PIPELINE

Learning Should Never Stop

Comments from the CEO

Mark H. McCallum

NASBP Chief Executive Officer

I think we all can appreciate that being a lifetime learner is important to personal and professional growth and satisfaction. Indeed, continuous learning is at the core of professional competence for a surety bond professional. The Preamble to the NASBP Code of Ethics states, in part, that surety bond producers will strive at all times to improve their professional skills. Further, provision "e" of the Code of Ethics adds that surety bond producers will:

> "Continuously strive to keep themselves informed and educated regarding the principles of surety credit, surety industry affairs, and the services normally rendered by a surety bond producer."

Not surprisingly, then, NASBP places great emphasis on professional development and education, directing considerable association energy and resources to those ends. Most, if not all, of our community are familiar with the excellent educational experiences afforded through the NASBP surety schools. These schools have trained generations of surety professionals and have been the catalysts for forming life-long bonds among surety school students. To these in-person offerings, NASBP has added virtual educational programming over the years, from online CE courses to a robust annual slate of virtual seminars, all which continue to undergo growth, demonstrating the need and the appetite for short educational offerings.

In 2024 to date, NASBP Virtual Seminars have received more than 8,169 registrations, a number that surpasses the registrations for the same timeframe last year. We also continue to encourage Virtual Seminar registrants to share complimentary discount codes for these programs with colleagues and clients, spreading the benefit of industry learning, and I am pleased that more than 1,266 registrants chose to do so thus far in 2024. We have just opened up the sales and renewal process for NASBP Virtual Seminar Annual Subscription for 2025, which promises to continue at record levels.

We also are planning a virtual educational effort sponsored with two of our cherished industry association partners, the American Subcontractors Association and the Construction Financial Management Association, for a first-ever tripartite program, branded as a "ConSure Infocast," to be offered on January 9 at 2 pm Eastern. This program will focus on the important risk management topic of prequalifying the project owner and the general contractor to understand their project financing and financial wherewithal.

During the height of the COVID pandemic, NASBP launched its podcast series, Let's Get Surety, https://letsgetsurety.org/, as another way to reach its community and beyond, and 122 episodes have been released (soon to be 123 episodes on October 22). That has resulted in 48,704 downloads so far, with 7,099 downloads occurring this year. This podcast platform has allowed NASBP an informal means to explore topics as diverse as the significance of reinsurance, surety careers for women, personal guarantees, and e-signatures in surety, to name a few, and to reach far and wide (though most listeners are located in the US, the podcast has regular listeners in Canada, China, the United Kingdom, and France, for example).

NASBP will continue to explore new and innovative avenues to provide educational opportunities, as we know that, for surety professionals, learning should never stop!