

Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Leadership Recall for Past President, Chun Lee, P.E.



Northern Nevada Question #1. Tell us about your family.

Chun Lee: I've been married for an amazing 2 years to a clinical pharmacist from Pocatello, Idaho with our 3 dogs. Some say that they have no idea how she was able to find such a catch in me (which I don't blame them), but it is me that was truly the lucky one. I am also 1 out of 2 amazing sons to William and Elsa Lee. My parents immigrated to Reno, Nevada when I was 2 years old, my dad had his on HVAC company in Hong Kong, my mom worked in a sweat shop probably making Nikes. My parents each worked 2 jobs to support my brother and I until I was 7, and that's when they decided to open a Chinese restaurant in Fallon, Nevada. My brother and I worked there from that time until we graduated, we grew up in that restaurant, and we helped our parents wherever we can (including serving alcohol, shhhhhh). When people say it takes a village to raise a child, I truly believe it, because everyone in that community helped raise us. So hard work has been instilled in me my whole entire life, like I have told everyone that I would take a bad day in HVAC than a bad 12-hour day at the restaurant any time.



Northern Nevada Question #2. Tell us about your education.

Chun Lee: I graduated high school from Churchill County High School in Fallon, where it led to me 5 of my most amazing years at The University of Nevada, Reno and I was somehow able to get a Mechanical Engineering degree out of it.

Northern Nevada Question #3. How did you start in the HVAC industry?

Chun Lee: I graduated from UNR in 2003. Honestly when I graduated from UNR, I didn't have any experience in engineering, for some reason nobody thought working in a Chinese restaurant and FedEx was experience (they obviously never worked a hard day in their life). So everywhere I went they were all looking for engineering experience and I wouldn't get past the first interview. So I did a ask jeeves search (yes that was google before google was main stream) and looked for mechanical engineers, and I sent out resumes to some consulting firms throughout Reno (don't worry I'm like Tom Brady, I remember all of the ones that didn't call me back), and ABF consulting engineers called me. I had an interview with Eric Hebel and Brad Taylor, luckily I didn't need a second interview because of my awesomeness. I told myself I was going to stick it out for 1 or 2 years and get that experience that everyone was looking for and look for an engineering job that I would actually like, so that 1 or 2 years has now turned into almost 15 years. I think my dad having done HVAC and helping him fix stuff at the restaurant, I was destined for the HVAC industry.

Northern Nevada Question #4. How did you get started in ASHRAE and when did you get more involved?

Chun Lee: I went to a meeting when ASHRAE invited the student chapter of ASME back in 2001, I figured free dinner, why not. It was boring, because I had no idea what they were talking about. Then when I started working for ABF Consulting Engineers, Eric Hebel was the local chapter president at that time, he had me get a membership right away (probably to pad his membership promotion numbers). 6 months later, Eric was impressed with my Napster selection of sample MP3s and asked me to be the website person, so all of a sudden I was going to the Board of governors. Back in 2012, I decided to bite the bullet and go through the chairs, for the sense of commitment to the community and also to have people quit asking me to do it every year. So now I stand as past president and current membership promotion chair.

Northern Nevada Question #5. What do you think is the most rewarding thing about your ASHRAE experience?

Chun Lee: I would say the 2 most rewarding things about my ASHRAE experience has been the networking with not only the local chapter, but regional as well as on the national level and also being apart of something that has been able to give back to the local community (scholarships, toys for tots, numerous donations to the Northern Nevada Children's cancer foundation, etc.). You have no idea how invaluable the networking is until you step back and reflect on all of the people you have met.

Northern Nevada Question #6. Any other items you would like to provide to us? - please add as you desire.

Chun Lee: I would like to thank the whole Northern Nevada ASHRAE and HVAC community. My previous statement that says it takes a village to raise a child, is so true, everyone from contractors, sales reps, factory reps, and other engineers in this community has helped me grow tremendously (physically and professionally, those free lunches takes a toll on you).