

**LETTER FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
GOVERNMENTAL PURCHASING'S NATIONAL PRESIDENT**

Stephen B. Gordon*

Dear Readers and NIGP Members:

You are reading Issue 1, Volume 2 of the *Journal of Public Procurement* (JoPP). You are holding in your hands one more indicator of public procurement's emerging professional status, a refereed journal that only a few years ago was nothing more than a vision. Through the partnership of the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP) and the Florida Atlantic University (FAU), the vision has become reality.

Although NIGP and FAU launched the JoPP and are responsible for sustaining its publication, the JoPP Editorial Board represents a variety of organizations, including the World Bank, the United Nations, the Federal General Services Administration, NIGP representatives, and selected scholars in the United States and other countries. This broad basis of review indicates the JoPP's interest in disseminating public procurement knowledge and practices at different levels of government, and in all nations and international organizations. Moreover, different from law journals, the JoPP covers all aspects of public procurement, not only government contract law. Finally, each issue of the JoPP has two types of articles: scholarly articles that aim at building a body of theoretical knowledge, and "Practitioners' Corner" articles that practitioners share their experiences with their peers.

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As you know, the last issue and this issue of JoPP have reprinted the U.S. General Accounting Office's studies and the U.S. Office of Management and Budget's guideline. Although those reprints are useful for us, I hope the "Practitioners' Corner" of JoPP will publish original reports submitted by public procurement practitioners, and particularly NIGP members. Thus, your manuscript contributions will be very important for the JoPP to keep a balance between theoretical and practical features.

The JoPP's "Practitioners' Corner" should be the most appealing and useful part because it is a place where we, as practitioners, share our good or bad experiences with our peers. As an active member of NIGP, I have been one of several strong advocates of public procurement professionalism. I share with most, if not all, of you a belief that, in order to earn a prestigious professional status, public procurement officials must prove that our practices add significant value to government operation and service delivery, and require professional skills and knowledge.

Currently, numerous NIGP members are interested in earning an academic degree, either Bachelor or Master, in public procurement. Through our partnership with Florida Atlantic University, Professor Khi V. Thai, Director of the Public Procurement Research Center, has worked on proposals for five new courses in public procurement. Unfortunately, he has not been able to submit proposals for these new courses to the University Curriculum Committee for its new course approvals because of a single reason: insufficient textbooks and journal articles for readings that are required for new courses. Without sufficient publications, these new course proposals cannot be approved.

As you know, NIGP has launched a major education project, called LEAP, within which a Text Writing project has been undertaken. Within 18 months, NIGP will roll out the first edition of 14 public procurement texts. By then, we will have textbooks and a significant number of articles published in the JoPP for new college courses in public procurement. By then, we expect FAU, and possibly other universities, to offer courses in public procurement.

We all know that public procurement practices require a unique set of skills and knowledge that is needed to perform procurement effectively. Until a body of public procurement knowledge and skills is

widely recognized, and until those who perform the procurement function of government are required to have it, public procurement cannot be a well-respected profession.

Let's all get involved in contributing to the body of knowledge. Don't keep that article inside your head. Share it with the rest of us through the JoPP.

Sincerely,

Stephen B. Gordon, Ph.D., CPPO
2002 NIGP National President