



# Be The Change!

BY SUSAN D. DIEHL

This is a year for key strategic investments and accomplishments that will mark important milestones along NTSAA's journey. But none of that can happen without you.

**M**ahatma Gandhi once said, "We must be the change we want to see in the world." Many, including me, have shortened it to just "Be the Change" — short but enough to remind us that we can all make a difference.

It is a privilege to introduce myself as the new president of the NTSAA. As a longtime member and someone who has benefited immensely from NTSAA, I'm looking forward to this new role as another opportunity to give back to a great organization.

Since the inception of NTSAA I have believed in its mission and drive. Today we are an influential voice for the 403(b) and 457 marketplace on both the state and federal levels.

Our Leadership Council headed by David Blask has brought us into 2014 with great momentum, which made us over 3,000 members strong! Last summer many of you stepped up

and answered the call to volunteer in our "together we can do it" campaign. Lets keep this train going strong!

This has made us a much stronger organization. It is a reflection of incredible leadership of our Leadership Council members, staff and volunteers, as well as our committed Strategic Partners:

- ADMIN Partners
- AXA Equitable
- EFS Advisors
- Kades-Margolis
- Great American Insurance Group
- GWN Securities
- Lincoln Investment Planning
- National Life Group
- OFG Financial Services
- OppenheimerFunds
- PenServ Plan Services
- PlanMember Services
- Security Benefit
- The Legend Group
- TSA Consulting Group
- U.S. Retirement Partners

Today, because of this strong foundation, we can now set our

sights on what I believe is a unique opportunity: to become the most engaging, the most valued and the most influential 403(b)/457(b) leadership organization in the country.

This is an ambitious overarching goal for NTSAA, but it is the kind of goal that, I would argue, is now appropriate for an organization of our size and talented membership. If you think about it, engagement and value have always been at the core of NTSAA. Where else can an advisor get the right answer to a 403(b) issue? By focusing on this goal, we are pushing ourselves to be more of who we are already.

Clearly, we know that engaging our members by our offerings and volunteer leadership opportunities is critical for our sustainable growth. Our programs must be not only relevant; they have to be accessible. Our volunteer opportunities must be a great return of value not only to our members but to the government agencies and bodies (IRS, DOL and

state legislatures) that we engage with as well. Value already lies at the heart of our programs. It is the backbone that allows the countless connections that NTSAA facilitates for its members.

So, my dream for NTSAA for 2014 is that whatever leadership challenges we have or whichever crossroads we are at, every single member, volunteer and Strategic Partner feels they can come home to NTSAA, like coming home to their family, where we all unite passionately under a common purpose — serving our members and focusing on the essential values that will guide us in helping to secure the future of the 403(b) retirement industry.

So with this overarching goal in mind, I see 2014 as a year for key strategic investments and

accomplishments that will mark important milestones along our journey.

But none of this can happen without you, our members. Be the change! Volunteer, become a strategic partner (if your organization is not on the list above, you should be!) and stay involved! We have an incredible pipeline of new membership offerings that were introduced in 2013 — memberships for TPAs, attorneys and other professionals, and for investment companies that serve the marketplace as DCIOs. Make your voice heard and help mold the marketplace as we navigate through more changes in 2014. Your comments and suggestions are welcome.

In closing, let me say that my involvement in NTSAA has been one of the most rewarding professional

and personal experiences I have had over the years. NTSAA has truly become a family to me, with many invaluable friendships. It has engaged me professionally and motivated me to help make new strides for the organization.

It was an honor to serve on the leadership council this year under David Blask's leadership.

I am very excited about 2014. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve NTSAA members and help to catapult the organization toward the next level of achievement together with all of you! And remember: *be the change* — contact us today if you want to get involved in any way. **b**

---

*Susan D. Diehl is the president of PenServ in Horsham, PA. She is NTSAA's 2014 president.*