Good afternoon, SGMP—it is so good to have us all together at the 2016 National Education Conference! We all know SGMP couldn’t host NEC without our fabulous sponsors and suppliers. Let’s have them all stand now so we can show our appreciation.

To our exhibiting suppliers here— how was Networking Lunch yesterday? It was a major change from the usual pipe-and-drape tradeshow that was based on your feedback to us. We hope you were able to meet with planners and make connections in a more relaxed atmosphere.

Our goal with that new format was to give everyone something new, exciting and productive. This was the first step in our evolution from a traditional trade show and we will be looking for feedback for continued improvement. We truly want your constructive criticism so we can improve.

Today I will be sharing information about SGMP in the following areas:

1. Society membership
2. Headquarters operations & finances
3. SGMP chapters
4. Education
First, let’s talk about membership. We recognize our numbers have declined and we have taken steps to address this, with the most significant being the new Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF). The BRTF has presented its final report and recommendations to the National Board. This was an extremely comprehensive report with numerous recommendations.

The following areas were addressed by the BRTF for best practices:

- Monthly Meetings
- Marketing
- Monthly Board Meetings
- Contacts and Messaging
- Recruitment
- Retention
- Reclamation
- Membership Benefits Programs
- Chapter Leadership
- NEC Marketing Strategies

Key recommendations were made in the following areas:

- Posting newly-created guidebooks and best practices on the Chapter Leaders Toolkit:
  - Monthly Chapter Meetings and Marketing Guidebook
  - Monthly Chapter Board Meetings Guidebook
  - Chapter Board Leadership Transition Guidebook
  - Membership Recruitment Best Practices
  - Membership Retention Best Practices
  - Membership Reclamation Best Practices
- Developing and utilizing a professional membership recruitment package
- Creating and utilizing videos to describe and promote SGMP similar to the video on the Northern Lights chapter website (which is awesome!)
- Revising and expanding our SGMP membership benefits package
- Revising and expanding our SGMP Communications Messaging Matrix
- Developing and utilizing a chapter leadership webinar series
- Revamping the SGMP website for ease of use
- Researching and developing reciprocity with other industry designations as it relates to education contact hours

After the NEC, we’ll take these actions regarding the BRTF:

- The National Board will thoroughly review and discuss the report and recommendations
- A conference call with chapter leaders will be held
- New member and leader resources will be posted online
- A formal announcement and call for volunteers will be made to the membership for additional taskforces to further the work of the BRTF
Would the BRTF members who are here with us today please stand to be recognized:

Charnitamy Alexander
Cathrine Bays, CGMP
Kay Bothell
Ruthie Browning, CGMP
Chris Bunting
Pat Burch, CGMP
Chele Clark, CGMP
Anissa Damon, CGMP
Joseph Diehl
Michelle Fink
Nikki Fisher
Renea Gates
Linda Jackson
Leonard LaFrance

Jodie Langhammer, CGMP
Alex Lichtenstein, CGMP
Marlene Lu, CGMP
James Moran
Robert Nichols, CMP
Grace Nied, CGMP
Libby Noto, CGMP
Angela Quigley
Jamie Ralph, CMP
Dasha Runyan, CGMP
Andrew Silver, CGMP
Jill Stark, CGMP
Penny Stockdale, CGMP
Jan Thor

In addition to the work of this task force, SGMP members participated in these national committees. If you are a member of one of these National committees, please stand to be recognized:

Membership Committee:

Cindy Barner, CGMP - Chair
Charnitamy Alexander
LaTwanda Broughton, CGMP
Nikki Fisher
Kristi Griffith, CGMP
Crystal Mappes
Claire Marble, CGMP
Bob Nichols, CMP

Diana Puccetti Warrick
Erica Quillet
Kathleen Ryan, CGMP
Jo, c Seay
Jennifer Seigneurie
Kathy Sledd
Jennifer Tucker, CGMP
Linda Wiman, CGMP

Nominations and Elections Committee:

Kim Blanding, CGMP
Crystal Mappes, CMP, CGMP
Nate Melvin, CGMP
Kelly Roche, CGMP

Finance Committee:

Nate Melvin, CGMP
Ashley Leftwich
Annette Wallace

Willie Clay
Wayne Callis, CGMP
This is our membership helping to move the Society forward. Thank you for your dedication and service to the Society.

Additional membership changes include a pilot program eliminating the 50/50 planner ratio requirements for chapters. Chapter boards will have to vote on participation, which allows suppliers to join without a planner match and still affiliate with a chapter. Look for a FAQ document on this coming soon.

Now, let's talk about headquarters operations. The saying goes that the only constant in life is change and SGMP is no different. Our headquarters operations have now been in a virtual environment for over a year.

Last fall, we outsourced our financial and accounting role to an association management company after the retirement of Anna Marie Stewart.

This month, we announced that our executive director & CEO Rob Bergeron decided not to seek an extension of his employment contract with SGMP, which ends June 30th.

Rob: thank you for your contributions to the Society over the last eight years. You will be missed. My understanding from Maggie is that you requested no fanfare. But since that agreement was with Maggie—and I am not Maggie—please come to the stage to be recognized.

We have already shared with you that the National Board sent out an RFP to manage our operations. We are now in the process of evaluating the responses from association management companies.

We do not yet know what the new operations model will look like. While difficult decisions will have to be made, we are encouraged by the opportunities that this presents the Society. More information will be shared with chapter leaders and the membership as a whole in the coming weeks.
Finances will play a key role in determining the outcome of this process and the services that we will be utilizing from an association management company. As you can see, our forecasted income for FY2016 is approximately $981,000:

As you can also see, our forecasted expenses for FY16 are approximately $1,095,000:

The FY17 budget is being developed by our treasurer and will be presented to the National Board prior to the end of May. That budget will include cost-saving decisions.

Next, let’s take a look at some of our chapters nationwide...

- Rocky Mountain – celebrated its 30th anniversary in October
- National Capital – celebrated its 30th anniversary last month
- San Francisco Bay Area – celebrates its 30th anniversary this month
- New England – celebrates its 5th anniversary this month
However, we also have chapters who have decided that they can no longer continue operating. One likely will merge with the chapter from which it was spun-off and the others will be closing. Each member will determine their new chapter affiliation. All of these chapters fought hard and had significant assistance from the national organization, but, in the end, each chapter’s membership determined that it was time.

At the end of June...

- Kentucky Bluegrass – will close after 6 years
- Houston Gulf Coast – after 9 years
- Chicago – our very first chapter...will be disbanding after 31 years

Our Buckeye chapter also elected to cease operations this past fall. Buckeye’s remaining chapter funds were used to provide a full scholarship to one chapter member here today. Likewise, all remaining funds for those chapters electing to close will be used for scholarships to the 2017 NEC. These scholarships will only be available for those members of that particular chapter.

Now let’s discuss something a little more positive: expanding your expertise.

In addition to the CGMP courses we have held throughout the year, we held the first CGMP Congress since 2012. By all accounts, an exceptional education experience was had by those who participated.

Our attendees raved about the quality of the sessions and indicated that the education was enhanced by the networking and camaraderie of the Congress. In fact, 91.8% said the education and speakers met or exceeded their expectations and 95.1% said they would attend again.

So what’s next, in terms of SGMP national education? The 2017 NEC will be held in Fort Lauderdale on June 6-8. The 2018 NEC will be completely reimagined. Later this year, the National Board will seek member volunteers to participate in a task force that will make recommendations regarding the delivery of our national education strategy for 2018 and beyond.

We hope to host our 3rd CGMP Congress in 2017 or 2018.

SGMP is in a time of significant change. Because the strength of our Society is in its commitment to providing the best education and relationship-building for our members, and because the strength of our Society is in the dedication and commitment our members have to SGMP Nation, I know we will emerge stronger and healthier.

There is much more to come for our Society and you can expect greater communication and transparency in the months and years to come.

I extend a heartfelt “thank you” to the entire National Board of Directors, to our Gilmer Institute of Learning trustees (current and elected), and to our headquarters staff. I extend a special thank you to Cathrine Bays, who assisted with the auction this year as Melinda Mintz was on maternity leave.
And to you! You—our members—are the single most important asset we have. Many of you have been members and attending the NEC for more than a decade. This is evidenced by these side-by-side pictures. Here is Jo and Marie from the Rocket City Alabama chapter at the 2000 and 2016 NECs...both held at the Town and Country Hotel and Conference Center here in San Diego.

Thank you again for being here this week. Please enjoy the chapter recognition awards and the rest of the afternoon sessions, especially our closing keynote speaker. I have seen him before and he is fantastic.

I look forward to seeing you in Fort Lauderdale next year!