From the Editor: Where do we go from here?

Here we are in the first month of the New Year. The temptation to write about where we have been the past twelve months with higher education and where we are headed was overwhelming - and I didn’t resist. Actually, I tried to focus on the perspective of those who write for the national print media. As I read what they had to say, I wondered if their perceptions were close to what campus purchasing-professionals might describe. For example, there has been some discussion of the demise through merger, acquisition or financial failure of 500-700 institutions in the not-too-distant future. The pundits are calling for fundamental change, a rare event within higher education. What do you think? One way or another, I am always more comfortable asking questions than suggesting solutions and, once again, that is the case. I hope you’ll select one or two of the many questions raised and let me know how it looks from where you sit.

Commentary: Perceptions Matter

By Neil Markee, Editor in Chief-Purchasing Link

"...a variety of prognosticators have been suggesting that higher education is due, or maybe overdue, for a shakeout that could see as many as 500-700 independent, not-for-profit institutions merged..."

Read Article

Perceptions Matter

By Valerie Rhodes-Sorrelle, M. P. A., C. P. M.

“This is the time of the year when many of us set New Year’s resolutions or make a commitment to do something we feel is important...”

Read Article

New Resolutions

By Neil Markee, Editor in Chief-Purchasing Link

Here it is, January 2014 and, as usual for this time of year, the press is full of year-end summaries, a few dire predictions, and promises not to suggest a likely-to-be-ignored list of resolutions for the New Year. I’m not about to attempt to either sum up the year in 1500 words or to suggest the dozen steps we really need to take.

However, a variety of prognosticators have been suggesting that higher education is due, or maybe overdue, for a shakeout that could see as many as 500-700 independent, not-for-profit institutions merged, acquired or folded in the not too distant future. At least a few of the writers seem to think a winnowing of that scale would be a good thing.

Perceptions matter. What "they" are writing about us in the media affects our reputation and is an important factor in the competition for financial support from all sources. We need to understand what their current concerns are and how they will evaluate and formally, or otherwise, rank institutions over the next twelve months with higher education and where we are headed was overwhelming - and I didn’t resist. Actually, I tried to focus on the perspective of those who write for the national print media. As I read what they had to say, I wondered if their perceptions were close to what campus purchasing-professionals might describe. For example, there has been some discussion of the demise through merger, acquisition or financial failure of 500-700 institutions in the not-too-distant future. The pundits are calling for fundamental change, a rare event within higher education. What do you think? One way or another, I am always more comfortable asking questions than suggesting solutions and, once again, that is the case. I hope you’ll select one or two of the many questions raised and let me know how it looks from where you sit.

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Sounds simple enough! They conclude that, “The cleansing would be good for a higher education system still tied to its medieval origins - and for the students it's robbing.” Strong words!

Earlier, the 12/10/13 issue of the New York Times included an article by regular columnist Joe Nocera that amounted to a rave review of “At Berkley,” a new, four-hour Fred Wiseman documentary focused on what Nocera sees as, “probably the finest public university in the country.” Other than mention of a hugely successful fundraising effort that had brought in $3 billion over two years, the only concrete step mentioned was “scenes of meetings in which administrators talk about imposing centralized purchasing on the faculty.” (Emphasis added.) Nocera suggests that, “The real issue is: How do you make college affordable again?” “Worth the cost” seems more likely to me, given the relatively low cost actually associated with public institutions. Interestingly, he noted that while Berkley’s tuition has risen to $33,000, few students pay full list-price and observed that a record 67,850 prospective students applied for admission last year. Apparently, more than a few prospective students had decided that the university's offering was at least worth the effort involved in learning what it might actually cost.

"Colleges Trim Staffing Bloat," published in the 12/26/13 issue of the Wall Street Journal article, opened with, "After years of cuts in state subsidies and growing resistance to rising tuition, U.S. colleges and universities are starting to unwind decades of administrative bloat and back office waste that helped push up costs and tuition." The article went on to discuss savings made via paying more attention to software licensing at SUNY, centralized purchasing at UC Berkley, more efficient use of campus maintenance employees at the University of Kansas, and professional staff consolidation at the University of Michigan. Apparently, substantial professional-staff reduction played a major role in reported savings at both SUNY and Berkley.

As the title suggests, the overall focus of the article was on disproportionate administrative staff enlargement. Only public institutions were identified. The author pointed out that "Federal data, while delivered on a two year lag, show back office expenses have been growing rapidly. The number of employees hired by colleges and universities to manage or administer people, programs and regulations rose 50% faster than the number of instructors between 2001 and 2011 according to the U.S. Department of Education." The article did not suggest what the optimum administrative staffing ratio might be or why campus leaders had felt a need to expand non-instructional staff but, clearly, fewer was thought to be better.

Routinely, institutions seeking to reduce business process and other costs hire consultants to take a hard look at what exists and to make recommendations on how savings might be realized via reorganization and other changes. I suspect that, in many cases, campus business leaders believe they know what needs to be changed but seek outside input to provide a fresh look, share in what consultants may have learned elsewhere, and add credibility to changes recommended. Providing support for those contemplating unpopular changes in compensation, staffing, relationships and resource allocation is a factor, as well. Despite its reputation for trumpeting the need for immediate change in society, fundamental change on campus is not always universally embraced.

More than likely that was the case at the University of Michigan. It was probably Accenture’s call for staff consolidation in support areas that drew a strong negative reaction from a faculty group. In self-defense, the consultant argued that, inefficiencies at universities are “…an order of magnitude beyond those found in corporate America.” Reading between the lines I suspect, as is frequently the case with consultants, the recommendation was for the installation of a more “business-like” approach. Faculty reaction included characterization of the consultants as “ignorant and out of their element” and of their report as “boring” or “standardized operations as one would find in a state agency” or a big manufacturer. The engineering professor leading the charge argued that, "Those types of operations are a world apart from what happens in a university." I suspect the consultant would agree with the latter. The specific recommendations made were not provided in the article but, more than likely, they might be described as leading to a more corporate mentality, perhaps including a slightly more top-down management approach, not a popular notion among faculty on many campuses. It seems that administrative controls by definition involve loss of academic freedom in the minds of many in our world.

How did “business-like” get such a bad reputation on campus? Generally, business-like is considered a complimentary term meaning efficient, practical or serious, the words we use to describe a well-run business or a well-organized individual. If there is a formula likely to ensure the health and survival of an institution or even the smooth transition to whatever is to come, almost certainly business-like is a key part of the equation. But for many on campus, business-like currently means controlling, intrusive, rigid, maybe even right-leaning, and certainly not something you’d want to be associated with. How the term made that 180-degree change in connotation I don’t know. Shifting the campus working-definition back or business-like approach, not a popular notion among faculty on many campuses. It seems that administrative controls by definition involve loss of academic freedom in the minds of many in our world.

The national debate is about the perceived cost-benefit ratio of higher education in the minds of prospective students and other stakeholders, including those who decide what level of public and/or private financial support will be available. On individual campuses the issue is the allocation and effective use of resources. Just about everything is on the table, including the mission/vision statement of the institution, budget and the profile of the student body it hopes to enroll. The increased competition for financial support, whether in the form of tuition income or from other sources, and how effectively we apply the resources available has become the focus. In our world, the question is: What is purchasing doing to help address those issues effectively?

We need to be part of the effective use of resources conversation. With our attention to the details of the process, we risk missing opportunities to contribute to the conversations that may determine the future course of the institution/industry. Are we too often tending to our knitting and leaving the consideration of the major issues confronting higher education and the institution to others? Is the
discussion of strategic issues on your campus transparent enough to allow meaningful contribution by others not permanently seated around the table? Would thoughtful, informed purchasing input be welcomed by higher management on your campus? Are you prepared to provide that?

If a dozen thoughtful campus purchasing-professionals were to gather around a table privately to discuss problems, opportunities and issues, what would they talk about? What would be on their agenda? Suppose the dozen were chief business officers? Hopefully, we had been talking about at least some of what they would be talking about. What's happening in your world?

Happy New Year!

From the President: New Resolutions

Valerie Rhodes-Sorrelle, M. P. A. , C. P. M.
Grand Valley State University
NAEP President 2013-2014

Happy New year to you!!!

This is the time of the year when many of us set New Year’s resolutions or make a commitment to do something we feel is important. This year I would like you to consider committing to a better YOU.

Make a commitment to:

• Learn something new
• Become a more strategic procurement professional
• Add more value to your institution
• Improve leadership skills
• Become a part of change and innovation
• Share your knowledge, and experience to help others to grow

Plan to attend our upcoming Annual Meeting ... It will assist you in your efforts in becoming a better YOU in 2014. Remember Procurement Professionals are making a difference in shaping their institutions for success. The theme for our 2014 Annual Meeting is “Procurement in the Winners Circle”. The theme reflects the value that procurement professionals in higher education bring to their institutions and the celebration and recognition of this input. We want you to definitely be a part of your institutions success and time of celebration.

Still not convinced take a look at the tracks that you will find valuable sessions:

• Leadership & Strategic Planning
• Applied Procurement Techniques
• Business Collaboration
• Management
• Innovations in Procurement
• New this year: IT

NAEP’s host committee in partnership with E&I has put together an awesome evening of fun and networking that you will not want to miss. This event will be held at the Churchill Downs Kentucky Derby Museum on Sunday, May 18th. Plan to arrive early to ride the bus at 6:00 PM!

Registration is open … register today and take advantage of our early bird special to save $100!!!

Make a commitment to YOU so that you become an improved member of your procurement team!

Valerie Rhodes-Sorrelle

Board of Directors Elections Open February 4

Attention Voting Members:

On February 4, 2014, NAEP Board elections will open for 2nd Vice President and for two District Board Members. The Board consists of twelve Voting Members, comprised of President, Sr. Vice President, Treasurer, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President and Immediate Past President, who serve on a rotation basis, and six District Board Members, who are elected only by their own District Members.

Note to NAEP Voting Members: Only if your institution is in the Voting Member Category, and if you are the designated Member-of-Record Please be sure to exercise your voting power on behalf of your own institution by casting your electronic vote on the NAEP website. Elections will open on February 4, 2014. The deadline for your vote is March 4, 2014 at 10:00 AM EST. Please note that only the designated Member of Record of a Voting Member institution is eligible to cast a ballot in this election, although all employees of a Member institution are entitled to Member privileges. Associate Members and Business Affiliate Members are not eligible to participate.

http://localhost/plink/February2014/index.htm
How to vote: Log into NAEP's electronic voting systems at: https://vod.votenet.com/naep

To be sure that your voice is heard, please contact Shaunte Shelton-Slappy at 443.543.5541 to verify that your institution's primary institution contact information is correct in our database.

Note to All Members: NAEP conducts elections for Board Members via an electronic voting system accessed by eligible Voting Members through our website. The slate, submitted for Member consideration, was prepared by the NAEP Nominating Committee. Voting is restricted to those Members of Record in institutions that qualify for the Voting Membership category. Ballots will be counted at a Meeting of Members to be held on March 4, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. EST at NAEP's executive offices located at 5523 Research Park Drive, Suite 340, Baltimore, MD.

93rd Annual Meeting & Exposition News

Early Bird Registration Ends March 3
Early Bird Registration is currently open! Register by March 3, 2014 to receive a $100 discount.

Program
There are 45 workshops this year across 6 session tracks including a new Technology Track! Additionally, the program committee has lined up 3 keynote speakers, learning sessions in the NAEP Exhibit booth and the always-popular Member MindXChange! Click here to view the updated program. The Leadership Forum once again returns on Sunday, May 18th. This year the Forum will focus on individual and organizational competencies the core leadership skills needed to bring to your team and how to develop, refine and implement strategic plans. Leadership training is typically thousands of dollars elsewhere but we are able to offer this add-on feature to the meeting for only $50.

Registration
Your full conference registration fee includes access to all NAEP educational sessions, the exhibit hall, the host event, all NAEP networking receptions and NAEP luncheons. There is a separate fee for the Leadership Forum and the Gerald F. Evans Golf Classic.

Spouses and guests may purchase individual tickets to the host event, exhibit hall, and the Golf Classic. Single-day passes allow access to all educational sessions and networking events, food events, and to the exhibit hall that day.

Hotel Information
Louisville Marriott Downtown
280 West Jefferson
Louisville, KY 40202

The hotel is just steps from the Kentucky International Convention Center and the entertainment district, 4th Street Live.

NAEP has negotiated a discounted hotel room rate for the Annual Meeting of $162 per night, plus applicable taxes.

Reserve Your Hotel Online
The Louisville Downtown Marriott Hotel is the official headquarters hotel for the NAEP 2014 Annual Meeting. At this time, NAEP has not contracted with any other hotel to offer additional or overflow hotel rooms. You will only receive a discounted room rate by reserving your room at the Louisville Downtown Marriott.

New Attendee Orientation
If this is your first NAEP Annual Meeting or, if you haven’t attended in several years, you will want to attend the New Attendee Orientation on Sunday, May 18 from 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Learn the ins-and-outs of the NAEP meeting and the lay of the land of the Conference Center. This is a great opportunity to build new connections with fellow first-time colleagues. RSVP to Shaunte Shelton-Slappy if you plan to attend the Orientation Session.

Gerald F. Evans NAEP Golf Classic
Plan to arrive in Louisville a day early so you can enjoy some exercise, fun and socializing at the Gerald F. Evans NAEP Golf Classic on Sunday, May 18. Buses will depart for the golf course at 6:45 a.m. The fee is $65 per person and includes
transportation, breakfast and lunch, green fees, cart rental and range balls. Golf club rental is $25. Contact Shaunte Shelton-Slappy to sign up.

Vendor and Sponsor Opportunities
If you are interested in exhibiting or sponsorship opportunities at the meeting, please click here. The exhibit booth spaces are selling fast; we anticipate another sold out exhibit hall. If you are looking for ways to stand out above the crowd, consider a sponsorship at the meeting.

Seeking Donations of Goods for Raffle
The NAEP Scholarship Volunteer Committee is on the move! The committee is asking for donations for the raffle at the 2014 Annual Meeting.

The committee would like to secure big-ticket items like ipods/ipads, gift cards, speakers, laptops, printers, etc.

If you plan to donate an item, please contact Lois Sarfo-Mensah at the NAEP National Office. Lois will provide you with details, whether you would like to ship your item to the office ahead of the meeting or if you would like to bring it with you. NAEP will pay for your shipping to our office!

Contract Library Portal Update
Launching at the Annual Meeting in May, the Contract Library Portal is in final beta testing with a task force of volunteer NAEP members and vendors.

NAEP is currently contacting vendors to upload their contracts to the Library Portal. Do you work with a vendor or have a particular contract that you want to see in this portal? Let your vendor know! Tell them to contact NAEP to participate. You can also contact NAEP and we will reach out to the vendor.

Before the portal officially launches, we need your assistance. The volunteer member task force would like your help in choosing a name for this new membership feature. In the coming weeks, you will have the opportunity to vote for your favorite! Stay alert for an email announcing the choices!

Supplier Diversity Institute
Monday, August 4 - 5, 2014
Chicago, Illinois
Register Today!

Supplier Diversity programs have clearly demonstrated that they build resilience in those institutions that have embraced the principals of inclusion. This Institute explores strategies and opportunities to engage your campus community in Supplier Diversity, and you will walk away with specific integrated approaches to combine Supplier Diversity into your campus framework.

Now more than ever, procurement professionals are seen as stewards of their campuses. Financial and economic challenges have put pressure on supplier diversity programs across the US. At a time when the need for creative problem solving is at an all time high, now is NOT the time to lose programs that may provide exactly those solutions.

Join subject matter experts for an informative and engaging 2-day institute focused on the best strategies and practices in Supplier Diversity. Learn to engage your campus community, regardless of your experience level or role. This institute will explore ways to help you administer change at your institution.

The Institute offers two tracks to give you an opportunity to select the session that best meets your needs. Track one, titled “New Professionals”, offers programming for those who are relatively new to supplier diversity or are in the process of building a supplier diversity program. The second track, “Experienced”, offers programming for more experienced participants with mature supplier diversity programs. Regardless of your role or experience level, there is a place for you at the Supplier Diversity Institute.

Supplier Diversity: We Need Your Help!
The Supplier Diversity Program Committee has prepared a brief survey to solicit your input as they prepare a comprehensive educational program that addresses the needs of a wide variety of procurement professional, ranging from those that have minimal contact with the supplier diversity function at their institution or system and those with significant experience and/or oversee a mature program.

If you have a supplier diversity function at your institution, or are interested in creating a program, we would like to hear from you. Please take this very brief 6-question survey that will take you 5 minutes to complete. Your response will help us shape the program and identify those individuals who may find significant value from the educational sessions.

Member News

Congratulations to the following members who have earned their CPPO

• Charlotte L. Gensler, Central New Mexico Community College
• Ann Kokx-Templet, San Jacinto College District
• LaDonna Purcell, Morehead State University
• Dietrich M. von Biedenfeld, Esq., Houston Community College

Congratulations to the following members who have earned their CPPB

• Michael C. Adams, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
• Teresa C. Anders, Radford University
• Orlena W. Bussey, Radford University
• H. Bernard Canty, GA World Congress Center Authority
• John H. Glass, Wheaton College
• LuAnn Heath, Purdue University
• Mary Elizabeth E. Little, University of West Georgia
• Tammy L. Moyer, Kutztown University
• Kimberly L. Murphy, Truman State University
• Nancy Pressing, Radford University
• LeeAnne Beatly Smith, James Madison University
• William C. Terry, Portland State University
• Paul L. Thomas, Portland State University
• Jacqueline Walsh, School District of Palm Beach County
• Carolyn T. Wimmer, University of Florida
• Michelle A. Wright, Charleston County School District

Calendar of Events 2014

In-Person Events:

• **Procurement Academy**
  February 2-4, 2014
  New Orleans, LA

• **RFP Institute**
  February 5-6, 2014
  New Orleans, LA

• **Supplier Diversity Institute**
  August 4, 2014, 2014
  Chicago, IL

Online:
Institution-wide Green Cleaning
February 11, 2014
Complimentary Webinar from NJPA

Legal Aspects of Procurement Webinar Series:
Special Issues in Contracting
March 19, 2014
Purchasing Policies and Special Issues in Contracting
June 10, 2014

Missed an earlier webinar in this series? Purchase the recorded webinar and watch at your convenience.

Regional Meetings
It’s not too early to begin thinking about your regional meeting! Several meetings have opened up registration, including the Florida Annual Regional Meeting, which will be held April 9 – 11, 2014 in Miami at the Miami Dade College - Wolfson Campus.

View the current calendar to save the date today.

Sustainability on Campus
University of Alabama-Birmingham Innovation Saves Millions of Gallons of Water Monthly
The University of Alabama at Birmingham has come up with a novel way to save the university tens of thousands of dollars and millions of gallons of water. The Facilities Division created a network of tanks and piping that captures and uses ground water and condensate from cooling systems. Savings of about three-million gallons of water and $13,000 a month was experienced during the summer of 2013. From January 2012 through September 2013, 16.9 million gallons of condensate and 15.2 million gallons of ground water were captured, which is a university savings of more than $138,000.

Austin Peay University Installs Solar Picnic Tables
Austin Peay State University (Clarksville, TN) has expanded its environmentally friendly technology by adding solar-powered picnic tables so that students can use the sun for a quick charge. "Everyone carries an iPhone or some type of smart phone and laptops," said Environmental Health & Safety Manager Kristen Spicer. "They have a lot of devices that need to be charged."

Drilling for Natural Gas at Case Western Reserve U Case Study
Researchers at the university analyzed the process by which a college or university would go about making the decision to drill for natural gas on its property, including financial and non-financial factors. The paper was recently published in Planning for Higher Education Journal.
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Tech Bit: New Uses for Portable Apps
I have been using Portable Apps to carry a complete open source alternative to Microsoft Office on a flash drive since 2009. I can carry a complete office set up that will run on any Windows computer I can find, such as a spare at a client or the hotel’s business center.

I have LibreOffice, which does a good job with Microsoft Office files, along with several development tools I use. And even a tricked out collection of almost everything barely takes half of an 8 gigabyte flash drive. Programs and data stay on the flash drive. You plug it in, do your work, and when you are done, remove it. All trace of your visit goes with you.
It has been fun watching the Portable Apps ecosystem grow. More and more programs are available. I can even have a web server that runs on the flash drive and lets me work on a new website anywhere I might be.

I have also found a new use for Portable Apps.

I try a lot of software. Generally the process with new software is to install it, try it out and if it doesn't work out, uninstall it. Unfortunately most uninstall procedures generally leave little bits and pieces of the program - both files and registry entries. They clutter up your computer, and are one of the reasons why computers slow down with time.

With so many applications available in Portable App format, many of the programs I want to try are available for the Portable App platform. I can install them on my Portable App flash drive, try them out and if they don't work out uninstall them from the Portable App drive. Sure there are still bits and pieces left over, but I can reformat the drive and reinstall the apps I want to keep. And my desktop and laptop aren't collecting any extraneous files.

I've got my Portable Apps installation on a Kingston DataTraveler® Ultimate 3.0. I have found the Kingston products to be reliable and this flash drive is fast. Because it is going through a USB port, it isn't as fast as the PCI SSD drive in my desktop or laptop, but it seems as fast as any direct connect hard drive. I had tried a Super Talent USB 3 drive, but it failed. It would show up in Windows Explorer, but then all files disappeared. Unplugged and reinserted would return the files for a new minutes, then gone again. Data is far too important to trust to drives you can't depend on. So I switched back to a brand I know and trust.

If you haven't tried Portable Apps, I'd suggest you go to http://www.portableapps.com and download the installer. From there you can use the platform to download and install the applications you might need when you travel. Or you can experiment with applications before installing them permanently on your computer. Don't forget to use a reliable flash drive.

Submitted by Gregg Marshall, CPMR, CSP, CMC, speaker, author, consultant. www.vendor-tech.com; Email: gmarshall@vendor-tech.com

Quote of the Month

“A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him.”

– David Brinkley