



# Police Officers' Credit Union Association

March 14, 2016

Dear POCUA Members and Attendees of the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Police Officers' Credit Union Conference,

If I had to sum up the feedback from this year's event it would simply be "Wow!" **The overall combined conference score for the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Police Officers' Credit Union Conference was 4.92 out of a possible 5.** Having managed this event for over a decade, I don't even have to look back on the records for our prior programs to know that this is not only the highest rating earned but also the closest to a perfect score...ever.

A number of changes were made in the format based upon the feedback received not only from last year but also from conferences past. While the 2015 program was good, with a rating of 4.65 out of a possible 5, it was clear not only from the evaluations but also my personal observation that there was much room for improvement. A nearly .30 increase proves there was a chance to get better and we clearly took advantage of the opportunity. More important, the comments prove that the new conference model was well received. Here are a few statements made by POCUA members who have attended multiple Police Officers' CU Conferences including this year's:

*"I'm impressed with the format change."*

*"Excellent format. Changes worked well."*

*"This year's model was very good. A lot was packed into two days. Everything was of interest and flowed well."*

*"The new model is great!! There was less down time since the sessions were compacted into 1 ½ days."*

Overall one of the most impressive factors of the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Police Officers' Credit Union Conference was that among all of the 19 evaluations submitted 16 of them were returned with a perfect five for five on all questions. The remaining three had no ratings below a four. That has never happened before in our twelve previous annual events.

The following is more detail on what very well may be our best conference to date and what that means for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Police Officers' Credit Union Conference which is tentatively planned for New Orleans, LA in May 2017:

➤ **Our score for networking during this year's program remained the highest ever!**

The first question of the evaluation, "This conference provided an excellent opportunity to network with other police credit union professionals and volunteers," received a rating of **4.95 out of a possible 5**. This was the same score earned for networking during the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Police Officers' Credit Union Conference. So there was a concern that with nearly a perfect rating in the prior year, coupled with a change in format, that the only direction to go was down. Not only was the high rating maintained a perfect score was missed by just one evaluation!

Here are some of the comments regarding the networking opportunities:

- "I particularly liked having the Open Networking Sessions first. It's great to have an opportunity to talk with members of other CUs about issues of concern in an attempt to find solutions to our issues and help with theirs."
- "Networking (provided the greatest value). Was able to talk about best practices..."
- "Enjoyed the format but I travelled for learning and sharing information... At opening have each credit union standup and describe their successes and failures from the past year."

**What does this mean for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Police Officers' Credit Union Conference in New Orleans?**

- We will certainly include the Open Networking session at the beginning of the conference. Given that we may go back to the Sunday to Tuesday structure, it may be necessary to lead off with the Sunday night reception and start Monday morning with the Open Networking. However, the availability of a quality venue of the caliber of Clyde's of Gallery may determine the days and timing to an extent.
- The move to four 30-minute group sessions was well received. There were no comments concerning too many sessions or that there wasn't enough time given the 20-minute rounds in the past. This will be the format next year as well.

➤ **Our score for our speakers was not only the highest ever it was nearly perfect at 4.95 out of 5!**

Last year I was concerned with our drop in rating for our education sessions. I even stated "It is clear we need to take a close look at our #2 priority of education..." The focus on producing a more valuable agenda clearly paid off. Both the ratings and the comments were off the charts:

- "Please keep getting speakers like (Todd Romer)!"
- "Friday sessions were great."
- "Enjoyed all sessions. I gained many ideas from the sessions."
- "All the speakers were great. I very much enjoyed Todd Romer and Geoff Bacino."

- “I enjoyed all sessions. Great job having a variety.”
- “All sessions were valuable. I found the Young Money presentation very important...”
- “Good presentations with very relevant material.”

#### **What does this mean for the 14th Annual Police Officers’ Credit Union Conference in New Orleans?**

- The shorter educational sessions allowed us to keep the content fresh. With few exceptions, nearly all of the feedback was positive concerning this format so we will take the same or similar approach in 2017.
- The partnership with VirtualCorps.com and my personal work with other thought leaders has availed us to professionals who excel at public speaking. While I personally will continue to make sure our sponsors receive the maximum exposure, having our Gold Sponsors give a short commercial and then introduce the presenter seemed to work much better than allowing our sponsors to speak. Almost every speaker we have ever had were clearly experts but expertise in a particular area doesn’t necessarily mean expertise in public speaking. So making sure our presenters have the ability to engage our group will continue to be a focus. I will continue to look to our sponsors when needed in this regard, however. For example, after receiving multiple requests for a session on cybersecurity next year I have reached out to our partner Vero for a speaker since they are experts in that area.

#### ➤ **Finally some good food!**

The quality of the meals was also a real concern last year. A lot of resources, particularly time and money, go into the planning the food for our conferences. In 2015 it was personally disappointing to see those resources practically wasted in less than average meals and service. To say it was a relief to receive an exceeds-expectations experience on multiple levels in 2016 would be an understatement. I can go into great detail on the outstanding job Clyde’s of Gallery Place did for us but I’ll let the comments speak for themselves:

- “Food was great.”
- “Food was great this year - thx.”
- “Everything was fantastic from speakers to location to food.”
- “Food was excellent. Very good service as well.”

#### **What does this mean for the 14th Annual Police Officers’ Credit Union Conference in New Orleans?**

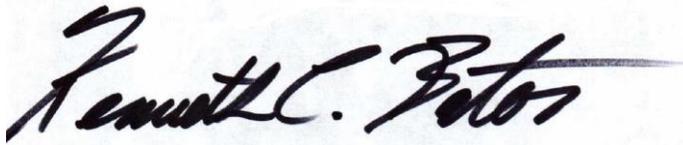
- Simply put, our association and model works for quality restaurants with private rooms. After growing issues with hotels that seemed to be rising over the past few years that culminated in an experience in St. Louis that was a detriment to the POCUA brand, it was clear that a change was necessary. We consistently attract between 40 and 60 people to our conference. Some

hotels treat that size of a group in a way that I infer as a nuisance, both in pricing and execution. 2016 was the second time I had the pleasure of managing our annual event at a restaurant. Both times the management of the venue was overjoyed to receive the business and it showed in the experience. There is a plethora of excellent restaurants in New Orleans near multiple hotels. I am currently reviewing options and menus for 2017.

- New Orleans, like Washington DC, is the perfect type of location for the model that nearly every POCUA member has asked for: a large city with an accessible airport that offers multiple choices for hotels and nightlife. In 2017 and beyond I will adhere to this model until the majority of our membership requests something different.

“It’s going to be difficult to improve on this year’s conference!” That comment from the evaluations pretty much sums up the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Police Officers’ Credit Union Conference and the challenge that lies ahead. A rating of 4.92 out of 5 is pretty hard to beat but as long as there is a chance to earn a perfect score with nothing but positive comments that is what I am going to strive for in 2017. I’m looking forward to another amazing program in New Orleans in May of 2017!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth C. Bator". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kenneth C. Bator

POCUA Co-Founder and Manager