

Remarks to the NASASPS Annual meeting, Portland, OR, April 22 - 25, 2018

Thank you, Madame President.

There is no place on a meeting agenda that one faces more challenges than right after lunch following a tasty meal and conversation possessed of good spirits and memories! However, I will do my best to make this as meaningful and as SHORT as possible. In my teaching experience, and teaching public speaking was one of them, I remember the admonition that a really good speech has a great beginning and a powerful ending with the two as close together as possible. With that in mind, let us begin.

In the characteristic of one of my favorite authors, James Mitchner, whose novels almost always begin with “. . . . and God created the earth. . . .” I feel compelled to retrace some of the significant signposts afforded us in our national history of establishing ourselves as a learned and educated self-governing nation.

Our founding patriots - I avoid the term of “Founding Fathers”, - as it is self evident that our Mothers had just as much or more to do with the establishing and perpetuating of our learning heritage as an educated nation. But early on, that ole’ reprobate, Ben Franklin, made the public comment that a self-governing nation needs to be an educated one. In that vein, he was responsible for the first lending library in the newly developing nation. Thomas Jefferson made the still touted comment that “I cannot live without books”. It was those and other such impetus that prompted the foundering Federation to distribute “Readers” - texts for use in both self and family learning of the skills of arithmetic and reading - a first step in becoming “educated”. (Ray’s Arithmetic, 1834 and McGuffey’s Reader, 1836). So called “roving teachers” were dispensed to teach families, communities, and local teachers about use. Another step toward the development and growth of Proprietary Schools and their place in the growth and development of our nation. (A bit more about that in a later comment.) Our developing and maturing Federation of States continued to place emphasis on engendering and enabling the acquisition of more and greater learning - to begin with - mostly skills but gradually adding some content of the development and history of the nation and the world. If one searches the actions of our first efforts of self governing, one will find many instances of judicial single acts that had significant impact on our history of becoming learned and educated. With those generalizations let us now focus on the genesis of education and learning as it has devolved to today and as perpetuated by legislative enablers and actions.

Almost immediately, after European settlers arrived and claimed permanency, private colleges and universities developed. Harvard and William Mary being the oldest. Perhaps the rudimentary beginnings of Proprietary Schools within the Federation that later became known as the United States! No government impetus or intervention in the beginning. Also, it was assumed that the Federation “owned” - or at least had possession of - all of the geographic area of the claimed part of the continent when the agreements of ownership and boundaries were reached with Great Britain. As states aligned themselves and declared their physical boundaries, those as yet unclaimed areas, and which were referred to as Territories had to be dealt with. Finally, in order to establish jurisdictions and to draw maps, the congress needed to divest itself of any geographic areas not yet claimed by declared states. This is essential to the understanding of what came next in the development of education within the states. .

In 1862, skipping over the many single acts of governing bodies during the prior years, to the Morrill Act (Senator Justin Morrill of Vermont) for Land grant Colleges of the Agricultural and Mechanical Arts was passed. Any State ratified and applying would be ceded public Territories to be used to contribute toward the establishment of colleges to perpetuate the development of better and more organized efforts to meet the most pressing needs of the developing nation - food and shelter. This Act also had provision for the Federation of these United States, to

concurrently conduct military leadership training to those enrolled in the colleges for those states either requesting it or permitting it. This is the first solid collaborative effort of the US Federal government and the Sovereign States to employ the States Rights' Constitutional obligation and responsibility to exclusively foster and provide education within the borders of the several states domiciled within the continental US. However, the State's provided the physical accommodations, Professors, teachers, and instructors for the State's portion of the offering and the Feds contracted with the state to allow them to also and concurrently instruct students in the military arts and practices to the students desiring to acquire both. The Feds had need of college educated personnel for their military obligations to the federation of the states with no other means of obtaining it. (The beginnings of the future ROTC so vital to on-going national security.) A concept later incorporated into the GI Bill of Rights so well known to us all and without our realizing that it was so "in the beginning" !)

Now again skipping forward to how these beginnings brought us to the NASASPS of today! The combination of Roving Teachers, colleges formulating text books and fostering teacher training, the developing agricultural, industrial, and commercial practices, gave rise to a practice of bringing skills training and development to the masses through Professors, who had had their textbooks validated within the Colleges and the resulting developing Universities, took up the concept of the "Roving Teacher" and traveled about the country setting up temporary "Colleges", selling and teaching their texts, and then moving on. Some made a regular route and returned year after year to teach to the public at large and the work forces and to renew those who had studied with them before. There may still be some of our current Proprietary Business Schools who still carry the name of Draughn in their corporate title. An on-going recognition of Professor Draughn whose roving business schools sold and taught his accounting textbooks. They were among the first to set up resident schools in the high density population areas where business, commerce, and industry needed an on-going source of trained or skilled office personnel. "Typewriters" were usually women who traveled from household to household or book club to book club or business to business to teach the use of the writing machine to families, gatherings, or individuals. Innovative proprietary combinations of the early roving teachers and textbook based "colleges".

Again, skipping decades in the development of formal and classical education in our country to the US Conscription Act of 1939. (By the way, it wasn't the first one!) WW I was brought to a stand still but wasn't "won" in the final sense of the word. As armed conflict broke out again in Europe, and with the import and export businesses being in large an extension of the on-going agricultural, commercial, and industrial enterprises of the US, it was inevitable that the United States would be brought into the conflict - again. In anticipation of the need for military readiness, Congress enacted the conscription act of 1939. That act provided for the returning and separating military, at war's end, to be guaranteed certain Rights in deference to the disruptions in their lives and that of their families. Following the close of the war, the GI Bill of Rights was enacted. That act gave a range of guarantees or rights to the military returnees. One of those was the Right to monetary benefits for pursuits to readjustment needs to re-enter the work force and civilian life. The most popular one being the access to education and training in the many and varied opportunities available in the United States.

"Veterans" could enroll in any "approved" education or training endeavor of their choosing. An "approved" endeavor was anything approved by any of the several states' policy boards and commissions. States were requested to identify an Agency within the State to act as the interface agency between the State and the (at that time, Veterans Administration/VA - now the Department of Veterans Affairs). In efforts to achieve some consistency for administrative purposes, the states were asked to come together and reach some agreements by which all could abide. The National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA) evolved from that expectation.

The US Office of Education was brought in to assist in developing rules, regulations, standards, and advisories. One of their efforts was to propose an outline for standards, subject to state's due process, for the use of the state's to "approve" non or unaccredited schools for the enrollment of Veterans. Those were adopted into the federal law as mandatory for the approval of the enrollment of veterans and other eligibles. Participatory institutions and establishments were approved for the enrollment of veterans rather than approved to operate within the state. A common misunderstanding. A state acknowledgement of the physical presence and the encompassed individual program offerings was needed for being bona fide.

The first GI Bill had a drop dead date of 1956. The emphasis on the "inadequacy" of Proprietary Schools diminished and very little pressure was put on states to do more to assure that Proprietary Schools met legal and measurable quality standards. During the ensuing years, several social issues were happening: High unemployment among the youth that resulted from the high birth rate following the end of WW II, as they aged into their adulthood. Resistance from them to being drafted into military service. Defecting into Canada rather than being forced into the military. The resulting breaking up of families and the loss of family influence on controlling and directing youth behaviors. And so on. Two significant events federal events happened. The DoD enacted a "new" GI Bill assuring post-service education assistance benefits and the US Office of Education was broken out from HEW and elevated to Department status and the Higher Education Act of 1964 was passed in which grants and loans were made available to youth to enroll in and attend post secondary and academic higher education. A possible two-pronged effect on the unemployment of youth. It got them off the streets and into education and training institutions and further better prepared them for jobs as the unemployment situation eased. It also gave them a choice between immediate schooling and military service with education benefits as an after reward. A financial bonanza for the education institutions that had geared up for the onslaught of returning GI's after WW II and then had no replacement population to subsidize that growth, after the demise of the first GI Bill.

The spotlight once again shifted to Proprietary Schools as they too began to feed at the federal trough. AND once again, the states were being held responsible for their perceived below standard behaviors due to inadequate or non existent oversight remanded to them through Amendment X of the US constitution. Remains of the first efforts at organizing for consistency and self perpetuating professional behaviors and efforts were recalled by a few of the oldtimers, and this time NASASPS happened for real!

Some of the States that had dual responsibility for the GI bill and for licensing of Proprietary Schools initiated an effort to reorganize as a self sustaining entity. Almost all of the SAA's were staffed by veterans whose first calling was military. It was the structure and administration model with which they were familiar. Consequently, the first efforts resembled the organizational and operating strategies of NASAA.

At this point, it is time to introduce the freedoms of choice guaranteed to every US citizen by Amendment I to to the US Constitution. Among others, freedom of speech, assembly, and the press - all of which are encompassed in the delivery of education. Amendment X further assures the sovereign rights of the states. Thus, the constitutional guarantee that the States will be the purveyors of education. The very basis on which NASASPS rests.

Now with that, I will defer to Madame President to introduce our next presenter who lived through the genesis of both NASAA and NASASPS.

Madame President.

