2017 August Purchasing Link

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From the Editor
Posted By NAEP Admin, Thursday, August 10, 2017
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We lead, this month, with a troubling discussion of the counterproductive and maybe abusive management of fundraising resources at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute—a small, private college with a sterling reputation—near Albany, here in New York. If the long article in the July 21, 2017 Chronicle of
Higher Education is accurate, and I suspect it is, you have to wonder how such maltreatment of staff, involving its president, could happen at a place like RIT. Perhaps it was an unrealistic ambition to grow into something they were not, or maybe a toxic reaction to the pressures that small private colleges with modest endowments face, just to survive. In any case, it seems they went far astray in pushing their development office to deliver. To paraphrase Senator Baker, you have to wonder what its governing board knew and when did they know it?

The other institution we mention is very different. Columbia is a large, world-renowned research institution in New York City, with a great reputation and what many would consider a huge endowment. In this case, the issue was how to deal with sexual assault on campus. And I think Columbia, my alma mater, has conceded that it stumbled as it sought to justly and humanely treat both the accused and accuser. The accused was found to be not responsible, graduated with honors, and reached an unpublished settlement with the university. The accuser was allowed to carry a mattress around the campus for the rest of the school year, in protest, and onto the stage where they both received diplomas. The university issued an apology to the cleared accused and promised to review its policies and procedures. I doubt anyone involved went home satisfied with what has transpired.

Take a look and, if you would like to contribute to the discussion, I’d welcome your input.

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Commentary: In the News
Posted By NAEP Admin, Thursday, August 10, 2017

By: Neil Markee
Editor in Chief-Purchasing Link

Higher education seemed to have lost the attention of the New York Times and Wall Street Journal a bit of late, as the media focused almost all of its attention on the antics in Washington, D.C. But they shifted focus some to campus issues during the second half of last July. I clipped more than a dozen articles. During the same time period, the July 21, 2017 edition of the Chronicle Of Higher Education, which is always focused on higher education, carried at least a half dozen articles that hopefully were read by campus business leaders. One that is a “must read,” if for no other reason than because of the rarity of the topic covered. How did we fare?

I can’t remember when last the Chronicle devoted five pages of copy and graphics to a critical review of a college president’s management, or maybe mismanagement, of the college’s development staff. I suspect author, Jack Stripling, saw his description of the situation in the July 21, 2017 issue as an example of how not to organize and manage an institution’s fundraising resources. His title, “How One Leader Set a Toxic Tone Spurning Allies She Needed Most,” is his key question. Stripling wastes few words as he lifts the
I will resist trying to characterize or summarize what he had to say after interviewing many of the people involved, because the devil is truly in the details here and you really have to read it all to get a sense of what he found.

I’ll be looking for public reaction from the institution’s governing board, corner office residents, other business leaders and/or the president herself. Perhaps there will be media coverage. I think this matter is that serious. If accurate, it is a devastating description of the misuse or abuse of authority. This is a must-read article and, maybe, lesson for all campus business leaders and anyone with any authority in the work environment anywhere.

Readers have to wonder if this situation is unique to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), a very well regarded and ambitious, small, private institution in upstate New York. The short-term, “Win now or you’re out” performance-evaluation approach applied to development leadership reminded me of what you might expect to find in some faltering, big-time, collegiate athletics programs. Overall, I was left wondering if a sense of desperation had permeated and degraded the development operation and disabled much of the rest of the administration’s decision-making. I understand that “not-for-profit” does not mean unconcerned with financial matters and that institutions must rely on other than tuition and government assistance to survive. And I know there is an ongoing need for performance evaluation—but the definition of sound business-practices on campus and the notion of collegiality once meant something that seemed to be missing here.

After reading his “indictment,” I was inclined to question how this could happen and what happens now? When the dust settles, I think RPI will have lost a point or two within the community. Depending on their response, they may be able to reverse that conclusion.

In my clipping collection file there were five articles dealing with sexual assault on campus, certainly one of the most difficult and sensitive challenges confronting higher education leaders in every area. There is near universal agreement this is a front-burner issue and the incident of sexual assault must be reduced and hopefully eradicated, but there is not the same level of agreement on what to do when it comes to dealing with individual cases. With four of the five articles coming from the national media and one in the Chronicle, I think it’s clear this is not now only a campus problem, if it ever was. Decisions made by an institution’s business office or legal counsel or president or governing board will be dissected, evaluated and judged by the citizenry the press and probably litigated in public. We are, after all, discussing a serious felony, a crime against society, and there is a good bit of daylight between the views held by individual student-groups on campus and among organizations outside the gate as to what should be done.

An article titled, “A Review of Campus Rape Policy After Complaints by the Accused” in the July 13, 2017 New York Times, by Erica L. Green and Sheryl Gay Stolberg, quoted Candice Jackson, described as “the top civil rights official at the education department,” as saying, “she believed the rights of students accused of sexual assault had been ignored” and she went on to discuss several individual instances. According to the article, Ms. Jackson represented sexual assault victims as a private lawyer before joining the Education Department. Closing the article, “Ms. Jackson said she planned to draw from her experience in courtrooms across the country.” And continued, “We have a justice system where nobody demands that the system itself be weighted in favor of a plaintiff.” She said, “In principle there is no reason to
depart from setting up a title IX discipline process on campus that is anything other than fairly balanced and doesn’t prejudge and weight the system in favor of a finding. We don’t do that in our criminal justice system, and I see no reason why we would want to do it in a campus system either.” That sounds like a plan to me.

Families of accused students, as you might expect, as well as well-respected law school professors, have questioned the policies apparently initiated by a “Dear Colleague” letter from the national administration in April 2011 linked to Title IX requirements. Apparently, they see the letter as suggesting/imposing inappropriate standards and creating a conflict of interest, as institutions could lose millions in federal grants if they did not comply. Another article in the same issue of the Times, by Sheryl Stolberg, states, “The rights of the accused are just as important as the rights of survivors.” Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, a New York Democrat who has made combating campus rape a signature issue, and who spoke at Tuesday’s demonstration, said, “But what we’ve seen over the last several decades is a disregard for survivors. Not only are they disbelieved but they are retaliated against for reporting these crimes.” Apparently, she sees how we handle two basic justice issues in need of change.

This entire situation is in flux and, so far, I don’t think higher education has been able to sell its plans concerning campus security or the equity of its response. We may be learning tough and expensive lessons, here although we’ll probably never know how expensive.

Several of these cases have gone on for years without disposition. But one well-publicized, long-running, sexual-assault case seems to be winding down. A complaint was made, charges were placed and, after investigation, the accused, Paul Nungesser, was found by Columbia University to be not responsible for sexual assault. But the accuser was allowed to carry a mattress around the campus in protest, including at the university’s graduation ceremony—where both the cleared accused and the accuser received diplomas. According to the July 15, 2017 issue of the New York Times, “Columbia said late last week it had reached a settlement with Mr. Nungesser.” As usual, terms were not disclosed. But the University said in a statement: “Columbia recognizes that after the conclusion of the investigation, Paul’s remaining time at Columbia became very difficult for him and not what Columbia would want for any of its students to experience. Columbia will continue to review and update its policies toward ensuring that every student-accuser and accused including those like Paul who are found not responsible—is treated respectfully and as a full member of the Columbia community.” Mr. Nungesser graduated with honors.

The terms of the settlement were not disclosed. However, Columbia, my alma mater, is seen as a very wealthy Ivy League institution in New York City with a reputation to protect. In the view of this non-lawyer, before a jury of his peers and the public, Paul Nungesser may have had a strong hand to play. If the decision-makers of Morningside Heights had it to do over, I suspect they would not follow the course they selected, or maybe found themselves on.

In an op-ed article by Cathy Young in the July 21, 2017 New York Times, the author thoughtfully argues that the current system serves neither the accused nor the accuser very well. Apparently, she believes that, too often, the accused is not treated fairly and the author notes, “…expulsion is a shockingly inadequate punishment for rape.” This is probably the best short diagnosis I have read on this topic and probably reflects the views of many.
Having not been a proverbial fly on the wall as the now common approach evolved, probably behind many firmly closed office and boardroom doors across the country, I’m not sure why we have a separate non-judicial campus system for dealing with rape. Maybe the leaders involved did not consider campus rape involving students as the sort of serious felony to report to police. Or maybe, as a felony too serious/sensitive to be handled by the nation’s justice system. If an armed robbery or other violent felony occurred on campus, I doubt any administration would seek to exclude the authorities and turn the case over to a committee. When I first read of the system in use, I wondered why they hadn’t first called 911, as they almost certainly would have done with any other serious felony. They could then have provided assistance to both the accused and the accuser, if students were involved, pending a legal judgment. Once adjudication had been made by the legal system, they could have taken other appropriate action. I hate to think they sought to avoid the normal, public, legal process to avoid bad publicity or to curry favor with the victim—to reduce their chance of being sued after the court case ended. Maybe it is fair to conclude that many institutions drawn into this situation, given the opportunity, would opt for another course before proceeding down a misguided path leading to a dead end, apology, or settlement.

This is an emotional, difficult, and evolving public issue that is likely to be with us for a while and I wonder, what’s happening on your campus? Predictions, feedback, venting and whatever are all welcome here.

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**From the President: Great Ideas - Collaboration & Support**

*Posted By NAEP Admin, Thursday, August 10, 2017*

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Rosey Murton - *NAEP President 2017-2018*
Chief Procurement Officer
Wake Forest University

So, you have a great idea. But what do you do if you cannot get the attention or support to implement the idea? Although procurement may not always be at the forefront of institutional priorities, we should always make sure we are presenting new and innovative ideas that provide value to our Institutions.

One proven way to move up in the campus initiative priority list is to partner with campus stakeholders where there are mutual benefits. Departments such as Information Technology or Legal Services can be effective advocates in support of procurement. For example, if you can split the costs of a position with a department (Contract Administrator, IT Category Manager, etc.) in the next budget cycle, will this help the idea to move forward? By engaging multiple stakeholders, it also gives a chance to gauge the viability and acceptance of any potential changes that will result from the implementation process.

If you still can’t make any progress, try making a business plan that incorporates the idea over time and with specific results. Case studies from
other universities can also help to make the case for implementation.

Ultimately, if you can’t get the support you need to implement those great ideas, it might be time to explore professional opportunities that are a better fit to implement great ideas. Leaders have great expectations and the need for innovation is a requirement at many institutions, so don’t be afraid to embrace change if you want to achieve great results.

NAEP is a great networking tool to not only discuss ideas but also for career networking and professional development. Check out all the opportunities on www.naepnet.org.

However you decide to approach implementing those good ideas—always keep trying!

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**September 2 Deadline: Call for Programs 2018 Annual Meeting**

*Posted By NAEP Admin, Thursday, August 10, 2017*

There is still time for you to share your expertise with your Association friends and colleagues by presenting an educational session at NAEP’s 97th Annual Meeting & Exposition, which takes place April 8-11 in Orlando, Florida. As a program presenter, you have the opportunity to share your knowledge, increase your professional visibility, and enhance the conference by contributing to the overall camaraderie and pride in the mission of the purchasing community. To submit a presentation for consideration, use the online submission form. You will be asked to create a profile and upload one or more presentation topics for consideration. (You will need to create a profile even if you applied last year.) Should you have changes to your presentation, you will have the opportunity to review, edit, and change your submission up to the deadline of September 2, 2017.

*Online submission form*

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**Negotiations Institute, December 11-12 Maryland**

*Posted By NAEP Admin, Thursday, August 10, 2017*

Registration for Negotiations Institute

**When:** December 11 – 12, 2017
Gain an in-depth understanding of the negotiation process, while learning strategies for analysis, developing decision-making processes, and how to define interests, set priorities, and develop mutually beneficial strategies for all parties. Build a network of colleagues who have similar responsibilities and who face the same challenges and opportunities.

Hotel:
Hotel at Arundel Preserve
Hanover, MD 21076
410-796-9860
Room rate: $149 per night

Information:
Melanie Freeman
mfreeman@naepnet.org
443-219-3614.

Facilities Institute, December 11-13, Maryland
Posted By NAEP Admin, Thursday, August 10, 2017

Registration for Facilities Institute

When: December 11 – 13, 2017

Where: Hotel at Arundel Preserve, Hanover, Maryland

This 2-1/2-day institute is geared to the procurement or supply chain professional who currently supports the facilities team or who has an interest in doing so. Participants will learn best practice techniques for managing facility spend and the key areas where procurement can provide significant contributions. In-class time will utilize “how-to” road maps and worksheets. Presentations and class discussion will be designed to increase the value of what you can take back to your institution for immediate use.

Hotel:
Hotel at Arundel Preserve
Hanover, MD 21076
410-796-9860
Room rate: $149 per night

Information:
Melanie Freeman
mfreeman@naepnet.org
443-219-3614.

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**A Living Storehouse of Information: NAEP Members Exchange**

*Posted By NAEP Admin, Thursday, August 10, 2017*

The NAEP Exchange is our Association’s online bulletin board—a one-of-a-kind forum, for use exclusively by our Members, where they can share ideas, ask questions, and offer advice about any aspect of the procurement profession. There is a national dialogue in the Main Forum plus regional forums and even topic-specific forums. Check it out at see how simple it is to tap into the expertise of thousands of higher education procurement professionals like yourself. Click here to enter the amazing NAEP Exchange community.

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**Tutorials for Mining Our Website: Helpful Documents & Videos**

*Posted By NAEP Admin, Thursday, August 10, 2017*

Be sure to explore NAEP’s website for our Tutorials and How To section, where you can download helpful documents and watch streaming video lessons that will teach you how to use the tools on NAEP's website. Here are some of topics currently presented:

- Site Search Video Tutorial
- Messaging and Chat Tutorial
- Career Center Tutorial
- Forums Introduction Page
- Forum Usage Video Tutorial
- Regional Administration
- Basic Regional Webpage Access and Maintenance
- Adding Documents & Images to your Regional Pages
- MoR Responsibilities: Roster & Dues Management

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Updated Competency Model: For NAEP Members Only

Posted By NAEP Admin, Thursday, August 10, 2017

Recently, NAEP reviewed and updated the Competency Model. The process, conducted by InspirEd, included one-on-one interviews and surveys distributed to a sample group of NAEP members. The result of this endeavor is our new Competency Model, designed specifically for educational procurement professionals.

An effective competency model helps educational organizations find the right team members, sets standards for performance, and drives business results.

You must be a current NAEP Member to view and download the Competency Model. Click here to log into the website to download.

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Quote of the Month

Posted By NAEP Admin, Thursday, August 10, 2017

“A man’s life is interesting primarily when he has failed. I well know. For it’s a sign that he tried to surpass himself.’

— Georges Clemenceau

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