Message from the President

Dear BCxA Members and Friends,

I am writing this letter from my presidential bunker (aka the basement storage unit), reflecting on the year we have had thus far. It started with an outstanding Leadership Conference in Phoenix, Arizona in February. I think everyone in attendance left ready to tackle everything we had laid out for a successful 2020, with little or no idea of what was in store. But as an organization, we did not fold, and we did not allow ourselves to throw in the towel for meeting our goals this year.

Conference

We can unabashedly — and without any doubt — say that our first virtual conference was an outstanding success. The inspired tracks, sessions, increased attendance, overwhelmingly positive feedback from our members and sponsors, as well as the financials, all are indicators of the BCxA’s success with our first virtual conference. While the feedback from many of our peer organizations was that their 2020 conferences were either canceled or lackluster, we are proud to say we stand out.

As always, we must thank BCxA’s amazing staff, volunteers, and Conference Committee members. An extra special thanks goes out to our 2020 immediate past president, Tom Poeling, for his vision and execution in getting us through this challenging initiative. We hosted 42 corporate registrations at 10 people each, 116 individual registrations, with an average of 175 participants in each session for each track. Although we are all clamoring to break out of our bubbles and get back to the norm of an in-person conference, this year’s event clearly shows there are options for bringing us all together in a changing world, especially not knowing what 2021 has in store.

New Programs

Our “20 Under 40 Program” was established this year, with winners being announced at the Annual Meeting on October 21. We hope to celebrate in person at next year’s conference. Many Chapters stepped up BCxA’s industry presence by initiating local programs, encouraging our newcomers to become more engaged. For example, Chapters sponsored younger members for the conference participation and distribution of scholarship dollars. I encourage each Chapter to share ways to encourage the development of these members so that we can adequately backfill our members and leadership, ensuring the health and growth of our organization for the foreseeable future.

Social Media, Public Presence

We increased our focus on new media platforms (vlog, podcasts, video) and virtual social events. If you haven’t already seen our new show, “Some Good Commissioning,” check it out on the BCxA YouTube Channel.

Website Redevelopment

One of our great achievements this year was the revision and update of our website. It looks great (if only I could remember my username!) … New design, easy-to-find content, and a search function! Check out the new www.bcxa.org.
BCxA Store

Additionally, we have seen the successful rollout of our BCxA Store at Lands’ End, with some great swag many of us have been looking for. Please take a moment to look at the site.

Education and Training

We took time this year to upgrade our online learning platform and restructuring our classroom training so that we can deliver to you live and online. Despite the difficulties of 2020, our team continued to find innovative ways to educate the industry.

Best Practices – First-Ever Ongoing Cx and Annotated EBCx

We are proud to be first in the market to debut “Ongoing Commissioning Best Practices” at the 2020 AHR Expo. Proactiveness and flexibility continue to be among our strong suits in bringing content to the market (in under a year). Special thanks to authors Jesse Sycuro, Janelle Griffin, Kelsey Leslie, and the team of reviewers and editors who produced this comprehensive document.

We have also annotated the “Existing Building Best Practices” with OCx planning and implementation steps that can be conducted simultaneously, when OCx is in scope, to save your owners and project teams’ time, effort, and budget.

Advocacy & Liaisons Committee

This new committee is currently working on a resource for our members that will include relevant building codes, standards, and policies, including effective dates and when they are scheduled for review. This way we can get in front of changes to regulatory measures and rating systems that affect your work. Also, due to changes in code and other voluntary standards, questions regarding commissioning contractual relationships and risk mitigation are causing inquiries within our membership and beyond. This committee is working on a paper for owners and providers to help guide this conversation. Stay tuned!

Owners Committee (Take 2)

I have officially transitioned from the consulting side to the Owners side. After seven full days of work, I can confidently say I am 100% qualified to restart our Owners Committee. The stellar presentation and feedback received from the presentation, “Commissioning from the Owner’s Perspective,” by Sandy Renshaw, PE, CCP, of Kaiser Permanente, has shown us that this content is an area we need to focus on to support our Owners and ensure we are keeping them educated on best and evolving practices. Over the next couple of months, I will be reaching out to our Owner members looking to establish this Owners Committee and its supporting charter, to fill this gap in our organization.

In closing, although my presidency will be marred as one of the worst years in recent memory, I do have to say we managed to persevere as an organization and ultimately come out on top. Now more than ever the value we provide the industry and our clients are in the spotlight. That is why I have decided to forego the judicial process and reinstate myself as the 2021 presid ... just kidding ... Ryan Lean, 2021!

Cheers!

Dan Forino, PE, CCP, LEED AP BD+C
BCxA President
Performance Highlights 2020

At our Leadership Conference in February, just before the pandemic hit full force, our BCxA Leaders set goals for 2020. But COVID-19 has forced us to adapt and innovate to keep our work moving forward. We succeeded in completing most of our goals in 2020, although not always in the way we planned.

Goal 1. Campaign to Recruit Young Professionals to the Commissioning Practice.

This was a theme and a goal for this year’s BCxA President, Dan Forino. One of the main initiatives was to recognize young people working in and contributing to the commissioning profession. By highlighting the value these individuals are bringing to the greater building community. We also started the work of developing and shaping future training programs for new entrants to the profession. We hope to finalize our revised and new training offerings in 2021.

Goal 2. Revise Awards Programs and Add New “20 Under 40” Program.

The BCxA has four award programs; The Benner Award, The President’s Award, Project Awards, and the new 20 Under 40 recognition program. We did put a hold on program revisions and updates needed to implement the Project Awards in 2020. However, we are now ready to restart programs for 2021.

Goal 3. Update BCxA Website and Branding.

As we’ve been navigating through social media and other forms of business communication, we felt it was time to update the BCxA website and branding to reflect a more modern, useful, and appealing digital image. We are excited about revealing the new website at the 2020 Annual Members Meeting.


The BCxA’s online, on-demand curriculum has served as a source for learning the practice of commissioning. However, important elements of our subject matter have evolved since the last major revision in 2012. As we more formally define the path for new entrants to the commissioning profession, we also started the reviewing, cataloging, and scoring of content that should be improved, replaced, deleted, and added. This is a huge undertaking. The Education and Training Committee is looking for subject matter experts (SME) to help with the review of current content, as well as revision and development of learning modules.

Goal 5. Organize Our Advocacy Efforts.

The BCxA has a long history of advocating for its members behind the scenes, but we have not always communicated our efforts. The new Advocacy Committee was developed to organize our efforts with membership and other associations, societies, and industry groups to be more proactive and communicate our initiatives to membership in a more timely and complete way. The committee will be producing a guide for all the building codes and standards by state so that we can proactive to help shape them. They have just finalized a new paper for members to share with Owners called “Commissioning Contracts and Risk Mitigation.”
2020 Milestones in Our Core Areas of Focus:

The First-Ever Virtual BCxA Annual Conference

Adapting was the name of the game for the Conference Planning Committee this year. As we watched in-person events collapsing or disappearing around us, we made the risky decision to go all-virtual.

In our view, the challenging times required a courageous response. After much research, the committee and the BCxA Board of Directors decided to take the lead in our industry to spearhead plans for a live-but-virtual commissioning conference. In this unexplored territory, we worked with our learning management software platform to develop the conference, linked to our existing education platform.

We started with a virtual Opening Plenary and keynote that was free to all viewers. We felt strongly that the research and message of our keynote speaker, building scientist Dr. Kevin Van Den Wymelenberg, was a pressing topic for commissioning and all building professionals during this pandemic, and should be immediately shared. We recommend that you view his presentation, “Buildings & Transformation Through and Beyond COVID19” included in the last hour of the BCxA YouTube Channel Opening Session video.

The outcome from months of preparation was, well ... a real conference. We featured fresh tracks with five sessions each, every Monday in August — 25 sessions in all, for a total of 25 AIA/CES continuing education credits!

We also received very positive feedback from sponsors and exhibitors as the chance to present was appreciated and well executed. Some of our sponsored sessions were the some

Training and Professional Development

Two-Day Classroom Instruction. As another example of adapting to the new world, BCxA instructors were able to adapt the curriculum to a virtual offering for the New Construction Commissioning, Existing Building Commissioning, and Building Enclosure classes. We have completed our first courses with very positive feedback from attendees. Also, the virtual nature of the course as well as the minimal cost/time investment has increased our enrollment compared to in person trainings of the past.

Commissioning Advocacy in the Marketplace

BCxA is involved in many industry outreach activities in its continuing commitment to support and advocate for members and the commissioning profession. This year, we were able to attend and support the ASHRAE Winter Conference, where BCxA Liaison Bruce Pitts attended all committee meetings and BCxA Staff represented the Association with a sponsorship and exhibitor table on the floor.

“With the BCxA’s virtual conference now completed, I’d like to personally thank every one of our sponsors, attendees, and market partners who made this year’s pioneering event a truly special one! As always, we couldn’t have done it without your unwavering commitment.”
Liz Fischer
BCxA Executive Director
of AHR. Liz Fischer helped again this year to develop the commissioning sessions for the Annual Energy Exchange Conference, held virtually this year. BCxA Liaison to IIBEC, John Runkle, attended a question writing session in support of IIBEC’s development of a building envelope commissioning accredited certification program.

**Publications**

**Ongoing Commissioning (OCx) Best Practices**, an industry-first document, was completed in early 2020 and introduced at the BCxA Leadership Conference in February. This document describes the current best practices approach to OCx, identifies the steps and why they are best practices for continuous quality performance improvement across the building industry. The OCx objective is to make the building systems perform in an integrated manner to meet the current facility requirements (CFRs), and Owner goals and objectives for the facility over the long term.

**Existing Building Commissioning (EBCx) Best Practices 2020.** This updated 2020 version is annotated to identify procedures that can be initiated simultaneously with EBCx, intended to support the planning and implementation of Ongoing Commissioning after EBCx Hand-Off if OCx is within the project’s scope. Correlating these activities avoids duplication of effort and minimizes costs.


“Building Commissioning Costs and Savings Across Three Decades and 1500 North American Buildings.” On August 27th, Elsevier published this peer-reviewed final paper, the result of a two-year collaborative effort between Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBL) and the BCxA to acquire, analyze and organize building - and systems - specific commissioning data; to understand cost and savings trends and to identify changing attitudes toward commissioning by owners and stakeholders.
2020 Financial Position

With all the volatility at the end of the first quarter, the Board of Directors, Executive Committee and Staff decided to make appreciable changes to both our revenue and expense forecasting and overall 2020 financial strategy. Specifically, we took the following actions:

1. **Action:** Analyzed our current financial position.  
   **Outcome:** As membership is a large part of our revenue and it comes in early in the year, we had a favorable financial position in early Q2.

2. **Action:** Re-forecast revenues in light of the pandemic.  
   **Outcome:** With the anticipated elimination of the in-person conference, we anticipated a 25% drop in revenues from the budget.

3. **Action:** Identify cost-saving opportunities.  
   **Outcome:** Commensurate with the anticipated drop in revenues, we also identified several paths to reduces expenses by the same amount. Elimination of the in-person conference was a large saving; other savings explored, but not enacted, was reducing our payroll expenses. All travel was placed on hold after March 15, 2020.

4. **Action:** Increased flexibility of existing contracts given the uncertainty of the pandemic.  
   **Outcome:** We successfully renegotiated the contract for our 2020 in-person conference in Phoenix to a 2022 date, which provided the flexibility to pursue a virtual conference.

Although we did not hit our budgeted income for 2020, through the success of the virtual conference we achieved a terrific result and will end up with a drop in revenue less than 20% from the budget. We gained expenses on the virtual conference as well as the completion of the much-needed effort to create a new website and legacy training materials, but this increase in expenses will not eclipse our increase in revenues based on the revised forecast.

The BCxA is on pace to complete the year in the positive due to the tight controls of our staff and their diligence in tracking our expenses.
Looking to the Future: 2021 Membership Imperatives

What does the future hold? Living and working in buildings will be different. We face new challenges in evaluating trade-offs between energy savings and indoor air quality. New regulations and safety policies are likely to affect our roles, responsibilities, and capabilities as commissioning providers. Stringent safety, maintenance and operations tools, equipment and procedures are being developed as we head back to our offices.

Here is what we do know: the BCxA’s mission has not changed. Our pillars — education, best practices, and advocacy — are more important than ever. Our best practices will need to be evaluated in light of changes in building design, construction, and operations. Our membership is used to change. We are adaptable by nature. There is so much opportunity to look forward to. We should be ready to improve the world, one project at a time.

It is vital for the BCxA to continue developing and strengthening a diverse workforce, to support the growing need for tech-savvy commissioning providers in new construction and existing buildings. Discovering ways to prepare and educate all professionals, young and old, from all geographic locations and diverse backgrounds, whether in person or online, is critical for keeping industry newcomers engaged. Our curriculum must keep up to date with the ever-changing technology and building performance expectations. Communication through BCxA programs, social media platforms, our new website, and the biweekly Checklist emails will continue to provide needed support.

New member attraction has been vigorous over the past two years. We have had record years recruiting members and record engagement this year in our membership outreach, market presence, and virtual conference. The challenge ahead is to keep that momentum going in a positive direction. We need to both retain members and expand our reach to new members.

2020 was most certainly a year of reflection – on our society, on corporations, on business strategies, and on ourselves as individuals. There are major opportunities ahead of us to lead and advocate for the verification of safety, security, resilience, reliability, efficiency, sustainability, and performance in the built environment. Get ready to enjoy the ride.

We are reinforcing the commitment to our mission, “To drive the built environment to the highest levels of optimization.”

We are focusing on our vision of tomorrow, “A built environment worth inheriting.”

We are asking to hear from everyone, as our tagline suggests, “Working Together, Building Excellence” — all of our members’ age groups, ethnic backgrounds, genders, and cultures — with your ideas for how to proceed as an organization to meet the challenges ahead.

We’ve built the best practices. They still apply in these trying times — let’s make sure they are being carried out.
As we all faced the unknown this year, the inability to plan for the future has been most problematic. Concern for our families, friends, and communities was often overwhelming.

At the same time, 2020 has brought many challenges and opportunities to the BCxA. The growth of the staff and committees has been inspiring as we move into new dimensions for education, training, and virtual communication.

Focusing our work on the here and now gave us purpose, such as developing ways to safeguard people in buildings, getting facilities ready for occupants to return, and dealing with building systems of the future. These became the primary purposes of everyone in the building industry.

At this year’s Annual Conference, listening to our members talk about the details of making existing hospitals safe and secure, and the commitment to being on the front lines to plan, assemble and test fast-track “pop-up” hospitals for COVID patients, was moving. These commissioning providers demonstrate the inspiration and dedication of our profession that leads us into the future of healthy workplaces. They are an inspiration to young engineers and building science professionals in their search for deep meaning in their careers.

As always, we are keenly focused on creating value for our members in meeting our mission. We welcome you to join any of our committees to help advance the BCxA’s role in our profession.

For example:

- Revising BCxA Best Practices
- Developing the 2021 Annual Conference Agenda
- Contributing knowledge to the online curriculum program
- Bringing your subject matter expertise or teaching skills to professional development
- Sharing your great ideas for promoting the BCxA
- Providing valuable insight into membership campaigns

Thank you once again to all our sponsors and members who helped to make 2020 a significant year in the growth of the BCxA and the building commissioning profession!

Be Safe and Be Well!

Liz Fischer
Executive Director
2020 Board of Directors

Executive Committee
Dan Forino, PE, CCP, LEED AP BD+C – President
Ryan Lean, PE, CCP, LEED AP – President-Elect
Tracey Jumper, CCP – Secretary
John Runkle, PE – Treasurer
Tom Poeling, PE, CEM, CCP Immediate Past-President

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Mike Dooley, PE,
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John Villani, PE, CCP, CEM, LEED AP
Geremy Wolff

BCxA Committee Chairs
Advocacy Committee – Liz Fischer
Awards Committee – John Penney, PE
Best Practices Committee – Karl Stum, PE CCP
Conference Planning Committee – Lyn Gomes, PE, CCP, LEED AP
Marketing and Outreach – Tom Poeling, PE, CEM, CCP
Membership Development Committee – Ryan Lean, PE, CCP, LEED AP
Professional Development – Bruce Pitts
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