Using Social Media to Increase Diversity

We live in a rapidly changing world! Now, I'm sure that statement didn't catch any of you by surprise, as the pace of change, in just the last decade, is mind-blowing. It seems every day brings new technology, new vocabulary (which is not always a good thing   ) and new challenges. Things that we take for granted now, were unheard of just a few years ago. If you would have started saying things like, "IPad, IPod, ITunes, Facebook, Twitter, etc." just a few years ago, it is likely someone would have considered having you see a doctor, as they would have thought you were "losing it." With all the advancements in our world, it is incumbent on each of us to change or risk being left behind. It wasn't too long ago there was no such thing as social media and you heard very little about the need for diversity. Today, both social media and diversity are challenges we must not only face, but we must overcome. So, how can our CPCU Society utilize social media to encourage more diversity within our ranks? Allow me to share a few thoughts.

We must understand that diversity is more than just race, sex, creed or nationality. While these are important facets to consider, diversity also involves perceptions, thoughts, approaches to problems and insights. The way we did things 5, 10 or 20 years ago will not meet the challenges of today. It's not enough to say we welcome others and their thoughts or opinions; we have to demonstrate this by our actions.

Social media provides us an outlet to put into practice what we profess. The CPCU Society has taken the initial steps of having a presence on many social media sites including; Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, but having a presence isn't enough. We must demonstrate a willingness to include others by the content we offer on these pages. The benefits of the CPCU Society cut across a variety of demographics and this must be demonstrated by our approach to social media. We must ensure the content we provide, on these various outlets, reflect the diversity of those within our industry. We need pictures showing the current diversity of our membership. We need to link our activities and involvement, within communities, to a diverse audience. We need to provide information in a variety of languages, so we demonstrate the diversity within our group.

Our local CPCU Society Chapters' involvement in community events needs to be published throughout various social media outlets. Many of our local chapters are heavily involved in helping very diverse groups, within our communities, but we aren't getting that message out, to those we wish to attract. Pictures and videos of this involvement could easily be published on social media websites letting people know we are a very diverse and inclusive group. We could create "commercials" about the value of the CPCU designation and have them prominently displayed on Facebook and Twitter.

The CPCU Society is made up of property and casualty insurance professionals, who come from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. Yet, our representation on social media doesn't demonstrate our diversity. People in every one of our communities need the information and insights we can provide and social media provides an easy to use manner to get the information to those who need it most. Providing links to FAQs within our industry would enable people to gain answers to their questions, while simultaneously building our brand.

We need to encourage members from every nationality represented, within the CPCU Society, to become involved and we need to display their involvement on all of our social media pages. Using pictures of their involvement and links to presentations given by this diverse group would encourage others to join and become involved. I'm sure many of our members have very diverse talents and we could utilize the talents in a variety of ways within our community and display on social media outlets. The more people see those who look like them, the more welcoming our society becomes and the more they want to get involved.

Finally, we need to create a culture that values diversity of thought. No one person or group has the answers to all the challenges we face and the more we demonstrate openness to different approaches and ideas, the more people will want to become involved. I mentioned earlier, the approaches we have taken in the past may not meet today's challenges and I'm confident, they won't enable success for tomorrow. The more we demonstrate our willingness to think in a

new way, welcoming challenges to the status quo and encouraging the ideas and opinions of others, the great involvement we will experience. Social media, if utilized properly, is a very easy way to get our message out and build our brand. I'm confident we will continue to build a diverse society and through these very simple ideas get our message to the masses. The more people see and hear our diversity in action, the more they will want to be involved!