***Ohio Chapter UPMA***

***State President Debbie Justice***

***SPECIAL NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS***

***April 9, 2020***

***Greetings to all Ohio UPMA members.***

First and foremost, I trust you are doing everything you can to ensure your safety both at home, at work and wherever you may be at. We are experiencing a situation that none of us have ever seen regarding how our lives are being affected with this horrendous medical issue. It is because of this very reason that we have taken appropriate steps to ensure we have all of your best interests in mind while we continue to conduct business in support of our membership, both active and retirees. This plan has been broken down into three separate plans and I’ll describe these in detail.

**PLAN A** – It has been decided that we have cancelled our scheduled State Convention that was to be held in Cincinnati at the Summit Hotel/Convention center. We had held off doing this for several reasons. The first was to see how severe the pandemic would affect us as a nation/state/and local venues. The second issue involved our indemnity to the hotel where had we cancelled prematurely; it would have cost the Chapter $10,000. As things turned out, we are not out the cancellation penalty and it did not cost us to do so. Anyone who had sent in pre-registration money will be reimbursed 100% to include the Vendors who had registered with us. Nobody will lose any funds because of this action.

**PLAN B** – We are currently planning a two-day conference to be held at the Dawson Resources building, which is located at 1114 Dublin Road, Columbus, Ohio 43215. **The dates for this two-day event are July 18-19, 2020**. This location was selected for several reasons. First, we anticipate a smaller response from those wanting to attend and this venue will suffice for the room we need. Next, it is centrally located in Columbus which is equal distance for all of our members traveling to get there from all points of the state. Since this is a two-day event, we are focusing on conducting only the business needs of the organization and there will not be extra-curricular activities or events taking place. Any costs associated with this scheduled event will be published on the website so please check that frequently for updates. We will still need to have a registration process for this event so appropriate accommodations/rations will be made available. **Lastly, we will know by July 10th if any plans change due to quarantine orders issued from Governor DeWine**. Again, please monitor the website for latest information regarding this event and status.

**PLAN C** – IF the two day event scheduled for July 18-19 is cancelled due to a continued quarantine situation, **we will hold a teleconference on July 18th at 7 pm** to cover mandatory business issues we need to have completed before the National Convention takes place in August. The call-in phone number and the PIN needed to attend will be published on our website by July 10th if the decision to cancel the Columbus event take place.

**NATIONAL CONVENTION STATUS** – As of today’s date, the National Convention is still a GO for August. There has been no wavering on the planning and execution of this event. We have also not heard of an alternate plan in the event of a cancellation due to extended quarantine issues, inflated medical conditions that could compromise our membership in attendance, etc. Again, monitoring our website as this process moves forward will be the best bet in getting the latest information and updates on this and all matters UPMA.

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While we are hopeful in planning for the future events, we must and will be cognizant of all matters relating to events scheduled that require a gathering of individuals, travel considerations, etc. Our intent is not to make plans that would jeopardize anyone’s health but rather, we keep that at the forefront of all decisions made.

With that said, we are still needing help from membership who can attend the National Convention in St Louis as we ratchet up our efforts and planning of the National Convention that will take place in Kalahari 2021. If you can make this trip or if you have questions about your participation and this event, please reach out to Lou Stucky or Mari Beth Kirkland and they will be glad to answer your questions and add you to the list of those stepping up to help make our plans a success.

**HOW ABOUT SOME GOOD NEWS?**

Remember the tickets we were selling for the Garth Brooks concert? Well we are STILL selling them and the **concert date has been pushed back to June 27, 2020**. All the proceeds will go towards PAC and our donor, Allen Perry has graciously donated them for this very cause. The order form was in the February newsletter. If you can’t find it, go to the website under ‘newsletters’ and you can reprint just the order form from there.

**WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE MEANTIME?**

We have membership and specifically, Executive Board members stepping up in a variety of ways both at work, at home and in their communities. Our interaction with both UPMA Headquarters as well as Postal Leadership up through USPS Headquarters continues on a daily basis via numerous teleconferences, emails and individual phone calls as needed to clarify policy, procedures and steps to be taken as we work to ensure the safety of our membership.

The dissemination of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) for our active working members is critical as it gives a clear blueprint on what needs to take place at work, reacting to any issues of an employee becoming infected, and then how to properly pay them if they are off work.

As we discussed in the recent newsletter that you just received, I can’t stress enough on the issue that we need to reach out and REMAIN in contact with those around us or farther than usual. When I say reach out, I mean call them, email them, text them, get on Facebook if you have an account but no matter what, stay in touch!!!

Hearing the familiar voice of someone you know and care about can be comforting especially when we are reminded daily of the need to ‘stay apart’ from others. We’re human beings and social creatures. When we don’t interact, it creates ill feelings and depression. That is what we want to avoid until this all passes. If you or someone you know is struggling, don’t hesitate to reach out to others requesting help. We can through this but it will take a collective effort by everyone to do so.

Until we come together, please continue to pray for strength to endure our hardships, offer up help whenever you can and most of all, know that the UPMA Family will always be here for you.

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