

**FALL 2019**

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RMGPA Fall Conference



## **Rocky Mountain High Notes**

### **Article Deadlines:**

December 13, 2019

March 13, 2020

June 12, 2020

September 11, 2020

### **WINTER CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW**

**December 5-6, 2019**

**Fort Collins Marriott**

**350 East Horsetooth Road**

**Fort Collins, Colorado 80525**

**THANK YOU!** To all who contribute to this newsletter. You are responsible for its success! A special Thank You to Newsletter committee members Kelly Wooden and Georgia Roberts for their unfailing expertise and assistance. The Awards committee welcomes Angie McDaniel and Pam Smith.

This Newsletter exists for YOU. Help us keep it useful and relevant by sharing your ideas, suggestions, pictures, puzzles, or comments.

Questions about the newsletter? Comments? Contact the editor, Michelle Brown, at [michelle.brown2@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:michelle.brown2@jeffco.k12.co.us)



Kerry Sheahan, RMGPA  
President



# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

“Great things in business are never done by one person. They’re done by a team of people.”  
—Steve Jobs

Merriam-Webster defines teamwork as “work done by several associates with each doing a part but all subordinating personal prominence to the efficiency of the whole.” At RMGPA teamwork is crucial to our Chapter’s success and the same could be said for our agencies. We work every day not only within our procurement teams but also creating teams with our end users. You may ask yourself, “What does working together really do for me?”

1. Fosters Creativity and Learning - Combining unique perspectives from each team member creates more effective solutions. Teamwork maximizes shared knowledge and helps you learn new skills you can use for the rest of your career.
2. Blends Complementary Strengths - Working together builds on the talents of teammates. You can learn how to combine your gifts with those of your teammate to become a stronger team.
3. Builds Trust - Relying on other people builds trust, and teamwork establishes strong relationships. Great teams build each other up and strengthen individual members creating cohesive group. Teamwork necessitates confidence in each other’s distinct abilities.
4. Teaches Conflict Resolution Skills - When conflict arises in teamwork situations, teammates are forced to resolve the conflicts themselves
5. Promotes a Wider Sense of Ownership - Team projects encourage teammates to feel proud of their contributions. Tackling obstacles and creating notable work together is fulfilling. Working toward achieving common goals allows teammates to feel connected to the organization building loyalty.
6. Encourages Healthy Risk-Taking - Working as a team allows team members to take more risks since they have the support of the entire group to fall back on in case of failure. Once a team succeeds together, their brainstorming sessions will produce revolutionary ideas. In many cases, the riskiest idea turns out to be the best one. Teamwork allows members the freedom to think outside the box.

It is each of these principles that I am asking you to think about as we launch RMGPA’s Mentoring Program. All of us can look back to someone in our lives who impacted who we are today; someone who encouraged or supported us, and sometimes pushed us beyond what we thought were our capabilities. If we look at mentoring using a team approach where you share the benefits you have gained with others, you will likely find that your guidance and wisdom will help you as well as your mentee.

As you mull over this opportunity hone your leadership skills and give back to the industry, remember these words from Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, “One man can be a crucial ingredient on a team but one man cannot make a team.” In our careers, we all need encouragement; we all need guidance; we all need support. Be that team leader and share your experience and expertise. Be that team coach who develops the next generation of procurement professionals. Be that team mentor who builds confidence and strength in others.

We are all capable of great things. Now go and team up with those around you and push yourself beyond what you think you are capable of doing. Go achieve greatness!

~Kerry

Hurricanes, tornadoes, hailstorms, flooding, blizzards, heatwaves, and wild fires-to name a few natural disasters people around the world must prepare for. How does a Procurement team prepare for natural disasters? Omnia Partners submitted the following white paper to address two types of emergencies: natural and human-made, and how Procurement teams Since 2000, in the United States, 38 natural disasters have struck a variety of states. Ravaged by wildfires in 2012, followed by catastrophic flooding in 2013, Colorado Procurement teams worked side by side with first responders and trauma response teams, ensuring supplies, equipment, and personnel were available when needed.

Most procurement issues evaporate in the early response phases of a declared state of emergency (22" of snow in 1997? True story!). Procurement functions are often bundled into logistics and resource management. During the December 2006 blizzard, when 21" of snow fell, tow trucks, transportation vehicles, fire trucks, and police vehicles were stuck. Emergency management officials opted to leave cars in the roadways where they were stuck, asking the National Guard to shuttle drivers to safety. In 24-48 hours, weather permitting, tow truck drivers would move vehicles to parking lots to clear roadways.

In these emergencies, Procurement teams face immediate change management. Up-front planning, signed contracts with suppliers of goods, services, and personnel for resources available 24/7; a PCard program for emergency purchases, team staffing, and a calling tree with designated points of contact. Procurement teams have to be prepared to apply cost principles, using reasonable cost to avoid overreaching, while leaning on technology to expedite processes. Like first responders, Procurement teams need a plan of action for a manual process if technology is down, and a designated command center protocol – even if the command center is the Procurement Director's kitchen table!

Read on to see how Omnia Partners can help your Procurement team prepare for emergencies:

[https://www.omniapartners.com/hubfs/PUBLIC%20SECTOR/Email/PDFs/566372\\_OMNIA\\_Emergency%20Preparedness%20Whitepaper\\_F.pdf?hsCtaTracking=9cc4aa13-1315-492e-baff-6c5a3fc1c9b4%7Cfd1ed592-a0d7-4ccd-b040-05e64cb5ef21](https://www.omniapartners.com/hubfs/PUBLIC%20SECTOR/Email/PDFs/566372_OMNIA_Emergency%20Preparedness%20Whitepaper_F.pdf?hsCtaTracking=9cc4aa13-1315-492e-baff-6c5a3fc1c9b4%7Cfd1ed592-a0d7-4ccd-b040-05e64cb5ef21)





# FORUM 2019



**What is Forum?** An annual NIGP networking opportunity for public procurement professionals that encourages professional development and engagement with the supplier community. [www.nigp.org](http://www.nigp.org)

## **Tales From a First Time Attendee:**

Submitted by Nikita Hildebrandt

NIGP Forum in Austin, TX this year was a whirlwind of learning and networking opportunities. Being a first timer, by the end of day one, I was blown away by the amount of training available at one conference. The plenary sessions that were offered, encouraged you to think of rising to significance and fear less/ do more. Pete Smith mentioned at the day two plenary session, “the biggest choice that we make is our identity.” He also asked us to think of: What am I known for? What do people think when you walk into the room? At the day three plenary session, Michelle Poler encouraged us to get out of our comfort zone, by facing fears that we may carry that block us to make ourselves a better person/professional. She asked us take part in the 100 – day project, to do something each day for 100 days to better yourself. This can be confronting fears or anything else you want to conquer to feel better about where you are in your life/career. What is the best that can happen? This year the breakout sessions were broken down into different tracks of subjects offered. The breakout sessions that I attended gave me multiple “ah-ha” moments with subject matter panels and instructor lead sessions. These sessions also gave me insight information on how I can make my daily procurement tasks better and more efficient. Thank you for the great opportunity to be able to attend my first NIGP Forum!

## SPOTLIGHT ON BRENDA HANNU

Submitted by Kelly Wooden, Newsletter Co-Chair

Brenda is a Colorado native from the Thornton area, just north of Denver. She earned a B.Sc. in Forest Management from CSU, and then earned a M.Sc. from CSU in International Forest Management in a special cooperative agreement with the Peace Corps. She completed her thesis in Costa Rica while serving two years in the Peace Corps and ended up staying in Costa Rica for just over 11 years! Brenda met her husband Hugo while in Costa Rica.

Brenda considers herself very lucky to have a brother who took her around the world after her service with the Peace Corps. They visited India, Thailand, and went on a trek in the Annapurna mountains in the Himalayas. Brenda even climbed up and down the mountains in a skirt! This was out of respect for the culture since women at the time did not wear pants, only skirts.

During her time at CSU, Brenda spent a couple of summers in Montana as a Recreation Guard and Fire Lookout on top of a mountain. While living in Costa Rica she had various professions – teacher and tutor at a bilingual school, University Professor teaching science to the first English speaking class of future schoolteachers and Executive Director of a non-profit for the management and conservation of tropical forests. When she came back to the U.S., she started working at her sister's construction company.

Brenda currently works as a Senior Procurement Analyst with the City and County of Denver. She just celebrated her third work anniversary in June. Before the City, Brenda worked 15 years with the State in the Colorado Geological Survey and the Department of Natural Resources.

Like many others in our field, procurement was not her first career choice and was only a part time duty of previous jobs. When Brenda started working in the Department of Natural Resources as the Credit Card Administrator, the journey down the road of procurement began. Her “other duties as assigned” included creating purchases orders and conducting informal bids. Another Purchasing Agent in the Department at the time mentored her in all things procurement and when this co-worker left for an opportunity at the State Procurement Office, Brenda took over her position as a dedicated Purchasing Agent doing bids that are more complex including contract review.



Her most interesting procurement involved carbon credits and a national park in Costa Rica. Corcovado National Park in Costa Rica was really a National Park on paper only. There were a lot of people living within the park boundaries. Thanks to a program involving carbon credits, a polluting utility company in the U.S. paid a large amount of money to offset their pollution to help create a core piece of uninhabited land within Corcovado National Park. Her team went to the landowners who were living within the park boundaries, and negotiated fair pricing for their land so they could relocate and the Park would have a nucleus that would become the core of Corcovado National Park; not one that was only drawn on paper. It doesn't take long for the land to recover and become wild again in Costa Rica.

Brenda has been a member of RMGPA since 2012 when she started working for the State in the Department of Natural Resources. Being a member opens a multitude of learning opportunities that everyone should take advantage of. The conferences are a great place to network and hear interesting, dynamic speakers. Brenda is in her second year as the marketing committee co-chair for RMGPA and her current responsibilities include posting announcements on Facebook and Linked In. If anyone has interesting articles or webinars to post, please let Brenda know.

**Brenda also received her CPPB certification this year. Congratulations Brenda!**

**Thank you, Brenda, for your contributions to our organization!**



A letter from Molly McLoughlin CPPO, CPPB

NIGP Governing Board Member, RMGPA Communications Co-Chair

Hi Friends and Colleagues-

Many of you have heard of the new NIGP competency-based learning and credentialing model called Pathways and I wanted to provide some more information on it:

### Why Pathways?

NIGP has spent the last year focused on members. They have assessed the landscape and understand the shifts and trends that impact you and the procurement profession. Most importantly, they have spoken to members and listened to what you want and need.

Members have told us they want learning that is:

- Accessible (delivered in the classroom and online/on demand)
- Flexible (available 24/7 and whenever the learner has the time to dedicate to education)
- Customized to the role they play in public procurement so it is applicable and offers relevant learning
- Affordable
- Multiple options for recognition – especially for a substantial number of professionals who do not qualify for professional certification due to formal education requirements or time on the job.

Members also want pathways that guide them on their current career path and prepare them for their aspirational career goals.

Members have also told us that they want similar choices in the way their achievements are publicly recognized through a variety of credentialing options. They want:

- Connections between learning and recognition so they are recognized for each major learning milestone
- Credentials without barriers
- Credentials that are integrated and ladderred so there are intentional steps to move from one credential to the next

### What is Pathways?

An innovative approach to help you develop personalized competency-based learning and credentialing paths for every phase and every stage of your working life in public procurement. It provides ultimate flexibility to create unique professional development experiences where you control your own destiny. You have the option to custom design your professional development to get focused learning for success in a current role, or to develop longer term strategic plans based on your career aspirations.

For more information, please visit the [NIGP Pathways website](#) and [FAQs](#).

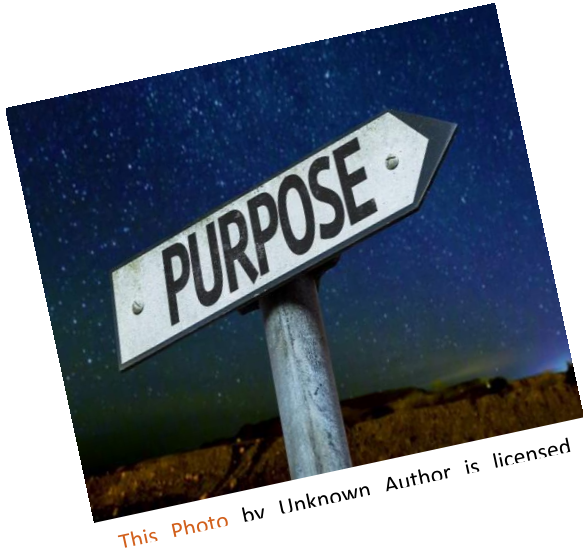
If you have additional questions, you can always email me at [molly.mcloughlin@bvsd.org](mailto:molly.mcloughlin@bvsd.org)

# THE PURPOSE OF PURPOSE

Submitted by Richard Pennington

## **"Start with Why" – Simon Sinek**

Teams are the lifeblood of organizations. They often have short durations with a very definite purpose. But teams can get off-track. Purpose is central to team success and the disciplines that teams need. Planning. Team formation and execution. Sound customer relationships. Measurement. Decision-making. This article looks at the central role of purpose in effective teams.



If you haven't read Sinek's book, do! His central premise is that organizations often begin asking what to do, or

even the "how to do it," before they know their fundamental purpose. In strategic planning, for example, before the objectives are defined for the shorter term, the vision of an organization is clarified.

A companion personal and team leadership principle is learning to ask questions. I call it the "art of the question." I saw this vividly illustrated in a meeting I attended.

Soon after the Affordable Care Act passed, the Colorado Health Institute assembled a group of stakeholders to discuss issues with the impending health exchange. I was a latecomer to the initiative, and when I first attended there were probably 25 people in the room. There were

representatives from health insurance companies, hospitals, information technology experts, and community groups advocating for their members' interests: recipients of Medicaid services and other government assistance programs whose members might be affected by the exchange.

The meeting went on for about an hour and was ready to adjourn. There seemed a prevailing sense that no one knew where to go next, and the group struggled a bit with next steps. Then I heard a lone voice from across the room ask, "How will we know we succeeded?"

That question is a powerful, succinct way to get to purpose in a hurry. At the time, I was just beginning research about the disciplines of effective teams. Sometime later, I again saw the importance of purpose in a story out of the state of Oregon.

In 2007, Oregon experienced unprecedented flooding. The governor issued a disaster proclamation. As the state marshaled efforts to respond, the state procurement office realized just how much there was to learn. They formed a team from multiple agencies involved in statewide disaster response to improve the procurement process. The team at first suffered from a common malady. Their enthusiasm overcame their ability to manage the project. They tackled issues well beyond the procurement focus.



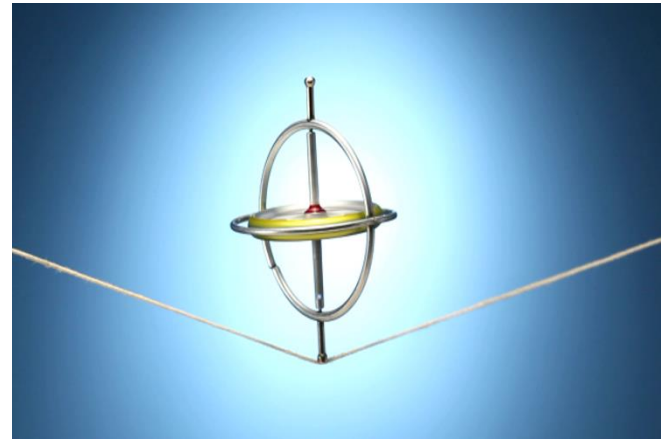
For example, they spent considerable time on the issue of cell phone coverage, concluding that there needed to be a state map showing wireless coverage. What they needed to work on was procurement resources. The team eventually used a “parking lot” approach to capture thoughts and issues that might be of interest to the state’s emergency management leadership.



To stay on track, they started putting their charter’s purpose on each meeting agenda. “Develop, recommend, and document processes to support procurement activities during a state of emergency event.” It helped keep the team focused. Their disaster preparedness kit (shown here) achieved national recognition; the team won the George Cronin Award for Procurement Excellence from the National Association of State Procurement Officials.

Like a gyroscope that signifies stability, purpose occupies a central role in everything a team does. Consider these questions to identify and sharpen purpose in

the various disciplines that effective teams practice:



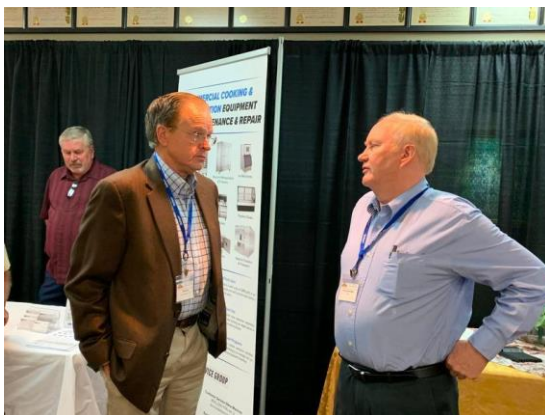
- Is the purpose clear enough that it can serve as a visible guide for future team action? For example, what does the team purpose tell us about what skills and abilities the team needs from its members?
- For improving customer relations, ask, “What’s one thing we can do or stop doing to help you succeed?” This question helps identify purpose during process design to satisfy customer needs.
- For measurement, “What are we trying to achieve with the measurement, e.g. what decision will the measurement inform?” In RFP evaluations, “Why are we evaluating each of the factors?” For example, is the purpose of an evaluated factor to forecast whether contract administration will not exceed the efforts typically required for like requirements in order to achieve acceptable, on-time performance?
- For process analysis like Lean, “Does the activity contribute to the organization’s needs, whether effectiveness, efficiency, or internal controls?”
- For decision-making, “What is the underlying purpose that the decision is expected to achieve? That question helps illuminate the essential criteria for making the decision.
- For managing change, “What is the elevator speech that captures the purpose and reasons for the planned change?”
- For managing risk, “How is the appetite for risk defined—and by whom—in this organization?” The answer to this question is important for framing policies like indemnification and limitation of liability in contracts.
- For learning events, ask, “Why learn this? How does it relate to the job?”
- When faced with engagement issues in a team, ask, “Why is this team’s work important? Why does the team need each teammate’s contribution?”

**Purpose serves to guide the team’s efforts and provides the reasons that teammates engage. Help the team keep purpose in mind!**



# RMGPA FALL CONFERENCE & TAPE 2019

On Thursday, September 19, 2019, the party was hopping at the 2019 RMGPA Fall Conference and TAPE (Terrible Acronym, Productive Event). What a turnout! A big Thank You to the Moose Lodge for hosting the events. We had two great guest speakers. Vendors lined up to network, pass out business cards, and discuss their areas of expertise.



This looks serious!



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