In an issue that focuses on the health of your company and its people, it's important for you to know that two recent and separate CFMA events have improved our Association's health by strengthening our internal growth and increasing our external exposure.

**CFMA at Spring Creek**

In October, CFMA held its Spring Creek annual leadership program for chapter leaders. In an Association with 92 chapters, we have recently struggled to grow attendance at this event, which we consider the single most important leadership event for chapter leaders. While last year's program was outstanding, only 31 chapters availed themselves of this opportunity.

This year, we decided to take action to increase attendance. Our commitment to this program is reflected in our annual budget, as we allocated more than $135,000 toward eliminating the registration fee and providing a $1,500 travel stipend for a leader from each chapter to attend Spring Creek.

I am thrilled to report that this strategy worked as Vice Chairman Ken Chiccotella, Chapter Services Director Cathy Wasner, and I spent three days with more than 60 CFMA leaders at Spring Creek this year – close to double the attendance of previous years!

Since numbers never tell the whole story, here is what the increased attendance means: Twice as many chapter leaders have learned new leadership tools and skills, increased their network of other CFMA leaders, and discovered more about how CFMA HQ can help them more effectively conduct the business of their chapters. We believe a direct relationship exists between outstanding chapter leadership and attendance at Spring Creek; if this is the case, then our chapters will be twice as effective as they were last year.

Why are we so enthusiastic about Spring Creek? Many attendees have said that the combined personal, professional, and CFMA development they garner from the retreat is life changing, and that they make lifelong friends. Increasing Spring Creek attendance twofold is a major accomplishment. Congratulations to all who made this happen. Page 79 of this issue highlights the sessions and includes photos of attendees for each of the two groups.

**Federal Contract Disputes Report**

One of CFMA's strategic goals is to increase our external exposure by being a thought leader in the construction industry. Toward this end, we hired Anirban Basu – who, although he is most widely known as CFMA's economic advisor and an engaging conference presenter, also happens to be a lawyer – to conduct an analysis of who is at fault in federal construction project disputes. We believed that the public likely perceives the contractor as being at fault in most of these cases, and this study was our attempt to set the record straight.

Our findings were reported in the September 28 issue of *Engineering News-Record* and were presented during a press conference in Washington, D.C. on September 29. The report is quite extensive and supports the conclusion that federal agencies’ procurement practices are a large part of the problem. I encourage you to read the Executive Summary on page 10. For the full report and additional ways to stay informed on the implications of the issues brought up in this study, visit [www.cfma.org/federaldisputes](http://www.cfma.org/federaldisputes).

These two accomplishments speak volumes about the growth and breadth of CFMA’s footprint as we continue to increase our value to our members and within the industry.