A Planner’s Progress: Lessons Learned the First 5 Years

Sponsored by the young Planners Group

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Today

- Living
- Learning
- Growing
- Knowing ‘The Rules’
- Tips
- Things to Remember
My Progress
Living

- Love what you do

Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.  ~Confucius
Living

- Maintain A Balanced Life
  - Life is a marathon, not a sprint.
  - There will always be more work than time.
  - The work will be there tomorrow.

"Live a balanced life - learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some." - Robert Fulghum
Living

- Keep it in perspective
  - Your perspective
  - Their perspective

"Live a balanced life - learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some." - Robert Fulghum
Learning

- Never Stop
  - You’re not done after Graduating
  - 30 minutes a day (morning) read newspapers, online discussions, magazines, etc.
  - Ex) ICMA, APA, Smart Growth Network, etc.

“Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty.” — Henry Ford
Learning

- Learn From Others
  - Seasoned Professionals
  - Co-Workers
  - Ask Questions

- Learn From Mistakes
  - Yours
  - Others – Be observant, watch, listen

“Get over the idea that only children should spend their time in study. Be a student so long as you still have something to learn, and this will mean all your life.” ~Henry L. Doherty
Growing

- Ask for Help
- Build Bridges, Don’t Burn Them
  - You never know when you’ll need those relationships
  - Collaborate
  - Conferences, Business Cards
- Trust
  - Without trust your work will be much more challenging
  - Needed from elected officials, community, co-workers

“You learn something every day if you pay attention.” — Ray LeBlond
Growing

- Communicate
  - Over Communicate
  - Face-to-Face, Phone, Email
  - Meetings (but avoid death by meetings)

- Little Things Matter
  - Say Thank You
    - Committee members, speakers, meetings, etc
  - Remember Birthdays
    - Co-workers, boss, people you come in contact with through work
  - Be willing to help
    - Avoid the ‘That’s not my job’ syndrome
Knowing the Rules

- The 8 letter word
  - POLITICS
- Personal v. Professional
- Get a seat at the table
- Speak their language
- Playing the game

“You learn something every day if you pay attention.” Ray LeBlond
Tips

- Pleasing Everyone Leads to Pleasing No One
- Perfection isn’t always Perfect
- There’s no such thing as off the record
- Be organized
- Document, Document, Document
  } Policies and Procedures

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit.”
~ Aristotle

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Tips

- Create a Bubble of Excellence
  - Starting small will grow into something big

- Start Good Habits Now
  - Learning
  - Following up on emails, phone messages, etc.
  - Proofreading

“Sow a thought, and you reap an act. Sow an act, and you reap a habit. Sow a habit, and you reap a character. Sow a character, and you reap a destiny.”
~ Charles Reader
And Remember…

- Laugh!
- Celebrate your successes
- Celebrate the success of others
- Dream big

“Go confidently in the direction of your dreams! Live the life you’ve imagined.”

~ Thoreau

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So how do we do all this?

There is help!
Young Professional Organizations

- Local
- ICMA – Next Generation Initiative
- APA – GPA Young Planners Group
What is YPG?

- Up and Coming Leaders
- Innovative thinkers
- Students and young professionals
- Young Planners age 35 and under; Planners above age 35 can serve as mentors

YPG members include a broad range of professionals, including:

- Local government officials
- City planners
- County planners
- Private sector planning consultants
- Transportation planners
- Environmental planners
- Economists
- Legislative analysts
- Lobbyists
- Attorneys
How Did YPG Get Started?

- APA recognized that it was not meeting needs of young professionals.
- Created a Young Professional Task Force to investigate the need.
- The Sacramento Valley Section of the California APA Chapter started the first YPG in the Summer of 2008.
- Since then nine other States have joined.
The Georgia YPG Mission

“The Georgia YPG focus is on helping young professional planners establish social and professional relationships with their peers and experienced planning professionals through career building, program, social events, and mentoring. The Georgia YPG will strive to cultivate the minds of young planning professionals through educational programs on the issues and trends that are relevant to the planning the communities of tomorrow.”

Young Planners Group Taskforce – “Blueprint for Change” (April 25, 2009)

What APA can do for Young Planners
- Create a Young Planners Interest Group within APA to address the needs and issues of young planners
- Integrate the voice of young planners at multiple organizational levels
- Enhance the APA Website to provide more resources geared toward young planners
- Provide continued APA marketing and outreach to students at universities to engage young planners before entering or re-entering the workforce
- Provide ongoing training and education to meet the needs of new professionals
- Encourage the participation and recruitment of young planners at networking events at the local, state and national levels
- Mentorship opportunities including: Student to Young Planner and Young Planner to Experienced Planner

What Young Planners can do for APA
- Expand the YPG membership
- Means of identifying leaders
- Participate in Leadership Shadow Program
- Bring other young planner members to APA
- Volunteer at the chapter level
- Serve in a leadership position in a Division
2009 YPG Goals

☐ Host a number of meetings and social events geared toward networking and professional development

☐ Identify issues and opportunities for young planners

☐ Solicit new planning ideas

☐ Establish 2010 goals
YPG Kickoff Meeting

Kickoff took place August 7th, 2009 at Manuel’s Tavern

We had a great turnout of approximately 30 young planners attending.

During the meeting we brainstormed challenges that young planners face and opportunities for YPG over the coming year.
Outcomes from the Kickoff Meeting:
YPG Challenges

- Refocus on “Hot Topics”
- Lack of connections to “big picture”
- Navigating the political scene
- Not knowing what jobs/ opportunities are out there
- Learning to deal with hostile atmospheres
- Tuning into the planning network
Outcomes from the Kickoff Meeting:
YPG Opportunities

- Session focusing on the Atlanta Mayor’s race
- Event Calendar
- Facebook or other social networking
- Database of Best Practices
- Forum for questions (i.e. google wave)
- Networking events
- Formal competitions for professional development
- Forum of best practices (both in and out of Atlanta)
- Support for AICP certification
YPG Connections

☐ Come to a Meeting

Keep an eye out for our friendly emails for updates on meeting times and locations...
Join a YPG Committee

**Leadership:**
- Maintain database of membership and continually solicit new members or organizational partners
- Maintain social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn) and strive to find new ways to keep existing members informed and solicited new members
- Serve as link to the wider APA, GPA, and Georgia Tech communities
- Coordinate and keep up with other local young professional groups

**Program Planning:**
- Coordinate YPG events ranging from potential speakers, panels, tours or social networking events
- Develop, enable and manage an online discussion forum
- Formulate YPG led AICP-oriented events such as test preps, review sessions or certification credit events
- Develop, maintain and regularly update a database of best practices or case studies of planning exercises from both in and outside of Atlanta

**Current Events:**
- Develop, maintain and regularly update an external event calendar
- Seek out events to add to the calendar (public meetings, speakers, forums, etc.)
- Keep membership informed of multidisciplinary planning topics, including news updates or interesting best practices from both in and outside of Atlanta
YPG Connections

- Review GPA Newsletter

E-Newsletters
YPG Connections

- Join our new Facebook page

It’s a great way to help us stay connected
YPG Connections

- Look for YPG Events on the GPA Website Calendar

Also find out about events at GPA as well as the whole Southern Region.

Let us know if you know of an event that might interest other YPGers
How Do I Get Involved?

Contact

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