

Facilitator — February/March 2016



CRFP Spotlight

Get to know some of our recent CRFP designees! We are excited that more of our members are joining this distinguished group. We credit their knowledge and experience, as well as their initiative for taking advantage of our online learning modules.

Congratulations!

Paige Culp, CRFP — Facilities Service Manager with Starbucks Coffee Company

Sean Eichelberger, CRFP — Repair and Maintenance Supervisor at Joe Muggs Café

Peter Martinez, CRFP — Facilities Service Manager with Starbucks Coffee Company

Abraham Mathew, CRFP — Facilities Manager with Panda Restaurant Group

Timothy VanAcker, CRFP — Director of Facilities Maintenance at Wildflower Bread Company

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Culp: I love the people I work with. Knowing that our main job is to help fix things, we are always welcomed with open arms by our operations partners. I enjoy having a field job where I get to visit multiple stores a week. Also the bottomless cups of coffee can't be beat. Eichelberger : I enjoy being able to provide our employees with all the equipment necessary and in proper working order to ensure they are able to take care of our customers and provide them with all their favorite drinks and treats. Martinez: I enjoy providing direct support to senior management in a way that really makes a difference. The contribution I make buoys their ability to make key financial decisions, which ultimately influence the overall success of our business.

Mathew: I enjoy providing timely and cost-effective solutions in facility matters. At times it can be daunting, but I am blessed to have a great facility team to fall back on when in need. Also, I like that the learning never stops and that no two days are the same at my job! VanAcker: Working with many daily challenges and meeting many different people from many different backgrounds.

What other companies have you worked for prior to your current position? Culp: I have basically grown up at Starbucks. This was my second company to work for out of college, and I just celebrated my 14-year anniversary. Eichelberger: None in the facility field. Martinez: I have spent 12 years at Starbucks. Mathew: Before joining Panda, I worked for Wrigley's manufacturing plant in India for 10 years in the engineering department as process tech and later as supervisor. Prior to Wrigley's, I did a stint overseas for two years at Saudi Fisheries Co. as refrigeration plant operator. VanAcker: Coca Cola, Levy Restaurants, VanAcker Custom Residential and Commercial Builders.

When you were new to the industry, what was the most surprising thing you learned about the restaurant world?

Eichelberger: The most surprising thing was finding out how performing even the smallest preventive maintenance on equipment makes such a huge impact on its life and functionality. Martinez: The difference between the people who have never worked in food service and the people who have is always clearly visible. Culp: I was surprised at how much behind-the-scenes work goes on to deliver the final product to the customer. I think of all the things we facility managers do to help the baristas deliver a perfect cup of coffee to our customers, and it's astounding. VanAcker: The amount of time, effort and dedication it takes to handle the everyday challenges of running and maintaining multiple restaurants to ensure that health codes are met, and we give the consumer the best experience period. Mathew: That my favorite dish, the orange chicken, is an original Panda Express creation and annually more than 70 million pounds of orange chicken is sold in the U.S. through our stores!

What is your all-time favorite movie?

Mathew: My all-time favorite is "Ben-Hur." Culp: "Rudy" or "Say Anything" or any "Vacation" movie with Chevy Chase. Eichelberger: "The 13th Warrior." Martinez: "The Princess Bride," "Blazing Saddles," "The Three Amigos" and "Last of the Dog Men" are some. Life is too short to just have one favorite movie. VanAcker: "Top Gun."

What is the most challenging situation you've ever faced in a facility or on the job? How did you handle it?

Martinez: Letting someone go from their job. This will never be easy to handle. Culp: I had a store in an upscale outdoor mall. A contractor hit a water line in the ceiling and couldn't find the shutoff valve for roughly 30 minutes. Water was pouring out everywhere. Dealing with the flood cleanup and damage to a neighboring tenant was definitely a learning experience for me.

Eichelberger : We had a local store that had just received a food order and their freezer went out the same day. I went to a local commercial refrigeration supplier and purchased a replacement unit. I then delivered it to the store and assisted them with the setup and installation, and we were able to save the product. VanAcker: We had a 200-amp breaker fail one afternoon in a restaurant. The major challenge was to line up electricians, inspectors, the power company, the permits to replace the panel and the breakers involved, all while not letting the store be closed more than several hours. We worked closely with all mentioned, all night, to keep the changeover on time.

Mathew: When initially starting with Panda, I was in charge of the Support Center building maintenance. At any given time, there were 350 or more people either working or visiting the building. During one summer evening, there was a forest fire a considerable distance away, but during the night the wind carried the smoke into the vicinity. In no time, smoke odor got into the building through the central AC fresh air intake. The following morning, it was an unexpected experience in crisis management for me. Ultimately we carried the day due to an excellent crisis management team that I had the privilege of working alongside.

What is your favorite work-related app? Culp: The Starbucks app—I can find stores anywhere! Eichelberger : Concur. We use it for filing expense reports, and it makes it extremely easy to compile and submit the reports. Martinez: Starbucks and Google Maps. Mathew: The NEMA reference app is quite handy for figuring out electrical plug configurations. VanAcker: My entire iPad. It keeps me aware and on top of many things at the touch of a button.

What is the best advice you ever received?

Culp: “Remember the little things in life, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.” Martinez: Never turn around in your later life and say, “I should have done that.” Eichelberger: “Inspect what you expect.” Mathew: Trust in the Lord with all your heart. And lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6. VanAcker: Work hard and make it simple; the sky is the limit.

Who is the most impressive person you have ever met?

Culp: Howard Shultz, our CEO. Who else? Mathew: Andrew and Peggy Cherng, the Co-Founders of Panda Restaurant Group. I admire them for their can-do attitude and for their generous support to the community. Eichelberger: Author Rick Bragg. I once worked a book reading by him and was just inspired by the way he spoke about how each individual can make life better for everyone. Martinez: My wife, Deborah Jean (DJ). VanAcker: President Jimmy Carter.

To what would you attribute your success in achieving your CRFP? VanAcker: Relentless commitment and the love of working hard. Martinez: One of my goals included becoming a CRFP so I can obtain a better working knowledge, which would allow me to contribute to my company's solid base. The CRFP provided me learning information and enhanced insight into the facilities sphere. In addition, this is one of the foundation blocks to advancing my career as a facilities manager. Culp: RFMA provided wonderful study materials for topics that are relevant to our business. The study guides were laid out in a user-friendly fashion. I spent a lot of time studying! Eichelberger: The prep courses and a lot of on-the-job experience. Mathew: The CRFP exam prep course definitely helped to brush up my knowledge. The online learning prep course gave me an idea of what I could expect in the real exam.

Would you recommend attaining a CRFP to other colleagues? Why? Eichelberger: Absolutely. It's extremely rewarding to know that you have met and exceeded the standards set forth by your peers who have come before you in the industry. Culp: Absolutely! It is a fantastic way to grow professionally and personally. We should never stop learning. Martinez: Yes. The process of the program study, along with program testing, may bring to light areas of opportunity that one may not recognize or have elapsed with time. Mathew: Yes, totally! I see the certification as a commitment to continual learning in the area of restaurant facilities. VanAcker: Most definitely. Getting my certification has given me the benefit of being in constant contact with other CRFPs to be able to pick their brains in any given situation. If I have not experienced it, one of my colleagues has. It's a great resource of information.

What do you do for fun in your spare time? Martinez: Exercising, participating with the International Defensive Pistol Association (IDPA), playing golf, making my 14-hour brisket in my backyard with iced beer, archery, reading and watching movies. Culp: I love spending time watching my kids play sports (ages 4 and 8), training for half marathons and shopping! Eichelberger: I manage and play in an adult Sunday soccer league. Mathew: I like to read, work out (recently I upgraded to a Yowza core motion trainer at home) and love spending time with my family. VanAcker: When I can find the time, relax with my wife and take care of those around us. Any activity outdoors, especially in and around water.