



The Pittsburgh Employees' Activities Association (PEAA) has been providing value for its members for almost 50 years. Since the early 1980s, the current PEAA executive team has strengthened vendor relationships with key Pittsburgh institutions. This executive team labored initially to develop—and has continued to nurture—an environment that enables vibrant small-business networks, which benefit the growing number of PEAA small-business member-vendors.

By 1984, the current PEAA Executive Team was in place and had established the vision for its long-term stability. PEAA President, Patricia Walters, formerly of Pittsburgh Plate & Glass (PPG), along with Vice-President, Robert Mitrik, formerly of American Bridge (USSteel), have provided the pathway to PEAA's promising present.

With the support of Emma Thompson and Chris Sterf, both of PPG, the Executive Team made important progress through the 1980s and into the 1990s.

As discount sales conditions changed, so did the PEAA. Wide-ranging product offers that benefited employees at the PEAA's corporate members for years diminished as new economic regulations led to necessary marketplace adjustments. The old PEAA had to transform, so the new PEAA provides networking capabilities that are poised to embrace growing social media technologies.

The Early HISTORY of the PEAA

It all started back in the late 1960's at Bell Telephone's BTRAP Employee Organization. What the hard-working labor force in this city could use to advantage was an association of the various employee clubs that cooperatively promoted local civic functions and other entertainment on a group basis. Often, “group-purchase discounts” allowed considerable savings to the individual members at the growing employee group clubs within Pittsburgh's corporations. Other benefits to this arrangement were envisioned, and the new Employee Organization sent letters to the personnel departments of various companies and to other clubs throughout Pittsburgh, outlining ideas and inviting responses.



Apparently the timing was just not right. Only a few clubs had established themselves and most were offering only limited outside activities. Corporations had not yet become aware of the tremendous benefits connected with employee morale resulting from these extra social activities and money-saving “employee-discount” opportunities. Thus, limited replies to the inquiries led to a “Hold for Later Consideration” status.

Eventually, late in 1969, the timing was right, and the PEAA was formed with several charter organizations. Representatives from Bell Telephone (BTRAP), the United States Steel Corporation (ACAA), Pittsburgh Plate & Glass (PPG), the Equitable Gas Company, and Rockwell Corporation agreed to meet after the first of the New Year.

Thus, the first PEAA meeting was called to order on January 13, 1970, in BTRAP’s office at 107 Sixth Street, in Pittsburgh. When the initial small gathering was called to order at 1:40 p.m., the PEAA was born.

The first item on the agenda at that first meeting was the development of Operating Guidelines to identify the benefits of PEAA membership for Pittsburgh’s substantial employee base, which was defining itself in a new way by the employee groups that were organizing at numerous Pittsburgh corporations. These groups would comprise the PEAA’s growing corporate membership in the coming months and years.

The adoption of the PEAA’s Operation Guidelines was unanimous at that first meeting, and these forward-thinking Guidelines served Pittsburgh’s employees well. The PEAA’s timing was right. At that first meeting, a defined vision for employee-discount growth coincided with the vibrant Pittsburgh corporate environment, which was able to boast more Fortune 50 corporate headquarters than the rest of the world combined.

The second monthly meeting was held at USSteel’s office one month later, in February, and in the meeting notes, it is indicated that Gulf Oil was added to PEAA’s corporate roster. Each representative agreed to undertake to make additional contacts and to investigate the promotion of the PEAA.



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Throughout the 1970s, Pittsburgh's status expanded to include its City of Champions moniker, and PEAA's membership proliferated to more than 100 organizations that boasted nearly 140,000 individual employee members.

New PEAA Organizations included: the H. J. Heinz Company; the Aluminum Corporation of America (ALCOA); several Pittsburgh hospitals (Magee Women's, Mercy, Children's); several financial institutions (Mellon Bank, PNC Bank, Dollar Bank); as well as the Pittsburgh Pirates and Steelers, the USPS, and more.