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STATE OF MISSISSIPPI CAMPUSES STEP UP TO THE CHALLENGE

ORMAN

CLEVELAND

JACKSON

STARKVILLE

COLUMBUS

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OXFORD

HATTIESBURG

In today's environment, if you are standing still, you are falling behind. Making the right decisions at the right time is critical. Following through on those decisions is challenging and can take courage. One example of a group of institutions and facility management professionals stepping up to the task and having the courage to challenge the status quo is the State of Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL).

We all know that the organizations that produce excellence are those that continuously improve. Success, the kind that leads to great facility services, is built on the foundation of a huge amount of hard work over many years. Mathematicians will tell you that the only way to learn math is to do math. When you do lots of it, you quickly find out whether you're right or wrong with each problem you try to solve.

Yet in campus facilities management you often find people and organizations who have been doing something for a long time; some are very good at it but don't always know it, and some just aren't very good at it and don't always know it. Why? Lack of feedback.

APPA recognizes, congratulates, and thanks the IHL universities for their contribution of knowledge and experience in conducting the Facilities Management Evaluation Program (FMEP) at all State of Mississippi State Universities. We applaud the campus facility management leaders who work so hard and had the courage to open up and display their organizations and their campus facilities to close scrutiny and critical review. This is a truly extraordinary action by campus administrators and facility managers.

The IHL as a system of higher education consists of a mixture of universities with challenging environments and settings that contain all of the complex elements requiring consistent application of professional facilities management practices.

Because of the institutional focus on achieving and sustaining a leadership position in education, these requirements and demands for high-quality campus facilities and facilities services is rigid and persistent.

BY JACK HUG, APPA FELLOW

“The FMEP process is an invaluable learning tool for any facilities manager. My experience on the ‘evaluator’s side’ revealed the honest intention the team has of simply trying to properly evaluate the entire FM process.... Not only did we end up with a plan to guide us in our goals for the next few years, but we were able to build a network of professionals that were familiar with our campus and its unique requirements for future reference.”

Mike Switzer, P.E.
Director of Engineering Services
Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning

THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

The Board of Trustees is the constitutional governing body of the State of Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning. Under the leadership of the Board of Trustees, the Institutions of Higher Learning provides guidance and management for the public universities in Mississippi. The Board oversees degree-credit courses at the eight universities, the University of Mississippi Medical Center, ten off-campus centers, and various other locations throughout the state. All eight universities offer master’s level programs, six have programs at the education specialist level, and five offer doctoral-level programs. The University of Mississippi Medical Center is the health sciences campus of the University of Mississippi.

The Real Estate and Facilities Division of the Institutions of Higher Learning is charged with the responsibility of managing all affairs relating to the capital improvement process, repair and renovation programs, property management, and Education Building Corporation activities. Objectives of this division are to work with each campus to ensure that campus facilities adequately address academic needs of the institutions; that needs are determined and prioritized for funding; that funded projects are monitored and kept on schedule to optimize results for expenditures; and that maintenance programs are reviewed and monitored for effectiveness.

Mike Switzer served as the initial contact person to help launch the APPA-FMEP project. During the time of campus self-evaluations and campus site visits, Mike served as the IHL director of engineering and for one year also the director of facilities management at Delta State University. He has since returned to IHL as director of engineering. Mike had the unique experience of serving in three different roles during the FMEP activity—as an observer of the FMEP process self evaluations, as a team participant for the first campus assessment, and on the receiving end of the evaluation process while serving as director at Delta State University.

Jessie Stephney, associate vice president facilities management at Alcorn State University, served as director of engineering for IHL for all but two of the campus site visits. Jessie regularly met with the FMEP review teams prior to the beginning of each campus site visit and attended the exit review and verbal report sessions that the FMEP team members conducted on the last day of each campus site visit.

Jessie has this to say about the FMEP experience:

“APPA’s FMEP provides facility managers an opportunity to get feedback from their peers without any hidden agendas. The review team uses their vast experience to evaluate the condition and direction of your facility management department. The evaluators consider each institution’s unique characteristics when performing the evaluation. As a result of the FMEP, facility managers will have the tools they need to justify changes in staffing levels, to improve services, and to garner the support of the university community.”

COMMENTS FROM OTHER STATE OF MISSISSIPPI CAMPUS FACILITIES MANAGERS

“If you produce just one idea for improvement or a list of things to improve that will help you become a better organization it is worth the effort. You can use the list of recommendations to get agreement from the administration on priorities.”

“Our list of recommendations that we received from the site visit team are big-picture opportunities like developing a performance measurement system, and using the FPI survey and Balanced Scorecard.”

“I have to say that I prepared myself for the worst and ended up with a really pleasant experience.”

“Gaining a better understanding of customer requirements and improving employee satisfaction are examples of our new priorities.”

“Developing a practical process for a small campus facilities department is something we really need to do. The review team gave us a roadmap for how to do this.”

“If you do an FMEP and close the gaps that the self-evaluation and the site visit reveal, you will develop a competitive advantage. It will enable you to provide improved service to your customers.”

“The FMEP helped us realize the importance of what we do and how interested the campus administration is in facilities and what we do.”

“This experience and the team report will help us achieve our goal to become a facilities department that the campus can be proud of.”

A LOOK AT THE CAMPUSES EVALUATED

Alcorn State University, the oldest predominantly black land-grant university in the United States, had its beginning in 1830 as Oakland College for the education of white male students. Alcorn State University is a coeducational, liberal arts and sciences, and teacher education public institution offering programs leading to associate, baccalaureate, masters, and educational specialists.

Located in Lorman

Associate Vice President Facilities Management, Jessie Stephney

Delta State University was created as Delta State Teachers College by an act of the state legislature in 1924. The institution opened for its first regular session on September 15, 1925, with a

faculty and staff of 11 members and an enrollment of 97 students. Today, the Mississippi Delta, a 20-county, northwestern region rich in various ethnic and cultural groups, provides approximately 80 percent of the university's enrollment.

Located in Cleveland

Director Facilities Management, Tommy Verdell

Jackson State University was founded as Natchez Seminary in 1877 by the American Baptist Home Mission Society to serve the great Mississippi Valley between Memphis and the Gulf Coast. The school opened on October 23, 1877 with 20 students, and it operated as a private church school for 63 years. In 1882 the Society moved the school from Natchez to Jackson. In 1894, the university was moved from its original site in north Jackson to a new tract of land in the southwest section of the city. The state assumed support of the college in 1940. The name was changed to Jackson State College in 1956 and to Jackson State University in 1974.

Located in Jackson

Director Facilities Management, Wayne Goodwin

Mississippi State University began as the Agricultural and Mechanical College of the State of Mississippi, one of the national Land-Grant Colleges established after Congress passed the Morrill Act in 1862. It was created by the Mississippi legislature on February 28, 1878 to fulfill the mission of offering training in "agriculture, horticulture, and the mechanical arts without excluding other scientific and classical studies, including military tactics." The college received its first students in the fall of 1880. In 1926 the college received its first accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. In 1932 it was renamed Mississippi State College. In 1958 the legislature renamed it Mississippi State University.

Located in Starkville

Executive Director Facilities Management, Jim Jones

Established in 1884, *Mississippi University for Women* became the first public college for women in America. Originally known as the Industrial Institute and College, the institution was created by an act of the Mississippi legislature on March 12, 1884 for the dual purposes of providing a liberal arts education and preparing women for employment. The first session began October 22, 1885. The name of the institution changed to Mississippi State College for Women in 1920, then in 1974 to Mississippi University for Women. In 1982 the United

States Supreme Court ordered the university to admit a male student to the nursing program. Following this historic decision, the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning ordered the university to change its policies to allow the admission of qualified males into all university programs. In 1988 the Board of Trustees reaffirmed the mission of MUW as an institution of quality academic programs for all qualified students with emphasis on distinctive opportunities for women.

Located in Columbus

Director Facilities Management, Sam Wise-Sodexo

Mississippi Valley State University was created by the Mississippi legislature as Mississippi Vocational College in 1946. The expressed purpose of the institution was to train teachers for rural and elementary schools and to provide vocational training. The first academic session started in the summer of 1950. In order to reflect the broadening scope and offerings of the institution, its name was changed to Mississippi Valley State College in 1964. The name of the institution was changed to Mississippi Valley State University in 1974. Graduate programs were begun in 1976.

Located in Itta Bena

Director Facilities Management, Derrick Bell

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The *University of Mississippi*, one of the oldest public institutions of higher education in the South, opened its doors in 1848 and now enrolls more than 17,300 students on four campuses, including the Medical Center in Jackson. Ole Miss is a classical liberal arts institution that also offers a selection of quality professional programs. The main campus in Oxford, home of the late Nobel Prize-winning author William Faulkner, continues to be an incubator for writers and literary scholars. The Center for the Study of Southern Culture and the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation are located on the Oxford campus, as are 30 other institutes and research centers. More than \$100 million in research is conducted annually on the Oxford and Jackson campuses, where world-class studies in pharmacy, physical acoustics, and cardiovascular disease take place. The 1.2 million-volume library on the main campus houses the most extensive blues archive in the nation, Faulkner's papers, and the national library of the accountancy profession. Ranked among the nation's top 50 public research universities by the Lombardi Program on Measuring University Performance, the university emphasizes strong classroom teaching supported by excellent library, laboratory, and technical facilities. Its Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College has been ranked among the top three in the nation.

Located in Oxford

At the time of the FMEP: Director of Facilities Management, Terron Jones, Ian Banner, AIA, Director of Facilities Planning and University Architect

The *University of Southern Mississippi* is a national public university that is engaging and empowering individuals to transform lives and communities. Founded in 1910, Southern Miss is the only SREB-Level 1 designated university in the state graduating the most PhDs in-state. A dual-campus, Southern Miss boasts world-class research and teaching sites along the Gulf Coast; receives more than \$102 million in research dollars; has signature academic programs including polymer science and engineering, the Center for Writers, the four-art disciplines, nursing and education; and has the sixth oldest Honors College in the nation. With academic excellence and, in a tradition of leadership for student development, Southern Miss is educating a 21st century workforce providing intellectual capital, cultural enrichment, and innovation to Mississippi and the world.

Located in Hattiesburg

Director of Physical Plant, Rusty Postlewaite

THE BEST LEADERSHIP IS GOOD MANAGEMENT

It is a fact that the worst recession since the 1930s has caused the steepest decline in state tax receipts on record. As a result, even after making deep cuts, states continue to face large budget gaps. For the most part, as the state goes, so go the state institutions. For many state universities, the states have become an unreliable financial partner. No doubt a scenario like this has played out in many states where the recession reality has set in—the states have few options and this economic downturn will not end quickly.

In November 2009 the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), Washington D.C., reported the following:

- Mid-year shortfalls have opened up in 26 states totaling \$16 billion or 4 percent of these budgets. These new shortfalls are in addition to the gaps states closed when adopting their fiscal year 2010 budgets earlier this year.
- Counting both initial and mid-year shortfalls, 48 states have addressed or still face such shortfalls in their budgets for fiscal year 2010, totaling \$179 billion or 26 percent of state budgets — the largest gaps on record.
- Fiscal year 2011 gaps total \$80 billion or 14 percent of budgets for the 35 states that have estimated the size of these gaps. These totals are likely to grow as revenues continue to deteriorate, and may well exceed \$180 billion.

By the time of this publication the situation for many states has likely gotten worse.

Private institutions are also facing a tightening of budgets and financial resources, and institutional endowments from investments are suffering even as they are being counted on for operations. Contributions from benefactors are also diminished. Capital expenditures and more difficult debt financing have caused a rethinking and postponement of projects, programs, and plant priorities.

It just may be that the constraints caused by financial and budget realities for facilities managers is playing out as a management crisis manifesting itself in our own shortcomings associated with managing change.

Clearly the near-term, mid-term, and realistic foreseeable future provides substantial opportunities for facility managers faced with the daunting combination of ever-increasing costs of operations and diminished resources. The era of “doing more with less” has given way to “doing less with less.” New meaning is being hoisted upon the phrase “close to the customer.” More than ever we are learning to apply deliberate and disciplined processes to service level standards that emphasize real determination of the things that matter most to our customers on our college and university campuses.

It's truly time to change, an opportunity to step up and distinguish our facilities management profession, to become a leading organization on campus by improving organizational performance, and service effectiveness. It is also time to guard against taking the easy way out and to let our services slip into mediocrity.

We know from experience that every successful organizational change initiative begins with an organizational assessment. Without the knowledge gained from an assessment, we risk missing viable opportunities and can severely underestimate the resistance to changing the status quo. To ensure the overall future development and success of our facilities management organization, we would be wise to take a comprehensive collaborative approach to change like the State of Mississippi University facility managers did.

EVALUATING WITH THE FMEP

The APPA Facilities Management Evaluation Program (FMEP) provides a framework for this collaborative approach. Where we begin to change often depends on what our organization needs now and what we can discern from a careful diagnosis of the likely future conditions. Proper use of the FMEP allows facilities management organizations to attain collaboration among members within facilities management organization and across the campus; an opportunity to address internal challenge with the people who work inside the institution while at the same time we can gain the benefit of the thinking and experiences of facility management professional peers. *There has never been a better time for a second opinion.*

The FMEP Criteria:

- focus on performance excellence for the entire organization in an overall management framework.
- identify and help facility managers track all-important organizational results: leadership, strategic and operational planning and execution, customer service, financial, human resource and work environment, use of information technology, facility department service processes, and mission-critical organizational performance results. Together this framework provides a comprehensive and complementary picture of the facilities organization's readiness to do its job today and how it is positioned to be successful in the future.

Maybe you have heard about a struggling or failing facilities management organization that used an FMEP assessment to begin its turnaround. But why would a facilities management department with good performance in difficult financial times undertake an FMEP self-assessment and peer review site visit?

One reason is to become even better—and to get better results. In today's education environment of high-stakes administrative and academic accountability to wide-ranging stakeholders, achieving the fundamental and advanced organizational capabilities stressed in the FMEP criteria is absolutely essential.

Education leaders who understand performance excellence know that institutional accreditation practices and other forms of institutional *report-card-results* must show progress toward delivery of ever-improving value to students, faculty and staff, and community stakeholders. The seven comprehensive and complementary assessment categories of the FMEP criteria are designed to help administrative and academic officers and facility managers work together, to collaborate in capitalizing on an institution's unique strengths and will identify specific opportunities for improvement. When institutions effectively develop and deploy strategies in each of the Criteria Categories, they can expect to drive better results and to achieve better organizational effectiveness and service-process efficiencies that are relevant and that matter most in context with the specific needs of the institution.

The FMEP Criteria was not created in a vacuum but rather was developed by a group of seasoned and knowledgeable facility management professionals who are campus facility practitio-

ners and also students and teachers of the FMEP and the APPA Award for Excellence (AFE) criteria; criteria patterned on the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Program; and developed and updated annually by some of the best minds in the field and practice management and leadership today.

Jim Collins (author of *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap ... and Others Don't*) recently endorsed Baldrige as follows: "I see the Baldrige process as a powerful set of mechanisms for disciplined people engaged in disciplined thought and taking disciplined action to create great organizations that produce exceptional results." The FMEP brings discipline to the facilities management decision table.

A MESSAGE TO LEADERS

APPA asks,

- **Are you making progress?**
- **Are your values, vision, mission, and plans being deployed?**
- **Are they understood and supported by your leadership team?**
- **Are they understood and supported by all members of your workforce?**
- **Are your communications effective?**
- **Is the message being well received?**
- **Are you a high-performing, innovative organization?**
- **Is your organization achieving peer-class performance?**
- **Does your organization have clear strategic objectives that address your most important challenges?**
- **Are your customers satisfied with your products and services?**
- **Is your organization ethical and well governed? Is the facilities management work environment conducive to everyone performing at their utmost capability?**
- **Is the campus appearance the best it can be given the level of resources provided?**

It is time to step up to the line and take your best shot at continuing to improve the management of facility services; get over the fact that budget cuts and workload increases appear to be disproportionately directed at facilities management. Indeed, the best leadership in tough times may well be good management. ☞

Jack Hug is a Past APPA President and currently is president of Hug Consulting Services of Colorado Springs, CO. He can be reached at jackhug1@comcast.net.

For more information on the **Facilities Management Evaluation Program**, visit www.appa.org/fmep, or contact Holly Judd at holly@appa.org.

