

New Year, New Goals: SMA President Hettie Richardson Discusses Plans for 2020



A new year brings new goals for improvement, and Southern Management Association (SMA) President **Hettie Richardson** is focusing her goals for improvement this year on SMA's communications and branding.

Richardson officially took office at the SMA Annual Meeting in October. Since then, she has been working to make an impact by initiating action on three main goals, which include:

- Increasing communication to members throughout the year to help provide them more value and increase transparency,
- Communicating the value of SMA to nonmembers, including potential members, practitioners, chairs of departments, etc.,
- Enhancing the visibility SMA at Academy of Management and highlighting the connection between SMA and the Journal of Management

Improving communications within and outside of SMA is a cornerstone of all of these goals, Richardson explained.

“What I have been thinking about is that the SMA leadership and the board work so hard and do all of these things for the members to try to make it a great organization, but we kind of accomplish it and assume that members are aware of it,” she said. “To the extent that we are bringing them more value, we want members to know it, and we want the rest of the world to know it, too.”

Richardson noted that she is hoping these initiatives will help members become more active and engaged in SMA's governance and future as well as increase transparency.

“We are constantly hearing feedback from members that they want to be more involved; they want to be more engaged,” she added. “But then we are also getting feedback, like ‘I don't know why you have the conference in this location.’ So it seems that often members don't know why we do the things that we do. I think if members feel like they have a better understanding of what their Executive Board is doing and why, that will be a success.”

One of her most recent accomplishments toward these goals has been the creation of SMA's Marketing, Communications, and Social Media Committee, which is chaired by Richardson as SMA President and consists of SMA's Past President **Garry Adams**, 2nd-year Board Member **Frankie Weinberg**, 1st-year Board Member **Sharon Segrest**, and two ex officio members, SMA's PR Specialist (**Stephany Below**) and Executive Director (**Dave Nershi**).

The committee's charge, which arised from the strategic plan approved at the Incoming Board

Meeting in October, is to craft a marketing and communications plan that includes an SMA brand strategy; work with SMA's CIO and Communications Coordinators as needed; and make a recommendation to the Board by its mid-year meeting.

“One of our focuses over the past few years has been increasingly professionalizing the organization to ensure that, as it gets bigger, it continues to be run well.” Richardson explained. “We want to be good stewards of the organization and make sure the organization maintains its value and grows its value for members.”