

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



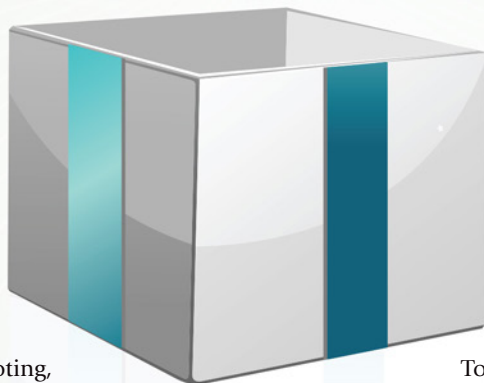
The Gift We Bring

"Celebrate what you want to see more of."

Tom Peters



Steven Wood Schmader, CFE



As we prepare to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday here in the United States, I am following national and global news

coverage of the rioting, looting, and violence that has occurred in the wake of the grand jury decision in Ferguson, Missouri. Actions that will have devastating economic and personal impacts across an entire community and city; impacts that will take years to recover from. Actions that will further divide neighborhoods and races. Actions that will erode trust between citizens and law enforcement, raise needless barriers, damage prosperity and take away from the quality of life that the residents of Ferguson deserve and desire.

In counterbalance, I also received information from the Tournament of Roses® in Pasadena, California, noting their theme for the 2015 Rose Parade®. "Inspiring Stories," a theme selected to encourage residents, visitors, and viewers from around the world "to reflect on and appreciate the many people around us who elevate the human spirit by who they are, what they have done, and what they continue to do every day. A theme that pays tribute to those who have loved uncondition-

ally, persevered courageously, endured patiently and accomplished much on behalf of others," explained 2015

Tournament of Roses® President Richard Chinen.

"They may be "heroes" or "stars" to some, but they don't seek such titles. They may be kind, resilient, free-spirited or intensely focused, and though different from one another, they are all inspiring because they have overcome obstacles, achieved the unthinkable, given immeasurably or sacrificed unselfishly. Whether for justice, for charity, or for any other good, they do so humbly and with resolve. It is the story of their journey that enriches our lives, regardless of the fulfillment of the purpose," he continued.

What a stark contrast of vision and approaches. And while it would be unfair to pretend that the people of Ferguson, Missouri, or any other global 'community' of people with shared beliefs, commonalities and concerns do not have a right to be respectfully heard and fully included in the creation of new solutions to those concerns, I hope that we will see many new and inspiring stories rise from the destruction of recent days to help set Ferguson on a much brighter path for the future.

Author Tom Peters offered the consideration that we should 'celebrate what you want to see more of.' From that approach, the Tournament of Roses® has done exactly that and I encourage everyone in our global industry to follow their lead in the New Year by using the positive power of our combined events to set the example of who our communities, cities and countries can be when they are at their best. Use your events to recognize current 'heroes', young and old; to educate and enhance understanding; to celebrate our diversity and bond those diverse backgrounds together; to partner with and showcase law enforcement officials in the positive light that the vast majority deserve; to bring down barriers and make the quality of life (including the assumption of a safe environment for all) in every community, our highest common priority.

We all enjoy the unique positions, tools, resources and influence to do just that; and during the holiday season, as well as throughout the year, that is the best gift that we can bring to our communities and our world.

On behalf of the IFEA and our friends and affiliates around the globe, I wish each of you...your families, your teams and your communities... much to be thankful for, much to look forward to and much to celebrate!