

Pursuing a career in FM as a young professional

By William Gagnon, Phillips Exeter Academy

The best thing about working in Facilities Management is being a young professional. The sense of belonging, the need for your opinion and the need for your help. Younger professionals working in Facilities has been declining year after year. Being younger and working for my institution is highly valued and I am pleased to represent a younger generation in a field of work that appreciates and welcomes young professionals. New ideas, perspectives and energy are known to be brought into the workplace and this understanding of diversity is now shared across the board on all levels practically anywhere. Age vs experience is just a number vs knowledge. If you're a young professional pursuing a career in Facilities Management, start by having an understanding of the department and institutions critical mission, vision and core values.

The strong sense of belonging and an urge to learn had inspired me to get involved and attend my first NNECERAPPA spring conference last year at Bates College where I started connecting with so many different people, most of which who introduced themselves first after noticing I was a first time attendee. I was overwhelmed with how many people were interested in talking with a younger professional and made sure I was comfortable and welcomed. I experienced this same generosity and respect at my first ERAPPA event as well.

Inspiration led me to join the committee for my chapter region, NNECERAPPA, as Technology and Communications chair (go figure, right?). Something strange about the second wave of millennials and technology. Actually, we grew up during a technological revolution and it's to our advantage if pursuing a career in Facilities Management. The gap of technologic innovation between generations is massive and, believe it or not, technology is one of the top challenges affecting Facilities Management departments yet still an advantage for young professionals pursuing a career.

A year ago I joined a committee and I encourage others too as well. I am currently working through the APPA E.F.P credentialing simultaneously attending APPA Supervisors ToolKit and working on the ERAPPA host committee for the upcoming annual. There are so many opportunities to educate yourself within the organization. I am grateful for the development, knowledge, friendships, mentoring and professional advice APPA continues to provide.