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MA, R.I. & ME Chapter of the Appraisal Institute president's message: Springtime is a season for growth and renewal - by Brad Hevenor

March 25, 2022 - Front Section



Brad Hevenor

With the dark days of winter now behind us, springtime is a season for growth and renewal. While the Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Maine Chapter of the Appraisal Institute has its sights optimistically set on the year ahead, we retain an appreciation of the challenges we have faced to get here, and those that remain. As we ease into warmer weather and cautiously emerge from our pandemic hibernations, we look forward to seeing more of our colleagues and members in person this year. Stay tuned for some exciting summer social events that should give us a chance to gather together and have some fun and relaxation – we have certainly earned it.

One upcoming in-person event that I would like to highlight is our 2022 Jay Zeiger Service Day. This year we are gathering at the Greater Boston Food Bank on March 29 at 1:00 PM to inspect, sort, and repack donated grocery products which will then be distributed to hunger relief organizations. The Chapter is pleased to return to the GBFB, who – last year alone - distributed 117 million pounds of food to people who struggle to have enough to eat. We are also dedicated to renewing our tradition of honoring the memory of Jay Zeiger, MAI. Mr. Zeiger was known for his dedication to the appraisal profession, his service to our organization, as well as his active volunteer work and fundraising for cancer research and treatment, which he continued during his own five-year illness. Please consider joining us for this event, with details available on the Chapter website (<https://ma-ri-me-appraisal institute.org/meetings-and-events-2/upcoming-meetings-and-events/jay-zeiger-service-day/>). If you are unable to attend in person, please keep Jay's memory in mind on that day, and consider initiating your own acts of service to carry forward his legacy.

Each year, our Education Committee makes available locally the resources of the nation's leader of real property valuation. Moving forward with our "all in" approach to education, the Chapter will continue to offer a variety of events and offerings in the coming months, whether they are virtual, on-line, or in person, and locations across our territory. On the heels of an USPAP offering in Augusta, ME, we are hosting a virtual update on March 15. We are excited to be in person for multiple continuing education seminars in Massachusetts, Maine, and Rhode Island in March, April, and May. Our Chapter's Education Committee has scheduled the following educational offerings:

- March 25-26: George Dell's Stats, Graphs, and Data Science (Needham, MA)
- April 1-2, 8-9: Basic Appraisal Procedures (Braintree, MA)
- April 12: Getting it Right from the Start: A Workout Plan for Your Scope of Work (Warwick, RI)
- April 14: Supervisor Appraiser/Trainee Appraiser Course (Virtual)
- April 21: How to Become a Real Estate Appraiser (Webinar)
- May 17-20, 24-27: Basic Appraisal Principles (Synchronous)
- May 23: Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions: Practical Applications

(Freeport, ME)

The Chapter continues to monitor the critical issue of racial justice as it relates to our profession. Please take a moment to review the Appraiser Diversity Initiative (<https://www.appraisalinstitute.org/the-appraisal-profession/appraiser-diversity-initiative/>) on the Appraisal Institute's Website. This important initiative, in partnership with the National Urban Lease, Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac, is hosting a webinar at 7 PM on April 21 on "How to Become A Real Estate Appraiser." Residential appraisers play a crucial role in homeownership and mortgage lending. In recent years, as fewer people are pursuing careers as appraisers, the current appraiser workforce is overwhelmingly over the age of 50, male, and not racially or ethnically diverse. The ADI is hoping to promote opportunity and provide guidance and support to help overcome the many barriers to entry to the appraisal profession. The workshop will inform attendees about opportunities to work flexible hours in the field or office, using cutting edge technology, with multiple career paths available. This webinar is one among many programs the Appraisal Institute is working on to focus on expanding opportunities for aspiring minority appraisers, combat unconscious bias in valuation and find solutions to promote the flow of credit in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.

It is hard to highlight this upcoming webinar without commenting on the recent letter from representative Maxine Waters, chairwoman of the House Committee on Financial Services, to the Appraisal Subcommittee, Appraisal Foundation, and the Appraisal Institute. Chairwoman Water's letter was in response to reprehensible comments made by a designated member of the Appraisal Institute in an email to Dr. Elizabeth Korver-Glenn, a leading researcher on the topic of bias and discrimination in housing. At a time when our profession is working to address issues of bias in housing valuation, the racist content and vitriolic tone of this email was devastating to read, and I condemn it in the strongest terms. In 2021, the Appraisal Institute approved amendments to its Code of Professional Ethics intended to address issues of bias and discrimination in valuation to protect the public trust in the appraisal profession. The recent incident further highlights the need for new systems of accountability and enforcement aimed at addressing discrimination and valuation bias. AI president Pledger Bishop has declared addressing potential bias in housing and appraisal as his "top priority for 2022." The MA-RI-ME Chapter supports this priority and will work this year to keep our membership informed of developments, locally and nationally, on this important topic.

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