“Nothing truly valuable can be achieved except by the unselfish cooperation of many individuals.”

– Albert Einstein

Dear Members:

As another year comes to a close, I am once again reminded of the amazing achievements we can accomplish when we come together for a common goal. The last 12 months have reaffirmed that teamwork brings about brilliant results, and that unprecedented innovation and advancement can be realized through the power of collaboration.

The ongoing economic turbulence places an even greater importance on our mission. As always, our success lies on the unwavering belief in an alliance that benefits us all.

We have seen many milestones this past year, such as:

- Member purchases exceeded $2.7 billion
- The Board voted to return $1.6 million to members in the form of patronage refunds
- Members realized over $200 million in savings by using E&I contracts
- Membership increased to over 4,500
- Member satisfaction reached 88.7% very or extremely satisfied

Throughout 2017, we maintained a steadfast commitment to further developing our best-in-class contract process and portfolio. Category specialization and expertise are having a tremendous impact and setting us apart at every level.

Our efforts toward harnessing business intelligence have been intense and will clearly be critical in helping us continue to bring high level value to our members and partners. Through their knowledge and experience, our MREs, PSEs, MDEs, and Consultants deliver insight and savings, always keeping our members’ interests as their primary focus.

Now, more than ever, the synergies we create are critical to our member community. Our long-standing relationship with NAEP is taking a new and more strategic form. Our collaboration with the HESS Group is inspiring, with over 100 IT professionals working in partnership with E&I.

Our Consulting Group’s relationship with JAGGAER continues to flourish, with several exciting collaborations in the past year. Most notably, we participated in a successful higher education executive roundtable hosted
at the University of Michigan.

Another collaboration I’m excited about is our partnership with ArcBlue. As a global leader in procurement consulting, ArcBlue offers both structured organizational assessments as well as individual skills assessments. With an eye toward innovation and achieving procurement excellence, we will continue to promote our Procurement Assessment service and assist institutions in developing an optimized sourcing strategy. In 2017, we took even greater steps toward ensuring E&I is synonymous with thought leadership in educational procurement. Ultimately, our goal is to position E&I as the primary resource for insights, information, and knowledge in the higher ed and K-12 marketplace. To do so, we will focus on expanding our library of information from our in-house subject matter experts, business partners, and members. I’m confident we will see incredible growth in this area moving forward.

Looking Forward

The world of acquisition and supply chain management in education is changing quickly, and it’s up to us to stay in front of it. As an organization, we are focused on those initiatives that are most aligned with our strategic plan and address the most critical needs of our members. We have a clear view on what is most important, and are navigating the ever-changing environment always with your needs first. I want to thank you for continuing to inspire us to do more, to achieve more, and to succeed more. It is a privilege to take this journey with you.

I sincerely look forward to our even brighter future together.

Regards,

Tom