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Maine Chapter of Appraisal Institute's president's message - by Tina O'Connell

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I wanted to take a moment to personally thank Don MacKay for his hard work over the past year as president of the chapter. He has done a tremendous job keeping up with the many tasks required of him. He deserves some recognition for his strong leadership, which has had a broad reach over a diverse group of members and appraisal industry sectors. Thanks Don for representing all of us locally, regionally, and nationally. I also want to thank the board of directors, chapter leadership, and committee members who have been giving of their time to help keep things moving.

To build on what the board of directors, chapter leadership, and Don have started, I hope to continue to try and bring more of us appraisers together so we can be a stronger voice advocating for our profession as it continues to change and evolve. Now more than ever it seems we need to foster a network and forum for our industry professionals where we can share ideas and brainstorm new approaches to our changing world. I also hope to continue to bring to Maine interesting and relevant educational offerings. One of the primary benefits of being involved in the Appraisal Institute is taking advantage of educational offerings, not only those offerings developed on a national level, but also locally. We have the ability on a local level to bring current and relevant topics to our members in a fairly quick time frame. Therefore, we welcome topic suggestions and ideas that you want to see.

In 2019 we had some great continuing education events at our chapter meetings as well as some national education offerings. In May's chapter meeting we offered a Maine Economic Update, hosted at the Bangor Savings Bank Augusta facility meeting room at no cost to appraisers. We had over 60 people attend. Other chapter developed offerings in 2019 included a double-course event about flood zone maps and shoreland zoning, a class on the use of drones in appraising, an MLS training session, and a panel discussion on banking regulations. We also hosted one of Appraisal Institutes newer courses on Advanced Land Valuation, taught by Vince Dowling, MAI, which brought appraisers to Freeport, from as far away as Michigan and Georgia. And lastly, we offered an older, but still relevant, national developed course on the Income Approach for Residential Properties,

taught by Edward Bowler, MAI.

At our educational offerings throughout the year we asked attendees to fill out a survey ranking their interest in a variety of national course offerings, as well as an opportunity for write-in suggestions. Based on our education survey results, we are looking to bring the expert witness course series and the green building series to Maine over the next several years. There was also a high level of interest in going concern related courses. In July, I attended the national chapter leadership conference in Denver, where I took away many new ideas shared by other chapter leaders about meetings, events, education and government relations. One example being considered is a residential roundtable discussion that would focus on the changes effecting residential appraisers. I am also hoping to bring people together for chapter meetings at new venues and developments where developers/owners can share insights about the project, along with networking opportunities. Another area of focus will be to create opportunities where we can invite state legislators and/or national leadership members to our meetings giving us a chance to be heard and start the conversation about topics important to us here in Maine.

The Maine chapter is hosting the USPAP update course in two locations in January, both taught by Ted Whitmer, MAI. One class will be on January 13th in Augusta and the other will be on January 14th in Freeport.

In conclusion, I look forward to the coming year with much hope that I will see more of you at our meetings and events. Stay tuned for more information about our first quarter chapter meeting. I'm working on a possible brewery tour with some shared insights by the brewery owner and an appraiser on what considerations go into appraising such a facility, coupled with some good food, drink, and networking amongst your fellow appraisers.

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