

## From Our President

Dear Members,

Happy New Year! I hope everyone's year is off to a positive and productive start. With the new year there is typically a resolve to do something better, to be someone better. Promises are often made (and almost as often broken)—to lose weight, read more, scroll less, create better work life balance (me, me!) and more. We frequently see the new year as a time for a reset—a time to assess where we are and where we desire to be—a place, a state, a being, that's viewed as better.

With the new year, we witnessed the inauguration of a new president and history made with his vice-presidential choice. We heard the beautiful words of the poet Amanda Gorman who, among many things, reminded us of our **LIGHT**, "Our light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it."

Additionally, I participated in a session today with this year's Contract Management Leadership Development Program (CMLDP) cohort, and we discussed the need to better include soft skills in our contract management training. One exceptionally bright individual took that a step further, adding **PASSION AND JOY** and opined that both would make a marked difference in our workforce.

I think that, with these three somewhat disparate ideas—new year's resolutions, the admonishment to see and be brave in our light, and the inclusion of passion and joy in a soft skills conversation—comes an opportunity in each of us.

What if our 2021 reset, our intention, dared to shift away is from what is the usual? What if we are brave to see and

## Calendar

**02/23/2021**

FL 8[a] Alliance Webinar:  
[Doing Business with US  
Dept of Transportation](#)

**02/11/2021**

NCMA Rio Grande  
Webinar:  
[Price Reasonableness  
and Price Realism](#)

**02/24/2021**

NCMA JAX Webinar:  
[Contract Managers:  
Our Mission](#)

## New Members

Welcome to our reinstated  
chapter members:

- Shirley Courtney
- Susan Dela Cruz
- Rachel Griner
- Victor Mercado
- Kim Plummer

## Member

be the **Light** that is in each one of us? What if we choose to pursue **Passion and Joy** this year and let these qualities permeate through all parts of our careers, the daily work on behalf of our missions, our service to NCMA, and more? What if we promise ourselves to remove anything from our lives that does not enlighten us, does not instill passion and joy, and does not make us become our better selves? Would it solve all our personal and organizational problems? Doubtful. But it would certainly create higher levels of engagement and enthusiasm, both of which are contagious, and in time, might create real change on a broader scale.

Give a try...let's see how truly happy this new year can be!

**Wanda Wallace; CPCM,  
CFCM**  
Chapter President



## Milestones

Congratulations to NCMA JAX members celebrating membership anniversaries:

- Leigh Bandy 9
- Dawn Brown 17
- Shirley Courtney 14
- Susan Dela Cruz 14
- Rachel Griner 14
- Charlotte Lawson 18
- Rita Lyons 4
- Victor Mercado 14
- Kim Plummer 14
- Richard Poulin 6
- Molleka Say 6

## NCMA JAX February Webinar - 02/24/2021

### Contract Managers: Our Mission



**February 24, 2021, 11:30AM - 1:00PM**

Hosted by NCMA Jacksonville Chapter  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**Speakers: James Krause, Fellow; Attorney, Krause Law**

## Michael Groeger, KAMAN Integrated Structures & Metallics

Join us for a virtual event spotlighting the varied and important missions Contract Managers help make happen. Topics will include:

- How contract managers are the linchpin to any product or service important to our nation's success.
- Negotiation.
- Sound business judgment.
- What contract managers buy/sell (and why that's important).
- Role of contract managers in successful mission completion.
- Increasing agility and speed to need.

Info and registration available at [NCMAJax.org/events](https://NCMAJax.org/events) or click below.



## Let's Face It: Hindsight is Often Overrated

By: Eleanor Bloxham

Hindsight is overrated. But many organizations expend great energy engaging in it.

Sure, if we knew then what we know now, we would have done things differently. But we didn't — and I know of nothing that will get us back to that moment in time. We don't have a time travel option just yet.

One organization I worked with had an interesting approach to hindsight. Any time a crisis flared, the top manager would engage in a walking tour to find out what went wrong and whose fault it was. You always knew when it was happening because as she walked through the office, she'd gather more and more people in an entourage traveling from desk to desk, gathering information on what went sideways and who was to blame. I was never a fan. It just seemed wasteful — and the wrong way round. When I moved up the ladder, I encouraged people to ask a different question: What is our best option in this moment, with all we know (and can learn about) now?

Learning is important. When I managed large staffs and someone was out of the office, I'd make a regular practice of sitting like a temporary hire at the vacationer's desk for a day, or

part of one — and do their work. I learned so much doing that. I could better see how the staff saw life, the often-boring work they had to do – much of it, it turned out, unnecessary. That gave me information to recraft jobs and take advantage of new opportunities — and it was fun for me and better altogether. But it's hard to escape the grip of hindsight at work. It's not just baked into the way some individuals handle their jobs and treat their staffs. It's built into most organizations' very DNA — and here I'm referring to the dreaded B word: budgets. Budgets are a very curious creature. They presuppose that you know now what will happen to you then. Sometimes they are applied with rigid force, making it impossible for organizations to ask a better question in the moment, like what is our best option now? In one of my books, I take on budgets (as one who has overseen their very implementation). For the most part in organizations that take them too seriously, they become a kind of annual rite to negotiate for resources, reminiscent of the behavior of animals. As practiced in many organizations, the exercise reverts to a lower part of the brain rather than an engaged, open curiosity about the future.

I used to indulge hindsight more when I was young. But life is short. True, perhaps I just don't like the discomfort of hindsight. And if there's something to be learned in hindsight - a new, better question to ask — so be it, and I'll look for it. Otherwise, in hindsight, in my career and my life, I've found I'm better off pointing my focus in other directions.

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ELEANOR BLOXHAM (Louisiana State University) is the founder and CEO of The Value Alliance and Corporate Government Alliance, a board and senior executive education, information, and advisory firm. Bloxham has a bachelor's degree in English from LSU and an MBA from New York's Stern School of Business. She is a regular contributor to Fortune and the author of two books. She may be reached at [ebloxham@thevaluealliance.com](mailto:ebloxham@thevaluealliance.com).

Republished courtesy of Phi Kappa Phi's Forum magazine, where this column originally appeared. More of Ms. Bloxham's columns can be found at <http://phikappaphi.org/publications>

**NCMA JAX Membership - Not Just for Locals**



More than 25% of JAX Chapter members live and work well outside our “local” (Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia) area. This month’s honoree is Ms. Paige Blechinger, CFCM, who is Chief of Contracting for US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Savannah District. She began her Army career at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico and joined the USACE 15 years ago; she has been at Savannah District for the past seven years. Before coming to Savannah, she served as Chief, Workforce Development for the Directorate of Contracting, HQ USACE where she oversaw the Contracting Workforce Development Program that included recruitment, retention, training, development and career progression. During FY11, Ms. Blechinger led the implementation of the USACE Grow the Acquisition Workforce Program which included recruitment and selection of 40 personnel. In her current position, she is responsible for all aspects of contracting for military and civil works acquisition programs under Savannah District responsibility. She recently completed a temporary assignment as Acting Deputy of Contracting for USACE where she managed Policy, Workforce Development, and Acquisition Support for the Command.

Ms. Blechinger holds two Bachelor of Science degrees from Kansas State University, a Master’s from Sam Houston State University, and is a 2008 graduate of the Naval Post Graduate School where she earned a Master’s in Contract Management. She is an Army Acquisition Corps member, Certified Federal Contracts Manager, and NCMA member since 2014. Her advice to younger employees: “Move around enough to be challenged and grow in your career field but stay long enough to implement an improvement and contribute to the organization.” Her favorite saying is “If you want to be happy for an hour, have a great meal; if you want to be happy for a year, fall in love; but if you want to be happy for life, plant a garden.” Her hobby is gardening!