Proposals Being Sought for Future SECoPA Conferences in 2016 and 2017

The proposal submission deadline for hosting a SECoPA conference will be February 6, 2015.

CONTACT:
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Here is some news from various sources to entertain and enlighten:

National Council Update:
- Last week, there was a meeting of the Finance Committee to discuss year-end projections as we continue to struggle with our limited revenue stream. Anyone have any ideas?

Interesting Facts:
- The National Office has added Book Talk to its webinar series. It is a great benefit and free to ASPA members. I listened to my first Book Talk today and it was enlightening. I have worked for both City Manager and Strong Mayor types of government and, in my humble opinion; have found that it depends on the person who is in the leadership seat. Join the Book Talks!

Also, I loved; the Paul Krugman op-ed in GovManagement Daily (from the New York Times) titled “When Government Succeeds”. Surely, those of us in the public sector know this occurs more often than not and I am glad to see it advertised!

2015 Conference
I had the privilege of working on the Finance and Budget track for the upcoming National Conference in Chicago, March 6-10, 2015. The team feels the track will be a great learning experience, alternating between research and practical application. Looking forward to seeing everyone in Chicago!

Keep in touch, I am only an e-mail away at nesibeech@hotmail.com, and tell me your ideas, thoughts and comments.

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SECoPA 2014 REVIEW

The American Society for Public Administration Georgia Chapter (ASPA GA) considered it an honor to host the Southeastern Conference for Public Administration (SECoPA 2014). Hosting the Conference was very rewarding and profitable, and without the assistance of SECoPA officers and past conference host, managing the conference would have been very challenging, but it went very well with a few exceptions. I cannot begin to thank the committee chairs, track chairs, panel chairs and student volunteers from Clark Atlanta University and the University of North Carolina. Student volunteers arrived at the hotel on Wednesday and began stuffing bags, and continued through Saturday.

The SECoPA 2013 Program Chair advised the Georgia team that 80% of the proposals would come in during the last two days before the deadline, and they were correct. On a lighter note I noticed one day that attendance was low in many of the breakout sessions just before lunch, but within 60 seconds the dining room was full of people. The food must have really been great.

In terms of overall cost, the hotel was reasonable considering the numbers, but in the Atlanta market printing is expensive. The Georgia Department of Revenue would not issue a sales tax exemption for food and beverages, and that was costly. I would encourage anyone hosting a conference in the future to check your sales tax status to see if you can get an exemption.

In conclusion, I received a lot of positive feedback since the conference, and I had a great time. The SECoPA family is very large, and the nicest people you will ever meet. You are welcome back to Atlanta any time.

Calvin E. Sims, Sr., MPA
SECoPA 2014 Atlanta General Conference Chair

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Alabama: Chapter Matters

Presently, there is no functional ASPA chapter in the State of Alabama. We used to have two chapters some years ago (The Montgomery and the Greater Birmingham Chapters). Both chapters became inactive simply because some of the previous leadership had made career changes or moved out of state, and this vacuum may have over the years led to a certain level of indifference in terms of membership and participation. But some of us are trying to rekindle the spirit. There have been discussions and some preliminary groundwork done to resuscitate a chapter in Alabama. This initiative, though still evolving, involves Tom Vocino, Steve Condrey, Kalu, and Akhlaque Haque. We had further discussions in September during the Secopa-Atlanta meeting. We have also received some guidance and framework materials from the main office in DC. We have made a few other consultations within the state and hopefully would be able to generate renewed enthusiasm for a new chapter from Alabama. I would think that I speak for the names mentioned above, but more updates as we move ahead.