



In June of 2021, attendees gathered in San Antonio, Texas, for the 67th Annual International Education Conference. All were invited to join the Opening Ceremony, and as attendees funneled down the aisles, a chorus of chatter and laughter flooded throughout the ballroom. There was a sense of hope, relief and familiarity as members slipped back into the rhythm of reconnecting with old friends and reaching out to new ones. After a long year of being apart, many welcomed the reminder of what made IRWA special — long, withstanding friendships and a united dedication to the right of way industry.

And for the first time, attendees were not just in San Antonio but also joining virtually and watching the festivities live from their offices or homes. With access to most events and the ability to engage with in-person participants via the conference app, virtual attendees were able to experience the annual conference on a new level.

IRWA'S 67TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

BY VIVIAN NGUYEN





Welcoming All Attendees

On behalf of IRWA South Texas Chapter 39, Conference Co-Chairs Matt McGee, SR/WA, and Georgia Snodgrass, SR/WA, took the stage in all smiles to welcome in-person and virtual attendees to conference. After giving a sincere thank you to all key volunteers, they invited participants to join in the festivities of the week, including the Monday Night Event and Golf Tournament. In addressing housekeeping items, Matt and Georgia acknowledged that the event would be following CDC and venue guidelines and assured in-person attendees that measures were taken to ensure that everyone had options during conference that would be most comfortable for them.

Georgia then welcomed IRWA International President Sharon Slauenwhite, SR/WA, who joined conference remotely this year, to say a few words. Sharon called the Annual Meeting of the Members to order, acknowledged the 2020-2021 International Executive Committee (IEC) members, Advisory Council and International Governing Committee (IGC) and thanked them for their commitment to the Association.

International Secretary Fred Easton, SR/WA, then took the stage to invite the Frank C. Balfour Professional of the Year finalists to say a few words. The finalists, Carol Bellinger, SR/WA, and Vanessa Ringgold, SR/WA, both delivered touching speeches and thanked those who had supported them on their journey thus far.

Acknowledging the Extraordinary

International Treasurer Judy Jones, SR/WA, stepped to the podium to announce The Lifetime Achievement Award, which is periodically bestowed upon a member who has made extraordinary contributions to the right of way profession and Association during his or her lifetime. A member of IRWA for over 40 years and a mentor to many, this outstanding achievement was awarded to Carol Croft, SR/WA, this year. Carol took the stage to give her thanks, sharing her uplifting words of wisdom.

Past International President Jim Struble, SR/WA, introduced a new award in honor of Dan Beardsley, SR/WA, who passed away earlier this year. Entitled the Dan Beardsley Memorial IRWA Builder Award, this award recognizes unique volunteers who have



made significant contributions to the organization as well as influenced fundamental change within the Association while elevating the right of way profession in a way that demonstrates IRWA's purpose.

Jim then invited Dan's wife of 39 years, Mary Ellen, to the stage to accept the award. As she made her way to the podium, everyone rose to their feet, and the hall echoed with powerful applause. "Napkins!" she exclaimed with a teary smile, waving them in her hands. She went on to explain that her husband had a penchant for jotting down notes and speeches on napkins, and it only felt fitting that she do the same.

"This is really an honor for me and my son Sean and my daughter Erin," Mary Ellen said. "I'm just overwhelmed by it. Thank you so much."

Looking Towards the Future

Sharon returned to the screen to share the State of the Association. She acknowledged that IRWA has come out of the pandemic stronger due to adapting quickly to new ways of learning, building and growing relationships under less than ideal conditions.

She went on to discuss how IRWA has enhanced relationships with international partnerships while still supporting the five international chapters. Several international webinars were presented this year, which offered opportunities for members to educate themselves on right of way industry practices across the globe.

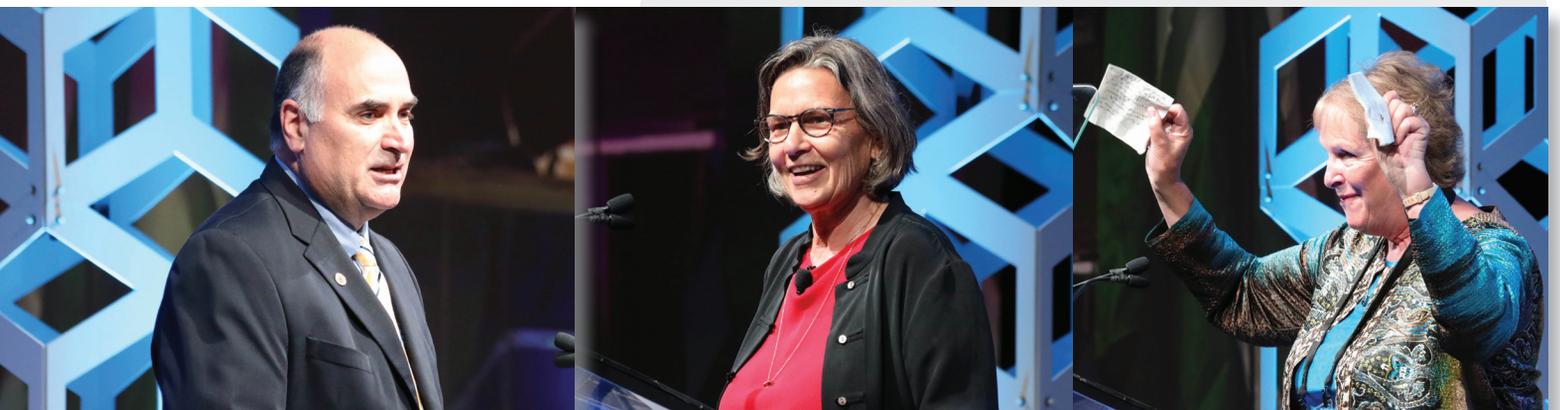
Lastly, Sharon stated that the curriculum revisions and updates were an ongoing process, but a team of volunteer leaders and education staff completed the conversion of

Course 102: Elevating Your Ethical Awareness to an online course; Course 230: Oil and Gas Land Basics is currently undergoing the same process. In addition, a volunteer-led project has begun its development of a Canadian version of Course 431: Problems in the Valuation of Partial Acquisitions. There were also updates made to 17 online courses including the conversion from Adobe Flash Player to a more modern format. Sharon acknowledged that education projects are constantly evolving, and the pandemic ushered new ways of communication and collaboration. Through the efforts of instructors, staff and Chapters, the Association was able to present 190 classroom courses virtually thus far.

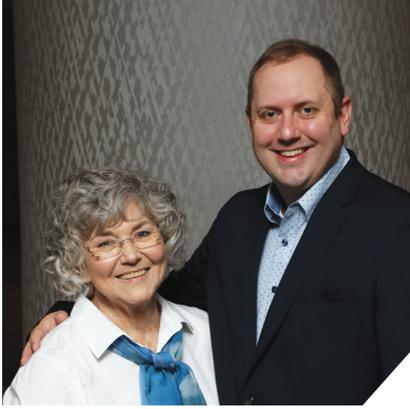
"What a year it's been — a year like no other. And for each of us and the IRWA, we met the challenges head-on, and we now look towards the future," Sharon commented. She then invited all attendees to enjoy the conference in person and virtually.

Matt and Georgia returned to the stage and recognized the 2020 Minneapolis conference hosts Dan Leshner, SR/WA, and Mindy Leadholm, SR/WA. Though they could not be in attendance, they were virtually present. "We would like to thank them for all their hard work and what would have been an amazing event," Georgia remarked as everyone clapped in support.

The event concluded with an uplifting story from the Opening Ceremony Keynote Speaker, Ann Bancroft. One of the world's preeminent polar explorers and an internationally recognized leader dedicated to inspiring women and audiences around the world, Ann spoke of her experience crossing the ice to the North and South Poles.



CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRS HIGHLIGHT



The 67th Annual International Education Conference was the first-ever hybrid conference, with attendees participating in San Antonio, Texas, and virtually from their homes or offices. The success of this year's conference was largely due to the impressive efforts of Conference Co-Chairs Georgia Snodgrass, SR/WA, and Matt McGee, SR/WA. As such, we invited them to share a few words about their planning and conference experience.

Congratulations on a successful conference! What were some of the unique challenges you faced while planning?

G: Since San Antonio was the first conference after the pandemic, the uncertainty of 'whether or not' the conference would even be a "go" caused a great deal of anxiety that no other conference city (that we know of, with the possible exception of Minneapolis) has had to deal with. For me, that was the hugest hurdle to get over.

M: Definitely the uncertainty, as we entered into 2021. A few examples that come to mind are how would the format of the conference be, how many members would be attending or allowed to attend, and what type of pandemic restrictions would be in place during the conference.

What are your thoughts on the virtual aspect of conference this year?

G: Members I spoke to who participated virtually really thought it was great. I would keep a virtual component going forward. The conference has a lot to offer right of way professionals from an education standpoint. It would be a shame for them to miss out on that component simply because they couldn't attend in person.

M: I think it is great! It allows member from all over to participate, stay connected and obtain continuing education credits for their certifications. It also allows for the IRWA to stay up with the changing business environment that is the now norm after the pandemic.

What was your favorite part of this year's conference?

G: Besides getting to see friends, my favorite part was the Monday Night Event. I never could have imagined with total conference attendee numbers where they were that we would have such a huge response to that particular event. I was truly overwhelmed.

M: I would have to say the Opening Ceremony and the Monday Night Event. On Sunday, you could feel the energy and excitement from the members as it felt like we were finally getting back to normal. The Monday Night Event was one heck of a party — from delicious food, to photos with live longhorns, to watching armadillo races, listening to a great band and don't forget the cowboy hats!

What's some advice you have for future conference co-chairs?

G: Keep the number of conference committee chairs small. We had basically three chairs. Tell them what your expectations are and let them do their jobs. Don't micromanage. If you pick the right people for the job, they will make you look good. Ours did. Matt and I are grateful to them for all their hard work.

M: Make sure that you keep open communication with IRWA Headquarters for conference and Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF) for Monday Night Event planning. Everyone is there to assist in making the planning as easy as possible.

The stage is yours! Any last thoughts you'd like to share?

G: Relax, enjoy and have fun. Don't take yourself too seriously! This is most likely a once-in-a-lifetime experience, so enjoy every moment of it. We made the decision early on that we were going to be casual and have fun. That helped me relax even more. I'd do it again in a heartbeat but only with Matt!

M: Don't let yourself and volunteers get too stressed. Like Georgia stated, it could be a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I would like to thank all the members, staff at headquarters and all the sponsors that helped make the San Antonio Conference a huge success. It would not have been possible without all of you. I would do it again, too, but only with Georgia!





The winner of the Alan D. Wurtz, SR/WA Scholarship Fund was Callie Howard, R/W-AC



The W. Howard Armstrong Instructor of the Year Award was presented to Faith Roland, SR/WA



Jessica Brown, RWA, received the Young Professional of the Year Award



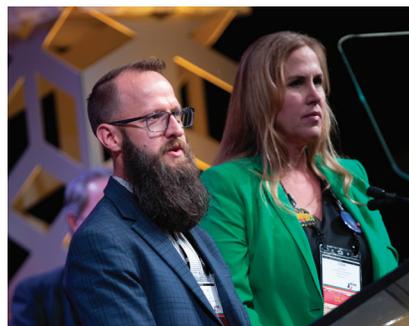
AWARDS CEREMONY

This year, there were 99 individuals between May 1, 2020, and April 30, 2021, who received the prestigious SR/WA designation. Those who earned their SR/WA in 2020 were also invited to walk across the stage and join this year's recipients in an official celebration of their grand achievement. In addition, LJA sponsored \$100 for each individual who obtained his or her SR/WA this year to put towards continuing their education with IRWA. All honorees walked across the stage proudly to accept their certificates and shake hands with International Secretary Fred Easton, SR/WA, and International Vice President James Olschewski, SR/WA, followed by a congratulatory photo with International President-Elect Jake Farrell, SR/WA, and International Professional Education Committee (IPEC) Chair Kristen Bennett, SR/WA.

International Nominations and Elections Committee (INEC) Chair Jenni Kriner, SR/WA, then took the stage to acknowledge that the ceremony was an opportunity to recognize the effort and passion that members bring to IRWA. She recognized the winners of the Annual International Surveying and Engineering Right of Way Mapping Competition, the SARPA Scholarship and the CRWEF Scholarship.



Lisa R. Harrison, SR/WA was the recipient of the Louis L. & Y.T. Lum Award. Pictured here are Lisa's colleagues at Pinnacle Consulting Management Group with President-Elect Jake Farrell, SR/WA and Carol Croft, SR/WA, who presented the award.



Website of the Year Winner was North Texas, Chapter 36, Region 2



Newsletter of the Year was awarded to The Centerline, Chapter 8, Region 2



Employer of the Year with Less than 20 Employees was presented to the Yasmin L. Stump Law Group, PC



Employer of the Year with More than 20 employees was presented to NiSource, Inc.



Iowa Department of Transportation was named the Employer of the Year, Government Employer

In addition to the outstanding winners of this year's awards, the Ronald Jourdan SR/WA Advancement Award was presented by Mike Flanagan, SR/WA. This award is periodically bestowed upon those who demonstrate a long-term commitment to advancing lifelong learning among right of way professionals. This year, the award was given to Carol Brooks, SR/WA, who passed away in February. There wasn't a dry eye in the hall as Carol's son, David, accepted the award on her behalf. "She made her mark, she made us proud. Most importantly, she made God proud," David said in his closing remarks.

IRWA's most esteemed honor, the Frank C. Balfour Professional of the Year Award, recognizes individuals who demonstrate exemplary support and commitment to the Association through leadership. This year's award winner was Carol Bellinger, SR/WA.

"For the younger generation here, this is the best Association that you can be in for you to spread your wings, give it a try, and no matter what happens, we have brothers and sisters here who will help you through it," Carol said, then followed with a promise to always be a mentor to those who needed it.



The Frank C. Balfour Professional of the Year Award was presented to Carol Bellinger, SR/WA



David Brooks accepted the Ronald Jourdan, SR/WA Advancement Award on behalf of his mother, Carol Brooks, SR/WA



The winner of the Gene L. Land Award with the Highest Numerical Gain was Los Angeles, CA, Chapter 1, Region 1



The winner of the Gene L. Land Award with the Highest Percentage Gain was Australia, Chapter 86



The Chapter of the Year Winner was Ohio, Chapter 13, Region 5





MONDAY NIGHT EVENT

The Monday Night Event was a smash hit. The Espee, the renovated, historic Southern Pacific rail depot, was filled with attendees donning festive cowboy hats as they excitedly gathered for pictures with the live longhorns and cheered on the armadillos racing around their enclosure. Over 600 attendees enjoyed a delicious spread of authentic Texas barbeque paired with refreshing drinks. Live music from The Rick Cavender Band set the tone for a stirring evening of good food, friends and family.

This year saw the return of the real-time electronic app Handbid, which was utilized for the silent auction. Later that evening, the live auction took place, featuring a hand puppet of outgoing International President Sharon Slauenwhite, SR/WA. The total auction profit was approximately \$12,715.

As the sun slipped from the sky and took the sweltering heat with it, the market lights, strung high over the venue, cast a soft, golden glow over the Espee, and attendees eagerly collected on the dance floor to appreciate the live music up close. The memorable Monday Night Event brought in \$46,735, which contributed to the grand total of approximately \$59,450 in net proceeds for right of way education.

The Foundation wishes to thank their generous sponsors: IRWA Chapter 8, Chapter 10, Chapter 25, Chapter 32, Chapter 36, Chapter 39, Chapter 49, Chapter 74 and IRWA Region 2; CBRE; Cobb, Fendley & Associates; Croft & Associates, LLC; H.C. Peck & Associates Inc.; HDR; Hornsby Appraisers and Consultants; JLL; LPA; LW Survey Company; NuStar Energy; O.R. Colan Associates; Pinnacle Consulting Management Group, Inc.; Pyles Whatley; Rutherford, MacDonald & Olson, P.C.; Stateside Right of Way Services; THC; Tidemark Land Services; Tierra Right of Way Services; and Valbridge Property Advisors.





BOARD OF DIRECTORS



On Wednesday, June 9, 2021, International President Sharon Slauenwhite, SR/WA, virtually welcomed members in attendance to the Board of the Directors Meeting and acknowledged both in-person and virtual attendees.

The first order of business was to approve of the minutes from the previous annual meeting, which was held virtually. The minutes were distributed electronically in advance. The motion to approve of the minutes as distributed was passed. Later in the meeting, the International Executive Committee (IEC) and International Governing Council (IGC) minutes from the past year were also accepted as distributed previously online.

Sharon then invited International Treasurer Judy Jones, SR/WA, to provide the finance committee report, which was distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Judy remarked that the finances from June 2021, which would include the conference budget, had not been reported yet, but the target was to end the month on budget. The motion to accept the 2020-2021 reports as presented was passed. Later, Judy presented the 2021-2022 budget; the finance committee met 13 times this year, and the proposed budget was presented at the IEC, IGC and at each of the 10 Region Forums. The 2021-2022 budget was approved as circulated.



Education Foundations

The Board of Directors Meeting then recessed, and President of the Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF) Carol Croft, SR/WA, provided an overview of the Foundation's efforts. She announced that the trustees had approved of The Leaders Light the Way Memorial Scholarship, which honors the memory of those leaders who shed a light in the darkness to those who are trying to find their way along the education path to certification and designation. The recipient will receive a \$2,500 scholarship to improve his or her leadership capabilities through education. After this announcement, many heartfelt, generous donations were made in dedication to the monumental figures who had left their lasting mark upon the Association.

"Friends, it's time we rise up," Carol said. "It's time to use these scholarships to bring up new leaders, and it's time to cross over beyond the speed bumps of life, and it's time to move forward."



Following Carol's impassioned speech, President of the Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation (CRWEF) Shannon Favaro, SR/WA, joined virtually to provide updates and introduce the incoming board members. She gave a financial update and gave details on the CRWEF student scholarship.

Business and Nominations

The Board of Directors Meeting reconvened with one board resolution, introduced by General Counsel Dave Arnold, SR/WA. The resolution, posted online prior to the meeting, proposed that the territorial limits for Region 4 and Region 5 be revised and that IRWA's newest Chapter, Three Rivers Chapter 88, be a part of Region 5. The motion passed.

International Nominations and Elections Committee (INEC) Chair Jenni Kriner, SR/WA, then took the stage to present the nominations for the International Executive Committee (IEC). Jake Farrell, SR/WA, was confirmed as IRWA's incoming International President. James Olschewski, SR/WA, Judy Jones, SR/WA, and Fred Easton, SR/WA, were up for reelection and were confirmed. Denise Skinner, SR/WA, joined the IEC as the incoming International Secretary. It was announced that Dave Arnold, SR/WA, would continue as General Counsel for 2021-2022.

International Secretary Fred Easton, SR/WA, presented the International Region Officers, while President Elect Jake Farrell, SR/WA, announced the appointments of the 2021-2022 International Service and Industry Committee chairs. The entire slate then came forward to be sworn in by past International President Faith Roland, SR/WA.

A Growing Vision

Sharon invited Jake to take the stage and share some of his plans as the 2021-2022 International President. Jake emphasized the importance of going back to the basics. "We must honor the rich past of the IRWA while we build an innovative and engaging future IRWA," he remarked.

Adding to his point, he described his vision for the Young Professionals Committee to position themselves as a member resources committee that would include diverse subgroups of members who want to engage in a common voice. He also announced the Advisory Council Liaison, Pat Pettito, SR/WA, who would be serving as the link between the Advisory Council and the IEC. In addition, three committees were added this year: the reinstated Marketing and Membership Committee, led by Faith Roland, SR/WA; the Real Estate Law Committee, chartered by Brad Kuhn, Esq.; and lastly, the Strategic Plan Committee, led by Ida Parrett, SR/WA, Beth Smith, SR/WA, Dan Bucan, SR/WA, and Sandy Grigg, SR/WA.

Lastly, he addressed the importance in selecting the senior staff leader at headquarters and shared his intention to push for the chosen leader's title to be changed from CEO to Executive Director, to be more appropriately aligned with the nonprofit association industry.

He encouraged members to approach him with any questions or thoughts, underlining the importance of their voice. He concluded, "Together, we will leave this Association better for all of us and those to come."



GOLF TOURNAMENT



In conjunction with the 67th Annual International Education Conference, the Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF) and the Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation (CRWEF) hosted their 25th Annual Golf Tournament. The Alamo City Classic was held on June 8th at TPC San Antonio, giving conference attendees and golf enthusiasts a day outdoors for networking and to raise funds for a worthy cause. TPC San Antonio opened January 22, 2010, with 36 holes of golf designed by two of golf's most respected and innovative architects and World Golf Hall of Fame members, Pete Dye and Greg Norman. Situated inside the 2,800 rolling acres of the Cibolo Canyons development at the base of the beautiful Texas Hill Country, both the AT&T Canyons Course (designed by Pete Dye and PGA TOUR Player Consultant Bruce Lietzke) and the AT&T Oaks Course (designed by Greg Norman and PGA TOUR Player Consultant Sergio Garcia) were built with the infrastructure to act as host venues for PGA TOUR tournaments. A full field of 144 golfers enjoyed their rounds on the Canyons Course. Everyone enjoyed contests for chipping, closest-to-the-pin on the Par 3 holes, men's and women's long drives, as well as the top three tournament finishes and a closing raffle. The event successfully raised approximately \$22,000 for right of way education.

The Foundations would like to thank the participants, as well as the generous sponsors. Special thanks to **Platinum Sponsors:** Paragon Partners, Ltd., Croft & Associates, Norfleet Land Services, IRWA's International Pipeline Committee, IRWA Region 3, IRWA Region 5; **Diamond Sponsors:** Coates Field Services, Inc., Region 7; **Gold Sponsors:** Liberty Core Consultants, Refined Land Services, LLC, RWIEF Trustees; **Silver Sponsors:** Percheron, LLC., Pattison & Associates, Inc., O'Brien Realty Advisors, JLL Valuation; **Bronze Sponsors:** Contract Land Staff, Texas Land Professionals, Inc., TRC, CBRE.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

This year's international conference in San Antonio was an opportunity for both the broader Association and Young Professionals (YP) to reunite, reconnect and demonstrate the energy, momentum and dedication that earned the group formal committee status just two years ago in Portland. Despite the challenges of the preceding year, the Young Professionals grew in involvement and membership and channeled that energy to plan and deliver one of the best Saturday Night Events thus far at San Antonio's Little Rhein Prost Haus. With the fluid nature of the hybrid conference, there were many unknowns, but the Young Professionals rose to the occasion, planning an event enjoyed by over 150 attendees! We could not have done it without our fantastic Region 2 YP representatives and the event planning committee, who took on this exciting challenge with gusto. We also send a special thanks to our sponsors who jumped right in with us and generously donated over \$13k in support of our efforts: IRWA Chapter 8, Halo Land Management, IRWA Chapter 39, IRWA Chapter 74, IRWA Chapter 36, Community National Title, IRWA Chapter 6, CBRE, IRWA Region 2, Valbridge Property Advisors, Croft & Associates, Whiteley Oliver, CLS, Percheron, Flairdocs, Weisser Engineering & Surveying, Paragon Partners and IRWA Chapter 4.

As we conclude the fun and excitement of conference, I am honored to be serving as chair with Vice Chair Amanda Vande Voorde, RWP, and Secretary Conner McDonald, SR/WA. The Young Professionals Committee is excited to continue growing the committee, increasing the involvement of Young Professionals in the Association and industry and most importantly, serving as a place of common ground for all right of way professionals. Since inception, the committee has functioned to connect us all as practitioners — whether new in the industry or seasoned in their careers, the YP Committee has served as common ground for all, and that continues to be our calling as we head into another exciting year!



— Sarah Williams, RWP, Young Professionals Committee Chair

CONFERENCE SPONSORS

In Appreciation

IRWA is pleased to give special recognition to our sponsors for their generosity in making this year's conference a success.

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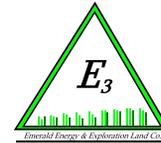


Allen, Williford & Seale, Inc.
Right of Way Valuations

PREMIER

PLATINUM

GOLD



SILVER



OTHER



EXHIBIT HALL

With hundreds of attendees, the Exhibit Hall served as an ideal venue for exhibitors to showcase their products and services to the dedicated right of way professionals in attendance. This was an excellent networking opportunity for many, and participants were excited to see familiar faces once again.

1. Allen, Williford & Seale, Inc.
2. Atwell, LLC
3. 2022 Conference Host — Cleveland, Ohio
4. Contract Land Staff
5. Emerald Energy



11. LJA Engineering, Inc.
12. Pandell
13. Refined Land Services, LLC
14. Right of Way International Education Foundation
15. TexasFile





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- 6. Flairdocs
- 7. HDR, Inc.
- 8. IRWA International Transportation Committee
- 9. JLL Valuation Advisory
- 10. LIA Administrators & Insurance Services



13



14



15



19

- 16. ThoughtTrace
- 17. Valbridge Property Advisors
- 18. Wood
- 19. WSB



COMMITTEES, COUNCILS AND REGIONS

IRWA's strength is derived from the dedicated right of way professionals who serve on International Committees. The Association credits their participation, leadership and collaboration in advancing important industry initiatives.

The Annual Conference provides a unique opportunity for members to discuss topics, relevant industry changes, trends and upcoming educational initiatives. The International Committees focused on issues impacting the core segments associated with the right of way profession, while the service committees discussed key initiatives that would help move the Association forward. New to this year was a hybrid component, which allowed committee members to attend virtually as well as in person.

IRWA is also guided and supported by the leadership of its various councils. The International Governing Council (IGC) represents each of the 10 Regions working in conjunction with the International Executive Committee and Headquarters staff. The Advisory Council is comprised of past International Presidents, and the International Relations Group focuses on building the Association's international presence. The Right of Way Consultants Council represents the industry's service companies that work to develop standardized practices. Supporting the Association's educational initiatives are the Right of Way International Education Foundation and the Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation, which met virtually post-conference.





CLOSING GALA



The 67th Annual International Education Conference drew to a close with a lively celebration at the Closing Gala. In her closing remarks, International President Sharon Slauenwhite, SR/WA, thanked the volunteers, members and staff leaders for supporting her in this journey. Sharon also acknowledged the many women who won awards or stepped into leadership positions this year and how that was a part of her presidency she would reminisce upon warmly.

She concluded her speech with a touching farewell to all members: “My wish for each of you is that you always have something to do, something to love and something to hope for. If you always have those three things, you will be of service, you will have joy and friendship in your life, and you will always be looking to the future. To me, that sounds like the IRWA.”



Stepping into the role as International President, Jake Farrell, SR/WA, was called to the stage to accept the president’s pin. After thanking his family and colleagues for their support, he spoke of the path that led him to this moment and encouraged members to step up and become responsibility-driven leaders. “I started this journey creating my own legacy, and I’d like to challenge each and every one of you to discover and fulfill yours,” Jake said. “The direction in our lives can change as quickly as a single, unexpected moment — seize it, absorb it and let it lead you to new heights.”

The night ended with Matt and Georgia signing off as conference co-chairs, followed by an exciting, rock ‘n’ roll-themed preview of: The 68th Annual International Education Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. The remainder of the evening was spent on the dance floor, with the beloved cardboard cutout of Sharon (who appeared at all major events throughout the week) making a final cameo, rising over the merry crowd.



