



Chairman's Message Summer 2009

The 2009 Sterling Conference was our most successful conference yet! **Thank you to the hundreds of people who all played a role in making this a world-class learning experience.** Our conference was successful in maximizing our attendees' competitive advantage via the all-time highest rated keynote speeches and workshop sessions that provided action planning tools to enable each participant to maximize their learning experience. The success of the conference was made possible by our conference committee, sponsors, exhibitors, presenters, keynoters, and many other volunteers who contributed to make this an exceptional conference. Congratulations again to our 2009 Governor's Sterling Award recipients: Miami-Dade County Park & Recreation Department; St. Johns County Health Department; Sunstar Paramedics, Pinellas County; and Tropic Isles Elementary School, Lee County, who were honored by Lt. Governor Kottkamp during the Conference.

This past year was a challenging one for Sterling, and for many of our friends, business partners, and colleagues. As we move into our 2009-2010 cycle, we continue to stand ready to accept this challenge. We understand the need to identify ways to operate more efficiently and maximize resources as we continue to deal with the many economic challenges. As stated by one of our Conference keynote speakers, "during these tough economic times, this is exactly the time you need to embrace the Baldrige/Sterling system so that you can better position yourself to move forward." I encourage you to meet this challenge head on by using the Sterling Criteria as your roadmap for success.

Examiner recruitment is well underway. At this early stage of recruitment, we are placing a major emphasis on examiner leadership development and retention and we have set a target to qualify 150 examiners as part of our 2010 examiner corps. The deadline for examiner applications is August 31, 2009. **We challenge you to apply as an examiner or encourage someone that you know to make the commitment to performance excellence.** It is a wonderful opportunity to expand your professional and leadership development as well as to join a network of dedicated professionals from across the state.

Over the summer, Sterling will be offering several regional training sessions in South Florida, Tampa, and Tallahassee. Classes will include *Understanding the New 2010-2011 Sterling Criteria: An Overview of Managing for Sustainability* and the highly rated *Criteria II: Understanding the Linkages*. In addition, the four 2009 Governor's Sterling Award Recipients will be featuring "Great Practice" Open House Events in October and November showcasing the reasons why they won the Governor's Sterling Award. **We encourage you to continue your learning and quest for knowledge by attending the upcoming training sessions and Showcase events.**

In closing, I would personally like to acknowledge the hard work of the Sterling staff as they have worked to successfully complete our 17th year. Their dedication has made the Sterling Council the envy of other state award processes. Thank you to Dione, Jim, Pat, Perry, Lauren, Jennifer, and Gayle for their hard work and loyalty to the Sterling Council.

I look forward to working with many of you over this next year as we address the challenges of an ever-changing competitive environment in Florida.

Thank you!

John A. Pieno
Chairman
Florida Sterling Council

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