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President's message: Volunteers of distinction - by Karen Friel

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Karen Friel, Appraisal Institute

David Cary, Jr, MAI was recently named a Volunteer of Distinction for Region IV of the Appraisal Institute. Cary's service to the Massachusetts and Rhode Island Chapter has been ongoing for more than two decades. "David Cary has shown a great commitment to the Appraisal Institute," said Appraisal Institute president Jim Amarin, MAI, SRA, AI-GRS. "We are proud to have volunteers like Dave who have dedicated themselves to the advancement of our organization, the valuation profession and their local communities."

Cary has served the Mass. and R.I. Chapter as a member of the nominating committee; a member of the board of directors; and chair of the social committee. He was president in 2009; vice president and regional representative from 2007-08; treasurer and chair of the finance committee in 2007. Cary was a member of the national Young Advisory Council from 1998-99. He joined the Appraisal Institute in 1992, and received his MAI designation in 2002.

Our chapter runs because of volunteers like Cary. Many others who have served the chapter in the past and others currently serving dedicate their efforts to making the appraisal profession stronger. But as a chapter volunteer, I have learned that service with the Appraisal Institute is definitely not a one-way street. There are a great many professional and personal benefits that coming from serving.

The most obvious benefit is the opportunity to form professional relationships. Peer relationships are important because many appraisers are sole practitioners working in relative isolation. It is important to have a professional source to turn to for data leads, contacts or perhaps to discuss a particularly challenging appraisal assignment. In fact, USPAP's Scope of Work Rule notes that an appraisal's Scope of Work is acceptable when it meets or exceeds:

- The expectations of parties who are regularly intended users for similar assignments; and
- What an appraiser's peers' actions would be in performing the same or a similar assignment.

Chapter service facilitates these critical peer relationships. Chapter volunteers have the opportunity

to hone their organizational, communication and leadership skills far beyond those used in professional appraisal practice. The Mass. and R.I. Chapter runs cutting edge educational events that often feature practicing appraisers presenting ideas and case studies that are not found in the textbooks. These events are organized and set up by another set of chapter volunteers along with our executive director, Lianne Andreucci. Chapter committee assignments allow volunteers to pursue their own interests within the organization. Chapter volunteers can work on broad industry problems both on the state and national level or on a more personal level they can mentor the next generation of appraisers in the candidate/advisor program.

Volunteer opportunities at the regional and national levels of the Appraisal Institute present yet another set of opportunities. Assignments on national committees such as government relations, education, admissions and designation qualifications offer opportunities to shape the profession going forward. These positions can also be stepping stones to national director and officer positions. A national officer of the Appraisal Institute is a voice for the profession speaking nationally and internationally before professional and governmental bodies including the United States Congress. Testifying before Congress is a long way from the traditional appraisal practice but the Appraisal Institute volunteer system is inclusive and rewarding.

Consider getting involved in the Mass. and R.I. Chapter or on the regional or national level. We'd love to work with you for the betterment of the profession.

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