MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy Birthday Canada!

Canada - this great country we call home! Our country is comprised of many different people who bring their cultural background of goodness with them. Together, our foundation becomes our center that allows us to prosper and move forward in our ever changing environment. Building a stronger community with diverse opinions, however with consistent goals, brings collaboration, beauty, health and continued success in all that we set out to achieve.

Associations across the country and abroad are available to all those looking to join a group of professional individuals where one can learn from each other and expand their knowledge base, friendships and networking arenas.

Lifetime learning is such a blessing. Everyone we connect with has either a story to tell or information to be shared. We learn daily as technology and legislation changes constantly within our environment. Reading, listening and watching, assists in making us better aware of our surroundings while increasing our communication skills at the same time. I believe that we are all leaders in our own way, by participating and bringing our unique abilities to the forefront.

Being a part of any organization is a win-win. Enjoy every day and soak up any new educational avenue around you to make you a more knowledgeable and marketable individual. Every day is a learning experience. I am very grateful for those who I have met along my educational journey and for those I have yet to meet in the future. Everyone comes into your life for a reason and whether they are here for a long or short period of time, they will always be considered part of your journey here on earth. I have a lot to be thankful for - thank you all for being part of my journey!

Education is limitless. Keep smiling!

See you in September.

Hugs,

Erika Giesl, QAA
President, Toronto Charter Branch
QAA CORNER

We are soo excited about our Association name change! With change comes a domino effect for all other AAA/QAA information.

Please note that we have changed our Association name only and NOT our designation name. The designation we currently hold (QAA) requires paperwork and approval prior to moving forward with the new proposed designation name (CCAP - Canadian Certified Administrative Professional). Your QAA designation is still to be used behind your name until the National Board has provided the green light. All correspondence can be changed to our new Association name, however with our current trademark logo and colour. The re-branding process is currently underway and National will be providing updates as we move forward within that process.

With the re-branding process, there is a lot of work still to be done. The partnerships we currently hold with all of the Universities and Colleges across Canada require updates for their future course calendars. Courses are still available and will not change at this time. Once the designation submission has been approved, the process of the designation change will take effect in all course calendars. Again, no courses will be effected during this process. We thank you for your patience during this transition.

"Always be yourself, express yourself, have faith in yourself, do not go out and look for a successful personality and duplicate it." - Bruce Lee

Nathy Emerant
Dahye Kwon
Cecile D'Souza
Jessica McConnell
Sharlene Rennie
Susan Mason

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

To all our members celebrating a birthday during the summer.
As we reflect upon this past year - we remind ourselves of the gifts of dedication, support from our families, and respect from our colleagues. I’d like to acknowledge all those who surround us with continued encouragement and endless love. It is with great joy that we have the opportunity to welcome new friends who share the same common path. Sim, as a new graduate, may you move with continued confidence and strength on the road which lies ahead.

Thank you to all graduates, past and present everywhere.

May your educational journey never end! Congratulations.

**REMINDE**

As a QAA graduate or AAP member, you are reminded that you are more than welcome to use our new name on your business cards. You may also use our current logo and website - these will be changed once the re-branding process is complete and National Board provides the details.

Graduates of the QAA program who are members in good standing only (annual paid membership) are to use their QAA designation behind their name.
Our Annual General meeting (AGM) was held on April 27th at the Hot House Restaurant in downtown Toronto. A wonderful evening shared with fellow members and invited guests. Our guest speaker, Charmaine Bryan, spoke about "The Power of Cultivating your Professional Image", which included matching facial shapes and other unique personal characteristics to style, colour, and accessories.

Our guest fees that are collected throughout the year at our monthly guest speaker program series is presented to our charity of choice at our scheduled AGM. This past year we presented to "Youth Without Shelter". A short presentation was made by Mike Burnett from the shelter to provide us a more detailed look at where funds assist our youth. It is incredible how we can help those in need by providing even a small amount of funds or a bit of your time.

The atmosphere was delightful, food was delicious, laughter filled the room at times, and there was great conversation. It is always a pleasure meeting new members and sharing wonderful stories.

We are grateful for our volunteers who take on positions and those who assist with other tasks that need to be completed. Thank you to all of you who shared in this annual event. We look forward to seeing you at our next scheduled event.

**Toronto Charter Branch Executive Team for 2017-2018**

It is with great pleasure and a warm welcome that I introduce you to your new Executive Team for 2017-2018.

- **President**, Erika Giesl, QAA
- **Vice-President**, Aldena Torres, QAA
- **Treasurer**, Paul Linchuang
- **Secretary**, Katherine Vallaincourt
- **Membership Chair**, Nicole Nickel-Fleming
- **Program Chair**, Erika Giesl, QAA
- **Social Media Coordinator**, Anca Popa
- **Website Administrator**, Dina Raso
- **Newsletter Editor**, Ana Cabral, QAA
- **Facilities Coordinator**, Laura Nash
Guest Speaker: Tracey D’Aviero

Is being a Virtual Assistant right for you?

Have you considered becoming a Virtual Assistant? From the number of members that attended the meeting, it appears many of us have!

Guest speaker, Tracey D’Aviero, comically noted that, until the recent arrival of the “virtual assistant” on mobile phones/devices, most people hadn’t even heard the term before.

A Virtual Assistant (VA) is someone who does all the traditional or specialized administrative work for business owners/executives, but from their own home (or other location) office. Many of us are already working as a quasi-VA; periodically working remotely from home or by providing support to executives located in other parts of the city/world.

What this means, said Tracey, is that we already possess the skills necessary to easily transition into becoming a full-time, VA. During her presentation, Tracy provided the incentive for us to investigate further – to ask ourselves the question: is this right for me?

With over 20 years’ experience as a VA, operating her own business, Tracey has created a mentorship program to help others set up their own VA business. She provides training and coaching to help determine if this is right for you. She’ll assist with developing a business plan – determining which services to provide, pricing and targeting customers.

Tracey’s presentation was very well received and generated a lot of questions from the floor. She told us that the VA industry is on the rise and asks: do you want to become your own boss? Is it right for you?

For more information, visit Tracy’s website:

www.yourvamentor.com or

contact her at tracey@yourvamentor.com.
LESSONS FROM SMOKE SIGNALS

By Gloria Pierre

Native Indians used smoke signals to send simple messages. Smoke signals were used to broadcast news such as result of battles, warning of sickness in the camp or danger such as approaching enemies. The meanings were agreed upon in advance. The messages had many elements of effective communication such as conciseness, context, trust and credibility which are useful when you are part of a team.

Here are the four lessons:

Lesson #1
Their lifestyle wasn’t as hectic as ours yet their messages were concise. We need to be just as concise because our listeners don’t or won’t listen if we ramble or digress. Are you able to hold their attention and interest for the duration of your request, call or talk? To be concise, truly listen, ask questions, know what you want to say and have the right words.

Lesson #2
They agreed in advance what the signals would mean so there would be no misunderstanding. They didn’t assume. They knew for certain. When you’re part of a team, do you ask questions to clarify, do you contribute in the discussion, do you actively participate? Or do you get your signals mixed up, assume or get flustered? Agreeing in advance requires you to truly listen, ask questions and have contextual information.

Lesson #3
Where the signal came from - hilltop or valley - conveyed most of the meaning. Where are your signals, messages coming from? Do you accept them without question? Are they from well-meaning, trustworthy sources? Do not accept the message if it didn’t come from a "pre-arranged" source. Also, what messages are you sending to yourself?
Lesson # 4
Their survival at times depended on the smoke signals so those sending and receiving the signals had to be conscientious and reliable. Do you receive signals that broadcast good news or gossip and rumor? Are you enabling those who send out the latter? They may be your "approaching enemies" who can jeopardize your performance or your success.

These lessons are valuable for your personal communication also. Always know what you want to say then say what you mean. Meaning what you say eliminates ambiguity and enhances your professionalism. Maintain your integrity by only broadcasting and receiving messages that align with your values.

Gloria Pierre is President of Clearly Speaking, the communication company that empowers its clients to command attention and respect when they speak and to get the results they want. Contact her at info@clearlyspeaking.ca

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Author, Speaker, Presenter, Coach
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"The great leaders are like the best conductors – they reach beyond the notes to reach the magic in the players." – Blaine Lee

CHARITY CHOICE 2017-2018

Thank you to "Youth Without Shelter" for allowing us to provide a donation to assist in their cause for the 2016-2017 program series. The TCB is now looking to support a charity of choice for the upcoming program series 2017-2018 and ask all members to bring forward your thoughts and why you would choose that charity of choice.

Email aap.toronto.program@gmail.com with your response.
NATIONAL ANNUAL GENERAL (NAGM) MEETING UPDATE

The NAGM was held at the Crowne Plaza in Moncton, NB this year from May 31 to June 3. This year we were pleased to have our Wednesday night hospitality suite sponsored by Mika Restaurant. A great evening of meeting new members from Moncton and those from the surrounding area, along with familiar faces that travel annually to our national meetings. An exciting time for Moncton as a new Branch is inaugurated.

The National Board meeting held on Friday provided insight on projects that are continuing and those that are under an RFP – i.e. website and our branding process. A number of members came to observe the board meeting and provided input when there was open discussion. This is a great experience for those who do not currently sit on a board but are interested in learning the process, and what is discussed; perhaps for future participation on an executive or national board level. The National Board provides an Executive Summary after each board meeting with details of what transpired. This can be found on the website under members only.

The Moncton Branch inauguration on Friday night was a great experience for our new members and guests, as well as the new branch Executive team. Moncton is excited about moving forward and we, as an organization, will assist with any questions they may have.

Our NAGM held on Saturday morning was also well attended in person or by proxy. With great joy, our new National Board was sworn in. The Qualified Administrative Assistant (QAA) graduate luncheon which followed thereafter was also a joyous occasion. We ended off the conference with a transitional meeting and thanked those who participated in positions, at the same time, welcomed those stepping in.

The Association started in 1951 with letters patent in 1952. We received our supplementary letters of patent to change our name in February 2017. The Association runs on volunteer hours by administrative professionals across Canada. Be proud of what you are accomplishing in your career and continue to set realistic goals. Participate in your Association or in your community, to continue enhancing your education, networking environment or put it simply, just your joy of lifelong learning and friendships.
Member Notice:

Volunteer Needed - Secretary Position

Due to a recent out of town move by our incoming Secretary, we are seeking a volunteer for this position. Please let me know directly if you are interested. I will work closely with the Secretary this year.
I was honoured to participate as an Advisory Board member of the 18th Annual Administrative Professionals Conference (APC) of Canada held this past May 28-31, 2017 at the Harbour Castle Westin Hotel in downtown Toronto.

The APC was another successful conference with over 500+ participants gathering from all across Canada. Educators from all areas of expertise shared their wealth of knowledge and answered any questions participants may have had.

As a partner, the AAP was provided a table at the APC where we were able to provide more information on who we are and what we are all about. We are very grateful for this opportunity as it is a great networking avenue for administrative professionals everywhere.

Whether you are new to the administrative professional career or a seasoned administrative professional, there was something for everyone! Under the direction of Portfolio Director, Amy Ruddell, the keynote speakers, the workshop and track session leaders, along with all of the networking events, sponsors and exhibitors were again great value for companies to send their administrative representatives.

It was a pleasure meeting so many like minded professionals during the four-day conference. One of my many highlights of APC was meeting Margaret Trudeau and Colin & Justin. Inspiring stories and wonderful people. On behalf of the AAP, I’d like to thank Amy Ruddell for bringing her unique ability and passion to this conference.

Coming Soon...An Evening of Fun...Ax Throwing

Come join us for our upcoming Fun in the Sun event hosted by the Toronto Charter Branch! Save the Date – "August date TBD" for a light dinner followed by an epic evening of throwing axes at wood planks in downtown Toronto. Axe Throwing is the latest team building activity that has taken the GTA by storm! Learn a new skill while building relationships with your colleagues. More details to follow in the next few weeks. We look forward to seeing all of you there!!!

...Stay Tuned
1. Self Awareness: Have a focus, know your best skills, be realistic, and set goals with an achievable time line.

2. Job Search = Job Research: It is important to understand the labour market and career trends, and to always research before approaching employers.

3. Workplace Culture: Develop the ability to be comfortable with diversity including the multi-generational workforce.

4. Communication and Brand Messaging: Recognize the importance of first impressions and capturing the attention of the employer.

5. Resumes: Customize your resume using key words and expressions, and learn about applicant tracking systems and online application systems. In addition, resumes are now focused on where you are going, not only about where you have been; recognize that there is no 'one size fits all'.

6. Cover Letters, References and Appropriate Interview Outfits: These are all still mandatory.

7. LinkedIn Profile and Social Media Presence: Having an online presence is just as essential and important as a resume.
8. Networking and Building Alliances: This is no longer a job search option. It is the #1 way of securing a job interview.

9. Interview Preparation: Review your interview skills, be aware of non-verbal language, be prepared to answer questions with work-related success stories and be watchful of falling into the trap of providing irrelevant details.

10. Participate in professional development: Continue being active with your Professional Association, attend free workshops offered through the Toronto Public Library, and consider using Employment Ontario funded career centers for free employment preparation coaching.

To learn more about job search, applicant tracking systems and the importance of having an impressive LinkedIn profile, contact Lisa Trudel at ltudel@tcet.com to see if you are eligible to use the free services of the Centre for Education and Training. Lisa works at their office at 595 Parliament Street in the historic Cabbagetown district of downtown Toronto and is happy to assist Administrative Professionals who are unemployed, underemployed or working part-time.

EXCLUSIVE OFFER:

Lucy Brazier from Executive Secretary Magazine has provided me with books that may be of interest. They are $10 softcover / $25 hard cover - 4 books in total. She is asking for $50 for all 4 books if you wish to go that route.

- Building a Powerful Brand - Anel Martin ($10)
- Conference and Event Management - Eth Lloyd ($10)
- Taking Control of Your Inbox - Dr. Monica E. Seeley ($10)
- Motivational Notebook - Executive Secretary - # One Professional One Voice ($25)

Please connect with me directly if you wish to order any of the above books. Thank you. Erika.
What attracted you to the Association?

JM: After spending more than 10 years refining my executive support skill set, I began to search for a network of individuals working in a similar capacity who could help to form the basis of a resourceful community.

What is your current position?

JM: Executive Assistant to the COO & EVP, Global Film Group at Entertainment One. (eOne is Canada’s largest entertainment distribution company and operates in over seven countries. The production arms of our Family, Film, Television and Music businesses are fast-growing and global success stories. Some of our most notable properties include Peppa Pig, Ben & Holly’s Little Kingdom, Rookie Blue, Saving Hope, The Twilight Saga (dist), The Hunger Games (dist), The Walking Dead (dist), The Lumineers, Snoop Dogg and The Arkells).

What are you hoping to gain from the Association?

JM: Sharing ideas, tips and ‘tricks of the trade’ is of course at the forefront of my priorities but also networking and get to know other professional EA’s who have learned to immerse themselves in their respective businesses. In addition, I have enrolled in the QAA designation through the University of Toronto and ultimately am looking to increase my capacity for executive level support and project management.

What is one fact about you that you would love to share with your new community?

JM: I love to play cards and complete puzzles!
I'm just on the final swing of my busy season. April to mid-June is the busiest time of the year for me. I've already reached the top tier on my airline rewards, and we aren't even at the midpoint of the year.

Don't get me wrong; I love every minute of it.

However, as much as I love my life in "full speed ahead" mode, I find that my efficiency needs to be performing at the top level for me to keep all the balls in the air. Now to be fair, I am an efficiency expert, so that is typically not a challenge for me. The other people I encounter in my job? That can be my challenge!

I admit I'm time obsessed. I know what time it is at all times. I don't need an alarm, I hate to be late, and I appreciate when others have the same level of respect for my time that I have for theirs.

You're laughing, aren't you? Right. Many others don't think about being late or not being time sensitive as disrespectful.

This month's article is about running meetings efficiently. The timing of meetings is just one aspect, but running a meeting efficiently (or participating efficiently) is respectful.

You attend meetings. Sometimes you run meetings. Read this month's article on The Seven Deadly Sins of Meetings and see if you or your company are guilty!

Rhonda

http://www.facebook.com/rhonda.scharf
Learn more About Rhonda
Watch Rhonda on Video
Buy Rhonda's Books, eBooks and On-Demand Webinars
The Seven Deadly Sins of Meetings

Meetings are the number-one time waster in the workplace, according to a study by Verizon Business. They say that the average executive spends approximately 50 per cent of their time in meetings. The average middle manager spends about 35 per cent of their time in meetings.

As administrative professionals, we spend far too much time in our own meetings and the meetings of our executives.

When conducted effectively, meetings can inspire and ignite motivation, lead to higher performing teams and a stronger bottom line. However, more than $37 billion is wasted each year in unproductive meetings—and that’s in the United States, alone. Admins need to minimize the wasted time in meetings and maximize the productive time.

Once you’re aware of my Seven Deadly Sins of Meetings, you’ll be able to better plan, organize, participate in and facilitate great meetings.

Seven Deadly Sins of Meetings

1. People don’t take meetings seriously.
They don’t come prepared and they often don’t have to, because there is a serious lack of accountability in most companies about meetings. Meetings are not supposed to be a time for social chit-chat. They are supposed to be focused on the topics at hand. Typically, they should allow participants to come away from them with specific goals and action items to be completed. A meeting should be held because there is a reason to have one, not just because it is the first Monday of the month.

2. Meetings are too long.
Meetings should be a maximum of 30 minutes. Yes, 30 minutes. To do that, we need to cut down the number of people in attendance and ask ourselves, “Who really needs to be part of this discussion?” instead of just assuming that everyone wants to be invited. (Note: With very few exceptions, they really don’t want to be invited.) Shorter meetings with a smaller attendee base will make the meeting more efficient. Many people would be perfectly happy to read the updates from the other departments instead of taking the time to listen to them live. Update meetings should be done via email, not in person.
3. People like the sound of their own voice and they like to ramble.
Give each person a time limit for their update. With a 30-minute meeting there is a bit of a rushed feeling, which encourages people to be quick and concise. Keep a large time clock (easy app on an iPad) visible so people can see how much time is left during the meeting.

4. No follow-through after the meeting.
At each meeting, make one person responsible for recapping the meeting at the end (it does not have to be the Chair) to outline the action items, the takeaways and the responsibilities. At the start of each meeting, have each attendee update the group on what was accomplished since the last meeting. This isn’t a status update but an action update based on the actions of the previous meeting. This action update can be a document that is prepared in advance of the meeting and circulated. The peer pressure of being the only one who didn’t accomplish their task is significant enough to ensure that at least some of the tasks will be completed. When there is no follow-up, there is no pressure to follow through on commitments.

5. We allow distractions.
Ninety-two per cent of people admit to multitasking during meetings: 67 per cent say they check email, and 49 per cent say they do other work, unrelated to the meeting. We chat with the person beside us. We allow the topic to wander away from the agenda to something more engaging. The facilitator of the meeting needs to control the distractions. And, as participants, we need to behave respectfully. Tuning out to check your email during someone else’s update is disrespectful to them. We can be better than that.

6. Important information has not been communicated in advance.
It is important that everyone involved in the meeting sends as much information as possible in advance. Participants can’t have an informed discussion with information they just received verbally 30 seconds earlier. If participants can’t send information in advance, then the topic should not be on the agenda. Remove the “New Business” category of your agenda and include only items that were communicated in advance.

7. Ground rules aren’t being followed or enforced.
A regular revisiting of ground rules is important. Have everyone agree on the rules and make it safe for people to call out when the rules aren’t being enforced.
Here is a quick Meeting Scorecard for you to grade each meeting (share it with all participants).

1. Did we start within two minutes of the scheduled starting time?
2. Did we have the right people at the table?
3. Did we follow the agenda?
4. Did we review the last meeting’s outstanding items?
5. Did we do a recap at the end of the meeting?
6. Did we have full participation?
7. Was everyone prepared?
8. Were our issues constructively challenged or discussed?
9. Were we open, honest and respectful?
10. Did we finish on time?

Scoring: Yes = 2, No = 0

16-20 – You and your team have perfected your team meetings. The trick is to continue to stay focused on what is working and why, and not become complacent.

9-15 – You have mastered many of the best meeting tactics, but there are a couple of things that are causing your meetings to be less efficient than they could be. Address them and become even more productive as a team.

0-8 – Unfortunately, your meetings have gone off-track and are likely very frustrating to those in attendance. Do yourself (and your team) a favour and make some adjustments immediately so you can become much more productive.

BONUS TIP: Send this questionnaire to your meeting participants to see if they agree with your scoring.

Good luck.

Rhonda
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<th>PROGRAM EVENT/SPEAKER</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<td>TBD</td>
<td>Canadiana Restaurant &amp; Banquet Hall 5230 Dundas St., W. Six Points Plaza, Toronto, ON Tel: 416-239-1114</td>
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<td>Christmas Brunch</td>
<td>The Old Mill Toronto 21 Old Mill Road, Etobicoke M8X 1G5</td>
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Enquiries & RSVP's to aap.toronto.secretary@gmail.com

Members are FREE, unless cost indicated. Non-members = $7 Donation
The Association of Administrative Professionals is a Canadian chartered non-profit professional organization founded in April 1951. The Association is proactive in encouraging its members to further their education and enhance their career opportunities by continuously upgrading their skills and professionalism. Association members are encouraged to obtain the Qualified Administrative Assistant (Q.A.A.) designation. The Qualified Administrative Assistant Program consists of three compulsory courses and four elective courses offered at eighteen post secondary institutions across Canada. The first graduating class was in May 1960. By June 2017, the Q.A.A. designation was awarded to our 750+ graduates.

Please contact us above with your comments or suggestions

SUBMISSION DATES FOR THE CONNECTION

Publishing Schedule:

Coming Soon...