Conference Planning & Events Committee Report

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This provides the Conference & Events Planning Committee's 2015-2017 Biennial Report, which summarizes the Committee's role, goals, key accomplishments and recommendations for continuity.

ROLE OF COMMITTEE/OFFICE

Conference & Meeting Efficiency and Impact
Plan and implement Western Area Conferences, meetings and events that reflect a dynamic and innovative organization, and personify the Western Area theme of “A Mind for Business and a Heart for Service.” Oversee and execute the logistical arrangements, ensuring compliance with budgetary parameters. Implement procedure and policies that leverage technology and ensure greater economies of scale.

SMART GOALS

Goal 1: Increase institutional knowledge and WA engagement through biennial conference activities and Special events.
Goal 2: Increase & enhance technology usage in conference planning, presentations & activities.
Goal 3: Increase conference attendance by 10%.
Goal 4: Coordinate & manage conference planning.
Goal 5: Reduce 2017 conference expenses by 5%.
Goal 6: Develop timeline of conference critical completion dates.
Goal 7: Identify conference site for 2019; develop RFP & secure contract with hotel.
Goal 8: Identify conference site for 2021.

COMMITTEE ACCOMPLISHMENTS/SUMMATION

Goal 1:
• Event planning for the WA 2016 Leadership Summit & workshops including development of RFP’s and multiple site visits to determine the best venue for the Summit to increase engagement of members.

• Offered Conference & Event Planning workshop at the summit and encouraged member engagement through a contest to develop the Club Links event for the 43rd WA Conference

• Event planning for the 43rd WA Conference including multiple site visits and all components at the venue to encourage attendance and increase the enjoyment of attendees

• Provide customer service to members by being available to answer questions re: the WA Summit and Conference within 48 hours.

Goal 2:

• Work closely with the Communications team to produce conference materials

• Use “RegOnline” computerized system to manage in-house registration and increase customer service.

• Provide additional customer service through adding and updating attendee’s existing reservations

• Provide timely reports to the WA Exec Team for decision making purposes with the goal of increasing registration

Goal 3:

• Generated a 100% increase of WA Summit 2016 participants over the last Summit held in 2012

• Collaborate with the communication team to develop enticing graphics to increase attendance at both the Summit and Conference.

• Assist with the development of Call to Conference descriptions and materials

• Develop Top Vendor recognition program

• Develop a unique WA Store “A Mind for Business” with special items with a booth at the 43rd WA Conference as well as an online store is also available

• Built excitement for the 43rd WA Conference through activities at the 2016 Summit

• Provide special attention to the Connecting Links through a reception at the 2016 Summit and developed CL Ambassadors for the 43rd WA Conference

• Reviewed Conference Evaluations from Houston 2013 and Sacramento 2015.

• Used theme of “Denver will be Different” throughout the conference planning process

• White glove service - a new level of customer care for our guests including airport greeters and a Welcome Desk in the hotel lobby for the 43rd WA Conference

Goal 4:
• Review prior conference RFP’s and evaluations to determine areas for improvement for both the Summit and the Conference.
• Planned and executed a successful 2016 WA Leadership Conference
• Met with the Newport Beach Conference Planning Representative to explore venues to increase the enjoyment of the 2016 Summit attendees
• Conduct multiple site visits to ensure the enjoyment of attendees
• Determine "deal breakers" during hotel negotiations.
• Plan for expedited registration for past & current National Officers, Area Directors and other invited guests
• Developed the Captain’s Table to help raise funds for HBCU’s
• Developed “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” themed President’s thank you breakfast.
• Planned the Vendor and Chapter Exhibit area to provide an attractive shopping area with increased visibility.
• Collaborate with workshop presenters to determine A/V and other needs for successful presentations.

Goal 5:
• Continued the WA Conference Fund Development program by the creation of “The Denver Diamonds “
• Use of Regonline for Summit and WA Conference registrations at substantial cost savings
• Reviewed all budget material related to Special Events from 41st Conference in Houston in 2013 and the 42nd Conference in Sacramento in 2015.

Goal 6:
• Work closely with the Area Director to execute her vision and timeline
• Developed lessons learned from past conferences to determine adequate timelines

Goal 7:
• 44th WA Conference RFP developed and submitted to Austin area hotels/Convention Bureau for 2019
• Planning for Austin site visit with goal of venue selection and other activities.
• Planning for the 2018 Leadership Summit

Goal 8:
• Portland identified as the location for 45th WA Conference in 2021
• Submitted RFP for Portland

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUITY
• Conduct site visits with the fresh eyes of the attendees; be open to the possibilities of using space in a creative way.
• Continue to explore opportunities for cost savings through working with hotel staff to lower venue and menu costs. Do not rely on published prices and continue to negotiate for the best value.
• Determine an event theme early in the planning process for use as a guide for decision making.

2015-2017 CONFERENCE PLANNING & EVENTS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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