The Value of the Grant Professional Credential
Shelia McCann, M. Ed, SM, GPC

Last month, the online Grant Professional Association Community received an inquiry regarding the value of the Grant Professional Credential (GPC). The Grant Professional Certification Institute (GPCI) has been administering the qualifying examination since 2007 and to-date there are over 500 credentialed grant professionals. In June, GPCI released the electronic version, making it possible for candidates to complete the examination in local testing sites.

The inquiry initiated an avalanche of responses and testimonials. In the short period of five years, the GPC is gaining in respect and trust across the Nation. The body of experience is growing and holders of the credential are identifying the benefits.

The grant-credentialed professionals’ community is reporting higher levels of recognition from colleagues, employers, and the community. The recognition acknowledges the breadth of knowledge and depth of experience demonstrated by passing the exam. The recognition has been both empowering and uplifting. One respondent specifically referred to the higher level of professional credibility shown by colleagues.

Some respondents reported financial benefits from possessing the credential. Employers have awarded job promotions and/or salary increases or bonus payments in recognition of the accomplishment. Consultants are fielding more inquiries and accepting assignments at a higher rate. Teaching opportunities appear to be on the rise. Courses for beginner to advanced levels of grantsmanship are a common theme in addition to workshops for other grant professionals. Credentialed grant professionals are sharing their knowledge and encouraging others to take the examination.

In this ever more mobile society, the ability to obtain employment in new areas is becoming increasingly important. Grants professionals who are also GPCs are noticing greater consideration when moving into new areas. The credential is serving as a strong indicator that the individual, though unknown in the local area, is qualified and trustworthy. Employers are specifically looking to hire grants professionals who have the GPC credential. One employer reported a preference to hire a GPC as part of an effort to raise the credibility of the whole organization. Having a GPC opens doors.

Fundamentally, grant professionals with the GPC credential are reporting a keen sense of accomplishment. The scientific process that developed the pool of exam items and topics for the writing portion identified the competencies and skills necessary to be among the very best in our profession. For those who have passed the examination, the personal feeling of having achieved a career milestone is significant.

Current experience points to the value of the GPC to open doors to opportunities and increase professional credibility. Above all, it is becoming a signal that this individual operates with a proficiency and capability at the top of their chosen profession.