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LSU

Director of Game/Event
Management

2022-23 President

As we close out the end of another challenging but successful year, this is my thank you note to each of you.

Thank you for the countless hours you spend behind the scenes away from family and friends missing important birthdays, weddings and other special events. While most of the world works 2,080 hours, you and your colleagues work nights, weekends and holidays during the other 6,680 hours a year to provide entertainment and exciting events for your institution, conference, community, family and friends. For me, it is the smiles you see at your events, or posts on social media about what an amazing time was had. To know that you were a part of creating that is something truly magical. So, thank you for giving it your all, even when you thought no one was watching.

"Working hard for something we don't care about is called stress; working hard for something we love is called passion." – Simon Sinek

It takes true passion to be an event and facility manager in college athletics. No matter the institution, conference or division, expectations are always high. Just like a coach must meet expectations on the field, event and facility managers must overcome the challenges brought on by their administrators, student-athletes, coaches and fans. Thank you for always giving your all to meet and exceed those expectations!

Thank you to all of the event and facility managers who have more pictures of signage, grass, broken seats, port-o-potties, barricades, trash, etc. than pictures of your kids and pets on your phone. Thank you for giving it your all every day at every event and coming back to make it even better the next day ... because you took so many pictures.

Thank you for being a member of CEFMA. Both personally and professionally, this organization has supported me for over a decade. Our Board members and Officers have a desire that reflects the purpose and passion of the entire membership. Thank you to those who serve this organization and give your time so

selflessly. Members, thank you for your engagement, contributions and commitment to CEFMA.

CEFMA has become more than a Convention. It is a collaboration that happens daily through our community discussion page, social media posts, mentorship and ambassador programs, podcasts, webinars and regional conferences. Thank you to our sponsors that support the sustainability of our Association and provide exceptional goods and services to our member institutions.

Last, but certainly not least, my biggest shout-out goes to the spouses, partners and family members of all of you awesome people! The ongoing support and sacrifice that you provide does not go unnoticed. We would not be who we are without you.

As the new year approaches, I challenge each of you to take a minute to give those kudos out! A simple note, recognition in a meeting, a departmental or even a CEFMA award nomination. Too often we consider ourselves "behind the scenes" and do not feel deserving of this recognition as we are "just doing our job." But we all know how much the job entails and how hard we work. Celebrate that and celebrate those around you!



Barb Kowal

CoSIDA

Director of Professional
Development and External
Affairs

Big changes are on the horizon for CoSIDA in its 65th year as a national organization.

It's an exciting time of new opportunities, membership and branding identities – and new leadership – as we head into the summer and the June Convention in Las Vegas and CoSIDA continues to evolve to meet the needs of our profession.

We are in the midst of an extensive and rigorous examination of CoSIDA's brand and name identity. Since late last year, we've had a dedicated branding working group of external stakeholders and CoSIDA members look at name changes and new identification, with the guidance of Joe Bosack & Co. Over 150 people have been brought into the renaming process at different points; the choices have been narrowed and a decision will come via a vote of the membership.

As part of the rebrand for 2022-23, we've introduced an All-In Membership, with institutions having the opportunity to include an unlimited number of members in their CoSIDA memberships for one rate, while providing professional development opportunities for all people in roles working toward promoting the institution's brand. It opens up possibilities for CoSIDA to be an even stronger advocate for communications and creative professionals.

Importantly, in the midst of all these initiatives, CoSIDA will have a change in leadership. Announced in mid-May, Erik Christianson, nationally recognized strategic communications and advocacy leader who has served as the NCAA managing director of communications since 2012, will assume CoSIDA leadership duties in June, replacing retiring Executive Director Doug Vance. Christianson is a longtime advocate for, and advisor to, CoSIDA. Over the last eight years, Vance has led CoSIDA admirably and introduced tremendous initiatives, advocacy and change, resulting in membership growth/engagement and a raising of CoSIDA's profile in the intercollegiate athletics industry. Here's to a job (so) well done, Doug!

As CoSIDA continues to help members chart a successful course in this evolving communications environment, we offer

year-round professional development and continuing education. All of this takes place with a commitment, built over years of advocacy and work, to develop a more diverse workforce in our profession. (See CoSIDA.com/2022convention and the programming collaboration with ADs, NACMA, ICLA, Women Leaders and more.)

At the onset of the pandemic in March 2020, we introduced our Racial and Social Justice initiative – #CoSIDAforChange – with podcasts, webinars, personal video testimonials, and more, focusing on critical conversations and experiences around diversity, equity and inclusion. Extending that effort, we introduced a Diversity and Inclusion Fellowship program this year in partnership with the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics. Designed to encourage a greater understanding of how athletics communicators at all levels can become effective champions for DEI, we've hosted live webinars with college athletics leaders and national figures in DEI and populated a resource library. This has resulted in tremendous conversations and work.

As CoSIDA anticipates and prepares for the continued changes ahead in this unprecedented era of communications, our initiatives and programming this year are examples of that.