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SIOR New England Chapter attends spring Las Vegas Global Conference

June 13, 2025 - Front Section



Shown (from left) are: Bob Cleary, Elvis and Rob Nahigian.

Las Vegas, NV SIOR held its spring convention for 2025 in Las Vegas. It was reported that it was the largest attended spring conference in SIOR history with over 1,000 attendees. Approximately 10 SIOR New England Chapter members and guests attended this event held at Caesar's Palace Hotel. The conference took place from Tuesday, May 6 to Friday, May 9. It was full of social and educational events. The New England Chapter held a chapter only dinner on Tuesday night at the

Gordon Ramsay Restaurant. Approximately 13 members and guests attended. Wednesday was the Industrial Forum with a report from various SIOR members on the status of the industrial market. Generally speaking, the industrial market seems to have come to a halt in many markets. With the new tariffs, there seems to be a wait and see attitude. Many of the large industrial requirements have come to a screeching halt.

Rob Nahigian with Justin Wren (key note speaker and former national champion wrestler)

The first of Chinese products under the new tariff has just arrived to the U.S. and it may take a few weeks to feel its effect. The general conclusion was that the industrial market should pick up by the end of 2025 or early 2026. There have been many layoffs, and the LA Port is down by 33% on business. Many ships are not operating.

The keynote speaker was Justin Wren. He is a 10-time state wrestling champion, five-time All-American and two time National Champion Wrestler and a UFC veteran. He has been inducted into the Black Belt magazine Hall of Fame. He left wrestling to become a humanitarian, founder and CEO of a not for-profit organization named, Fight for the Forgotten. He is working with poor tribes in the Amazon that have no housing, no water and no infrastructure. He is in the midst of raising \$6 million to build housing, health care and school facilities. He started with Stacking Your Reasons to Exist and Challenge Accepted. He said that he was addicted and on alcohol during his wrestling career and found a new purpose. He needed to have a purpose through service and it was a trip to the Amazon that changed his life. He stated that we need to Live with, Listen, Learn and Love those who are less fortunate. We are fortunate in what we have in the U.S., but many do not have fresh water. He showed slides of carrying containers of fresh water for 3 hours from its source. He then spent 6 months drilling 50-60 times to try to find an aquifer. He said to remember why and who you are fighting for. Opportunity is greater than charity. If you feel that you are only one person and can never make a difference for a cause because the cause is so big and overwhelming, he said to remember this. Sleep in a room with closed windows and one mosquito in the room. One small mosquito can make a difference to your night of sleep.

SIOR also introduced its newest CEO, Jim Dinegar who replaced retiring Robert Thornburgh. Dinegar is in his first week of SIOR and met with the Legacy Group. He told them that he works for two goals. First SIOR is a member organization, and he works for the members and the betterment of its members. Second, he will work to keep SIOR in the black financially during his tenure. Dinegar intends to listen to all the members but loves the spirit of the SIOR family and how everyone works together.

SIOR also announced that there was a recipient for the Howell Watson Award, the highest award from SIOR. The last recipient was in 2023. This year the award was granted to Mark Goode of Chicago who is a past instructor and has been an SIOR for 45 years. He also runs the Investment Program at the SIOR conferences with Herb Krumsick. The award was first issued in 1959.

Congratulations to Goode. The fall convention will be in Louisville.

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