

Facilitator — October/November 2015



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.

A special note from Roger Goldstein, CRFP

In the restaurant facilities management industry, I feel a great sense of pride that RFMA is such a robust and supportive organization that is dedicated to facilities managers who support restaurants of all types. Watching RFMA grow and develop to offer an array of educational and support services, as well as the tremendous success of our annual conference, has been an amazing journey. When the committee was formed and a certification program was developed, it represented an important milestone for RFMA. We became recognized as an industry resource that supports restaurant facilities managers and an equal to other organizations with general industry representation. Since that time I have watched the CRFP ranks grow and feel proud of what that represents for them personally regarding their understanding of the specific areas of restaurant facilities management. Since I've attained the CRFP myself, and seen many of our facility team members do the same, I can attest to the sense of pride that it instills.

Those letters after your name mean something both personally and to an employer. The broad scope of the material attests to the challenges facilities managers must tackle, and attaining CRFP certification demonstrates a full understanding of our industry. I am certain that any facilities professional will rise to the top when they have their certification.

Another area of pride for me is seeing our facilities team's CRFP certificates fill up the Wall of Fame in my office.

Go, team Panda!

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Blevins: I enjoy providing a unique Asian dining experience for our guests and helping our associates explore possibilities to resolve store challenges. Flores: What I enjoy most about my job is being able to work with people directly and deepening their understanding of facilities management. I also enjoy that this gives me an opportunity to get my hands dirty since I came from a service technician background.

Lee: I enjoy encountering the different facilities-related challenges each day within our locations and resolving them swiftly so that our restaurant can resume business without any interruptions.

What other companies have you worked for prior to your current position? Flores: Prior to working at Panda, I started in the restaurant industry with Taco Cabana as a service technician. At that time, there was not a facility manager position in the company. Later, we created that position, and I was promoted. I appreciate the work and dedication it took to get to where I am today and think a lot about the people who have had an impact along my journey. Blevins: I was a Facilities Manager with Target for 12 years. Lee: I have only worked with Panda Express since I graduated from college.

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

Blevins: One of the most surprising things I learned was how dedicated and focused our guests are. When guests come to our store to eat, they already know what they want and how it should taste. Flores: My biggest realization when starting in the restaurant industry was that it never ends! When the doors close and customers go home, the day isn't over. Also in the restaurant industry every day you will learn or see something new. Lee: I realized that the equipment and building facilities require consistent maintenance and attention as there is heavy wear and tear within a restaurant.

What is your all-time favorite movie? Lee: "Inception." Blevins: The "Star Wars" trilogy Flores: "Gone in 60 Seconds." I'm a car fan, and this one is loaded with a lot of beautiful cars.

What is the most challenging situation you've ever faced in a facility or on the job? How did you handle it? Flores: Being fairly new, I got a call in the middle of the night that a restaurant had caught fire and there was significant damage. The restaurant was an hour and half from my house, so I got dressed and headed out there. Once inside I realized the drive-through area was now see-through! I handled this challenge with strategic planning and by leveraging my established relationships with local contractors who could help make things happen quickly. Blevins: One of the biggest challenges I face is meeting the needs of every guest who chooses our store. I handle this by ensuring my store's atmosphere is safe and comfortable, with fully functioning equipment to produce superior food quality.

My favorite work-related app is? Lee: Google Maps. It's great to be able to locate last-minute local vendors and get driving directions to the next restaurant. Flores: My favorite work-related apps are my travel apps that help keep me on schedule. Blevins: My favorite app is Yelp, which I use to find stores and vendors.

What is the best advice you ever received? Lee: Failure is not fatal, but failure to change might be. Flores: Be humble, do everything with no expectation and in time you will be blessed for your kindness and generosity. Blevins: One piece of advice I learned earlier in my career is "trash in is trash out." This goes for using data in budgets, what foods I eat and even self development. Whatever I "put in" my eyes and ears "comes out" in my attitude and words.

Who is the most impressive person you have ever met?

Flores: Andrew Cherng, Founder of Panda Restaurant Group. His passion for seeing each of his employees grow is very inspirational. Blevins: One person that comes to mind is John Griffith, Executive President of Property Development for Target. He started out as a construction framer, but ended up leading a \$1 billion department to produce more than 912 stores, with direct staffing of more than 3,500 people. Lee: Coach John Wooden.

To what would you attribute your success in achieving your CRFP? Flores: I attribute my success in achieving my CRFP to the support I was given by my wife Tanya, and supervisors Tom Lykins and Roger Goldstein. Lee: The support I get from Panda Express' Lead Facilities Manager, David Porter, and seeing his passion for restaurant facilities maintenance. Blevins: My success in achieving my CRFP relates to staying relentlessly open to possibilities and being willing to adapt to new standards.

Would you recommend attaining a CRFP to other colleagues? Why? Blevins: Yes, most of my colleagues are in the program to achieve their CRFP. Why? The old saying—"What you don't know cannot hurt you"—is no longer true. To be an effective leader for our corporation and to keep our teams safe, we need continuing education that is relevant to our position. The CRFP program provides a set standard for facilities professionals in the restaurant field.

Flores: Absolutely! I feel attaining the CRFP designation is a way of finding facility managers who are willing to learn, develop and continuously grow with the industry. Lee: Yes, it is a great way to connect with other partners in the maintenance industry.

What do you do for fun in your spare time? Flores: In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my wife and three kids. We are a very active family and enjoy everything from boating on the lake to hiking, running and long bike rides. Blevins: My spare time is consumed with meeting the needs of children in crisis. I currently live with 10 children, ages 5 to 18. They are so fun, and they help keep me flexible in every area of my life. Lee: I enjoy traveling to different countries, golfing and building custom wood items.