

FEBRUARY 2020

Offshoot

The Official Publication of the California Landscape Contractors Association San Diego Chapter

www.clcasandiego.org



Offshoot
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President's Message

Willie Valdez



Fellow Stakeholders, please allow me to share a valuable lesson!

Four years ago, after I had fallen far enough behind in my personal technology war, I decided it was finally time to jump in and move forward into the tablet world. Now for you, likely that's no big deal; but for me, technology is a daily battle that starts as soon as my eyes open, every day, except for never.

Welcome iPad and minor headaches. As usual and par for the course, I had difficulty linking up some of my second-tier email addresses. Really not the end-of-the-world kind of stuff, but I really needed them hooked up and running—mostly to keep me away from my Mac that I tried to upgrade into the previous holiday season.

Apple Store here I come. That's where an extraordinary experience began.

For those who haven't been to an Apple Store, please understand it's really unique, completely different. The innovative way Apple sells products and creates Apple fans is completely different than anything I've ever seen or experienced.

Over the years, a standard practice of mine is to get to know the manager wherever I make a significant purchase. In a short time, I was on a first name basis and developed great rapport with this incredibly bright young leader at Apple. Next, very rapidly I'm checked in and introduced to the first tech/sales member and they begin to solve the issues to get my email addresses all working properly. At each step of the way the tech support member solves a skilled portion of the puzzle up to their capacity and then hands me forward to a tech with differing skill sets. By the time I get done with the third tech specialist we are up and running. I'm really grateful at this point and just can't believe they stayed with each issue and solved the entire puzzle. Even

though it took three different techs, all extraordinarily brilliant, each had a little variation of unique skills and enough to get me over the finish line.

As I began to appreciate the Apple process it occurred to me what a rare experience I'd just witnessed. Great customer relations, great service, highly engaged and supportive agents with obvious IQ advantages. I'd never before witnessed a group of such high performers cooperating so well, so seamlessly.

I just had to ask the manager, how does Apple get such a group of talented, bright, high-performers to work so well together? AKA, cooperating. I explained to her I had never seen that type of cooperation in a group of higher performers ever before—in my experience, groups with these talents and advantages are usually much too competitive to ever work well enough together to solve anything!


Her answer was amazing. Willie, she explained, it's really quite simple and I'm happy to share it with you. Obviously, we have HR resources that are very well funded, and we can vet beyond most companies' abilities, but what you experienced is our training in teamwork. More specifically, we train our people to ask themselves: "What have you done today, to help a fellow co-worker and team member?"

That insight really resonated with me, like I'm hoping it will with you and all CLCA stakeholders. I can say, of course, most of us will never get HR training like Apple provides their employees; but the essence of all landscaping work is creativity, and we all can be extraordinarily creative to solve our challenges.

What have you done today, to help or support a fellow CLCA or industry stakeholder?


Best always. ~Willie

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Coming Events

Mark your calendar!

February 26

San Diego Chapter Kickoff Event, 6 p.m.
Gravity Heights, 9920 Pacific Heights Blvd., San Diego.

March 10

San Diego Chapter General Meeting. All welcome.
8:45 a.m. breakfast/networking, 9:15 a.m. meeting.
Mimi's Cafe, 10788 Westview Pkwy, San Diego.

April 14

San Diego Chapter General Meeting. All welcome.
8:45 a.m. breakfast/networking, 9:15 a.m. meeting.
Mimi's Cafe, 10788 Westview Pkwy, San Diego.

May 22

San Diego Chapter Golf Tournament.
Rancho Bernardo Inn, 17550 Bernardo Oaks Dr., Rancho Bernardo.

June 9

San Diego Chapter General Meeting. All welcome.
8:45 a.m. breakfast/networking, 9:15 a.m. meeting.
Mimi's Cafe, 10788 Westview Pkwy, San Diego.

~KURAPIA~

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SDCWA Offering WaterSmart Contractor Incentive Program

The WaterSmart Contractor Incentive Program (WSCIP) is a large landscape and technology-focused program that targets qualified landscape contractors and self-managed sites. WSCIP offers four incentivized water-efficient devices (shown at right), that when installed in combination, are among the irrigation industry's best management practices.

Enrollment is a paperless process. To participate, create an account to enroll and verify your qualifications. This pilot program is available for a limited time and on a first-come, first-served basis. This program is co-funded by San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.


Program Requirements

- Commercial (including HOAs), industrial, institutional and agricultural sites
- Minimum of one acre of irrigated landscape with no maximum limit
- Must receive potable water service from a SDCWA retail member agency
- Sites using recycled water may also be eligible on a case-by-case basis
- Contractors must provide proof of a C-27 License, three similar installation project references, water management certification(s) and insurance




Smart Irrigation Controllers - \$35 per station

USEPA WaterSense labeled products. Must be eligible for MWD SoCal WaterSmart incentive. [Click here to see which controllers qualify!](#)




High-Efficiency Sprinkler Nozzles - \$6 per nozzle

Must be eligible for MWD SoCal WaterSmart incentive. [Click here to see which nozzles qualify!](#)



Flow Sensors - \$60 per sensor

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Drip Irrigation - \$0.20 per sq. ft.

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San Diego Chapter Member Milestones

Congratulations to the following companies for reaching membership milestones this month.

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11 Year Member

Proscapes by RHC

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AAA Ldscp Specialists

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Advanced Landscape Mgmt.

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Landscape Development

5 Year Members

Lux Design
Interwest Insurance Serv.
Taylor Jones Architects

16 Year Members

Viridian Landscape

4 Year Member

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ORCO Block & Hardscape

3 Year Member

Alvizia Corporation

13 Year Member

RCP Block & Brick

1 Year Member

University of California
San Diego

12 Year Member

Greenridge Landscaping

Join the Fun at the San Diego Chapter Kickoff Event!

Wed., February 26
6 - 9 p.m.



9920 Pacific Heights Blvd., San Diego

Come out and kick off the new year with CLCA San Diego! Join friends and colleagues to network over brews and apps at Gravity Heights in San Diego. You won't want to miss this fun event - it is a great opportunity to meet new members and reconnect with industry partners.

Register online at our chapter website (www.clcasandiego.org). Contact Amy Conrad at (619) 733-6538 or amy@conradpr.com with questions.

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SD Leaders Sharpen Their Leadership Skills at CLCA Conference



LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBERS

Mike Madewell (Education Chair), Willie Valdez (Chapter President), Cecily Gordon (Bookkeeper), and Bronwyn Miller (Secretary/Treasurer) are ready to gain some new leadership skills at the CLCA conference held in Sacramento, January 28-29.



NEW BOARD MEMBER Pam Kinne gets a warm welcome from Chapter VP of Legislation Ian Campbell. Pam is serving as Resource Management Chair in 2020.



CHAPTER PRESIDENTS Willie Valdez (San Diego) and Edward Wallace (Orange County) take advantage of a break during the conference to trade chapter success stories.



ALLEGIANCE AWARD honors go to San Diego Chapter Life Member Jerrie Beard. Presenting at the Leadership Conference Awards Luncheon is State President Regan Barry.



2020 STATE BOARD is introduced at the 2-day Leadership Conference.



REGULAR MEMBER of the Year award goes to Eric Watanabe, presented by 2020 State President Regan Barry. Associate Member of the Year was awarded to Lindsay Ono who was unable to attend.



TOASTING TO SUCCESS are Immediate Past President Elizabeth Burns and President Regan Barry. They toast to Beth's successful 2019 and Regan's sure to be successful 2020 presidential year.



COLLABORATION BREAKOUTS were a common occurrence at this year's conference. Shown here, attendees of the 2020 Perfect Vision session share ideas on how we can move CLCA forward in a positive progression.



MOCK BOARD MEETING showing proper procedures for taking minutes and other meeting tips was put on by Mickey Mouse-batted HQ staff. Executive Director Sandra Giarde (right) leads the group.

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Discrimination Based on Micro-Aggressions

By Steven Cesare, Ph.D., The Harvest Group

A business owner from Colorado called me recently to say that he just received a complaint from one of his field employees alleging discrimination based on a series of micro-aggressions that other field employees directed toward him. As a premise, a micro-aggression is defined as any statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a protected class (e.g., race, gender, religion). Taken aback by this claim, the business owner sought direction from me about how to handle this delicate situation carefully.

First things first, I suggested that the owner begin the documentation process immediately by having a formal two-on-one meeting with the complainant to gather relevant details concerning the alleged micro-aggressions. To that end, the owner and the Office Manager met with the employee who stated several employees levied the following micro-aggressions against him:

- Fellow employees rolled their eyes at him when he spoke to them;
- An employee offered a part of his lunch to the other crew members, but not to the complainant;
- Employees made sarcastic comments to the employee; and
- Some employees laughed at the complainant behind his back.

With the micro-aggressions now identified, coupled with the names of the employees who allegedly performed them, the owner could now conduct the second phase of the process: the investigation.

Per the investigation, I initially recommended that the owner verify that the company employee handbook

Continued on next page...

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Discrimination Based on Micro-Aggressions

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contained a prohibition against micro-aggressions as part of its Anti-Harassment Policy. Next, I suggested the owner verify that this type of conduct was actually stipulated within the company's Employment Practices Liability Insurance (EPLI) policy. Then, the owner was told to conduct a series of two-on-one interviews with each identified employee individually, to gather his/her side of the story regarding the claims made. Upon hearing each employee's recounting of the allegation, I urged the owner to remind each employee of the company's Anti-Harassment Policy and how such activity may be declared insensitive, discriminatory, or even classified as bullying. I also suggested that the owner reminds each employee that he/she is a role model of the company culture and accordingly, must demonstrate appropriate behaviors at all times. And last, the owner was directed to remind each employee against retaliating against the complainant in any way.

The investigative interviews yielded unanimity of the claims made, with the employees stating they did not

intend their comments or actions to be taken so seriously by the complainant. Nevertheless, each employee received verbal coaching documenting their role in this process, which was filed in their personnel folder.

“A micro-aggression is defined as any statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a protected class (e.g., race, gender).”

Third, I proposed that the owner conduct a refresher training on Anti-Harassment to all employees reminding them of the company policy, discriminatory behavior, micro-aggressions, bullying, the grievance process, and the company's prohibition against retaliation. I also suggested that this training not single out any employee (e.g., complainant, or perpetrators),

but simply be given as a periodic reminder (i.e., establishing the possibility of an affirmative defense) of appropriate behaviors necessary to create and sustain a professional company culture.

If you have any questions about this topic or anything else related to human resources, call Steve at (760) 685-3800.

This article was excerpted from the Harvest Group blog, Tuesdays with Steve Cesare.



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