



SPOTLIGHT ON ANGEL (DABNEY) BAILEY, SR/WA

Describe your professional career. How did you first become interested in the right of way industry?

In 2007, for six months, I did a rotation as a right of way agent in the Property Division at the public utility organization (MLGW) I had been working at for several years. Every day, there was a new adventure and continuous learning experience as to how we served our community. After my rotation, I was hired permanently in the Property Management and Survey Department of Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division. In my role as a right of way agent, I wrote and obtained easement contracts, landscape agreements and permits for the utility. I reviewed electric, gas and water design sketches and read and interpreted survey notes for contacts. I worked as a right of way agent for 10 years, then moved in the role of land rights specialist, where I was able to train new incoming agents. After being in that position for a couple of years, I was promoted to the position of property management specialist.





My role and knowledge of our utility broadened in the acquiring of transmission lines through negotiations, land right by fee purchase, easement or lease. Identifying and selling surplus land and land rights, resolving and investigating encroachments and unauthorized use of division property are all among things required in my current role.

How did you hear about IRWA and how long have you been with the Association?

Initially, I did not know all the resources provided by IRWA. I was in an area meeting and was told there were some required courses that needed to be taken for my position. Those courses were offered by IRWA, and that is where the love affair began. I have been a member of Chapter 32 for 17 years.



Member Spotlight is a wonderful place to introduce yourself or to celebrate a fellow member’s contributions to the IRWA. For more information or to submit a member for consideration, please contact Vivian Nguyen at nguyen@irwaonline.org.

What are some leadership positions you’ve held within the Association?

I held the position of Chapter education chair for Chapter 32 for approximately 8 to 10 years. In 2021, the Chapter added an assistant education chair — that was when I passed the baton. The change brought about the position of Chapter secretary, and I am currently serving in the role of Chapter 32’s treasurer.

In March of 2018, I obtained the RWA, and I continued my learning process obtaining RWP in October 2019. I passed the exam for SR/WA September 2023 and received my official certification at the beginning of this year. Additionally, in May of 2023, I ventured into the instructors pool, I am now a PEAK Instructor for Course 205: Bargaining Negotiation. The doors continue to open with IRWA! I am looking forward to see what the future has to bring.

What is the most rewarding part of leadership?

The most rewarding part of leadership is having the opportunity to motivate and inspire people to do their best work and pursue goals that enable them to grow (mentally, physically, emotionally or financially). The sharing of knowledge is so important in an ever-changing world.

In your nomination for Member Spotlight, you were praised for your dedication to professional education within the Chapter. Can you share a few ways you championed education to your colleagues and what advice you have to other leaders who are striving to do the same?

Give me a reason why NOT! How much time do you think your future is worth?

Learning is a never-ending process. You are the main piece in the process.

You must think outside the box of your everyday activities.

If the opportunity presents itself to you, make sure you’re able to process it.

You have to be flexible and be ready to fit into any role.

I try to learn something new every day.



Can you share one of your favorite IRWA memories?

My first introduction to an IRWA conference was in San Antonio in 2021. The energy was overwhelming, and there was a wealth of industry-experienced knowledge that everyone shared, whether it was within IRWA, their other organizations or personal business. Everyone was so giving!

What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?

When I was a young track athlete, my mother told me, "You're the brand!" You never know who is watching you because someone is always watching. Do your best without expectations of recognition. You never get another chance to revisit the first moment! Make sure you are remembered for the right reason. This has stayed with me, from when I was a young lady running track to an adult in my growing career.

One last question to end this interview on a fun note: if you could have lunch with anyone from history or fiction, who would it be and why?

Sojourner Truth, for several reasons. For one, she settled in my birthplace of Battle Creek, Michigan. In addition, I would like to know how she was still able to have a mindset of servitude and determination mixed with resilience. She was able to step out of her comfort zone and be an outspoken advocate for her people, as well as civil and women's rights. She became a valued added part of the movement for those committed to creating future leaders in the world we live in today. ✨