

From the Executive Director



Spring is here!

By Lisa O'Donnell, CAE

For many of us, spring provides a built-in reset button, a time for renewal and change. A time to dust off and polish all those items and ideas that were overlooked throughout the colder months. A time to declutter the physical and the mental things that piled up while we were focused elsewhere.

Decluttering is one of my favorite things—the Goodwill guys know me by name. Sometimes it gets me into trouble (husband to me: “What do you mean you got rid of my Nintendo 64?!” and daughter to me: “Mommy, you threw away my kindergarten art project?!”).

Oops.

But decluttering is not just about ridding my counters and closets of stuff. It's also about realigning priorities so that the meaningful details are elevated. This is true both for my personal life and my work life. In fact, it's true of FLA. This realignment of priorities was a significant initiative for FLA in 2020, resulting in the reorganization of our committee structure to better represent the profession and the goals outlined in the 2020-2022 strategic plan. Like any good organization project, we pulled out everything related to FLA committees and laid them in a pile. If you're a fan of Marie Kondo or other organization professionals, we set out to divide those into three important areas: 1) Keep, 2) Repurpose, and 3) Discard.

Guess what happened? Everything started in the “keep” pile. Of course, it did! It always happens that way, because who has the heart to throw out that timeworn and beloved blue blankie (True story.)? Similarly, how to decide what stays and what goes for an association? But, just like that blue blankie, we don't realign to ignore the memories or disregard the past. It's a chance to reimagine, modernize, and adapt to an ever-evolving profession. FLA offers a lot of programming, and everything seems to align with our mission. But, digging down deeper, we realized a few things:

- It was not always easy for new members to get involved with FLA.
- Some committees were working on the same things without knowing it.
- Committees could be combined with others to form stronger and more diverse committees.

- The bond between committees could be strengthened with a few simple tweaks like committee liaisons.
- For FLA to fully indoctrinate diversity and inclusion, we had to look closely at why we separated ourselves into so many segments.
- And quality of committee work should always outweigh quantity of committees.

What didn't change? The people. The volunteers. Those members who gave so tirelessly and passionately of their time to further the mission of FLA, and the committee members who graciously pivoted with us as we realigned the 56 (yes, fifty-six) committees, subcommittees and member groups.

On behalf of the FLA board of directors, we're proud to reintroduce our membership to a realigned structure that is based on thoughtful decisions and with an emphasis on One FLA – the idea that we are in this together.

Look for some new programming coming your way as a result of these positive changes such as new member webinars, a new poster session format, and more video content. Don't forget to complete the Membership Benefits Survey by May 21, developed by the new Membership Development Committee. Your feedback will allow us to provide the information and resources that matter most to you.

Take the Member Benefits Survey!

Thanks to all the 2020-2021 Chairs, Vice Chairs, and committee members for giving of your time so freely and passionately in the pursuit of greatness for FLA and its members. We're looking forward to seeing you soon at the 2021 Hybrid Conference!

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