From the President: Our 2017 Goals

Have you “paid your dues?” Have you celebrated your 500th council meeting? How many budgets has it been? How many council orientations? How many bond elections? How many rubber chicken luncheons? Whatever the aspect of the job that sometimes makes you wonder how you kept going – the answer is YES! You have paid your dues!

That fire that still burns that still calls you to make a difference in communities across the US was likely sparked or certainly tendered at the University of Kansas. Whatever stage of career each of us a KUCIMAT filled our minds with the vast complexity of public administration and leadership from the top scholars in the country. At the same time we filled our hearts with the inspiration of those amazing city managers and community leaders introduced to us in our internships and in the formal and informal mentoring that we understood to be the KUCIMATS.

How wise, how smart, how respected….someday…

Friends, this is still happening. But, it happens because there are those who still offer shoulders on which to boost the feet of the next generation. They look to us as we looked to our KUCIMAT heroes.

I am delighted to report that the program is still as strong as ever. The scholarship funding initiative that was kicked off last year is ambitious, but will address a critical need to stay competitive for top students in the future. Dr. Robinson made a significant contribution in his short tenure and we expect to attract another great talent to Direct the School because of the quality of our faculty, students, alumni and university. On-campus and off we have the BEST students in the US already poised to make an impact in communities.

I join our board, however, in expressing some surprise and dismay that we have fallen to a historic low in the percentage of KUCIMATS who are paying dues. Paying your dues provides a critical financial tool to help our students make that vital connection to our KU family and make their introduction to public service more than an academic experience. What it also signals however, is that each person of the 2,097 who receive a dues notice and pay it is paying it forward, believe the future of the profession requires the kind of education KU offers and know that our alumni connection is a big part of what makes this a special program and experience. Last year that number was 97. I have trouble believing that is where we really stand, but it is true.

So, please before you set this down or click away to another e-mail, go on-line or to your checkbook and pay these dues while you think of it. Yes, the money does good things, but the strength of our participation, our association, sense of tradition and commitment to the future is the biggest value.

My thanks and best wishes to all of you in the KUCIMAT family. We will see you in San Antonio. Keep on being the change you want to see in this world.

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