

THE RSVA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By: Dan Sippl, RSVA President

Growing Independence and Success Within Our Businesses and Organizations!

Having just been re-elected to a second term, it is with a great feeling of Honor and Pride that I will have the privilege to continue to serve Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America (RSVA) as your President.

I am always amazed at the degree of professionalism that grows from year to year at our annual conventions and Sagebrush training conferences. In Louisville, this was so evident from RSVA and our affiliation with the American Council of the Blind (ACB). The ability of the leadership to listen and respond to the needs of the membership and come to a consensus from a grassroots level to move blindness issues forward in a respectful and dignified manner without any unreasonable demands on legislators or society is impressive.

RSVA members can be proud of what they do, as we stood by what is right in the production of the Presidential Memorandum and clearing up HR 7 and the Portman amendment to preserve the dignity of families who are dependent upon the Randolph-Sheppard Act to provide them employment to support themselves.

It is truly a clear sign that each and every one of us can make a difference as we stand together as an organization to get the word out fast and efficiently to do the right thing.

The talents that are available to us through our affiliation and networking with each other and the ACB affiliates are endless, as proven by the presentation of Dr. Ron Milliman a recently retired Professor of Business. Through his many years as a post-secondary educator, he has directed and managed numerous studies of the consumer and how they use the marketplace.

As a fantastic speaker who is so willing to share his wealth of knowledge to help us succeed in our own businesses, he may now have time to share his knowledge with the blindness community with his recent retirement. You may want to reach out to him to see if he is available to travel to any of your meetings to allow your colleagues and friends to glean his vast knowledge and experience base.

Recently, I had the privilege of attending the Louisiana Randolph-Sheppard Vendors and Louisiana Council of the Blind joint convention. This was another clear sign of professional grassroots people working together to advance the independence of the blindness community.

Our friends in Louisiana were very fortunate to lure Ms. Melanie Brunson, Executive Director of ACB, as their keynote speaker. What a phenomenal speaker! She spoke on how your individual and personal beliefs can be achieved.

Ms. Brunson is not a motivational/inspirational speaker, but rather a trained lawyer with excellent executive and managerial talents. I have heard hundreds of excellent motivational speakers over the years, but Ms. Brunson is

so far and above any of them it would truly be worth your time and effort to secure her as a speaker for your friends and colleagues.

As an example of her impact, she and I were finding our way back to the conference after taking a break. We could sense that someone was behind us in the hall; they called out, "Melanie, Melanie, Dan, Dan. Do you have a moment?" Apparently, the staff that served our banquet listened to her presentation and took their impressions to the front office of the 4 Star Hilton, and they wanted a copy of a tape of her presentation if available.

The above are just a few examples of the value of your RSVA organization with its networking opportunities by merely getting involved.

Our professionalism will continue to grow as we continue to find ways to move forward and avoid creating any issues for the sake of having issues.

Do not miss another Golden Opportunity to network, share and grow your knowledge base to advance our program for many future generations at our upcoming Sagebrush Training Conference in February at the Golden Nugget in Las Vegas.