and hosted several NIGP classes each year and provided a 40% subsidy to our members.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we began noticing several issues and/or concerns with providing professional development opportunities. For example, there were major cuts in budgets from

our member agencies and total cuts by member agencies in regards to professional development. The Chapter began looking at opportunities that we could provide to our members as a free opportunity.

We determined that we would do a virtual event in September. The events were scheduled on 2 separate Fridays for 3-4 hours each. This would allow members to participate and not take up a full day. Once we decided on the days, we sent an email out to our members looking for individuals that would be interested in presenting on various topics. We offered scholarship points to those individuals that would present at the symposium.

Our Professional Development Chair coordinated with the speakers to get draft presentations and submit them to NIGP to obtain confirmation that the presentations would count towards continuing education hours.

Members were required to register and were sent the Zoom link after registration. The event took place on September 18th and 25th with approximately 45 participants at each event. We completed a survey following the events and received positive feedback on the contents and set-up.

Due to the success of the first educational symposium, the Chapter voted to continue offering the professional development opportunity annually.

Lessons Learned: Ensure participants are sent the Zoom link well in advance of the symposium, record each session individually and post to the Chapter site for future download by members that were unable to participate.

Scholarship Extension

Our Chapter has an extensive scholarship program, in which we issue approximately \$40K-\$50K annually in scholarships to our members. These scholarships are provided to our members to pay for trainings, attendance at the NIGP forum or for other procurement related professional development opportunities.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, and many conferences being cancelled, the Chapter needed to look at what to do with points and scholarships already awarded to our members. Because our members were hard to obtain the scholarships provided by our Chapter, we wanted to ensure that they would not lose their points or approved scholarships.

After many conversations, the Chapter decided to issue certificates to our Chapter members that would allow them to use their approved scholarship through 2025. Each member was issued a certificate, signed by the Chapter President which listed the scholarship they were awarded in 2020 and the ability to use the same scholarship through 2025. For members with scholarship points that were being rolled over from 2019, they are allowed to roll their 2019 and 2020 points to combine with their 2021 and use in 2022.

Lessons Learned: Ensure communication is clear and concise to members to avoid any confusion.