

FROM THE BOARD

"I get no respect." This phrase was coined in the 1970's by comedian Rodney Dangerfield. There have been times over the last twenty years that I thought this phrase applied to the profession of foodservice design. We have been referred to as "the kitchen guys" or brought into projects after the initial design phase (Schematic Design) is completed and asked to "put a kitchen in over there." Maybe the slight came in the form of no space to work in, a poor shape to play in, or no money allocated for our program and space.



Even within the foodservice equipment industry, the value of the professional foodservice designer is often downplayed. Anyone that knows AutoCAD or Revit can do it, right? It's just about putting in enough equipment to fill the space, right? [Newsflash: Doing a layout and foodservice design are not the same thing.]

Truth be told, respect isn't given. Respect is earned. As design professionals, it is up to us to continue to raise the bar on what it means to be a professional foodservice designer. Are you working at your craft? What does professional development look like for you? Are you inviting yourself into the design process earlier and adding value at every turn?

If we want to be seen as professional designers, we need to fit the part and act the part. Bring value through relevant, research-driven metrics. Bring value through understanding the mission of the client and the role of food in their culture and facility. Bring value through meeting deadlines, effectively communicating, and actively collaborating with other members of the design team. Most of all, bring value through knowing your stuff. Be the expert in your field.

Lastly, we need to tell our story. If we are to be seen as design peers to other professionals in the design world, they need to know who we are and what we are about. FCSI provides a platform to reach the architectural community. Through the credentialing process, networking opportunities, and educational events, we have the opportunity to raise the bar on what it means to be a foodservice design professional and a vehicle to tell the world what we look, act, and feel like. Now, let's raise our voice and tell our story in the right way and to the right audience.

Please consider this your invitation to the party. Are you in?

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