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## **R.I. chapter of A.I. poised to meet the needs of members**

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As we enter 2009, the Rhode Island chapter of the Appraisal Institute is poised to meet the changing needs of our membership. Members of the Appraisal Institute have long been held in high esteem from those organizations and institutions we serve. In past years various governmental regulations created appraisal licensing and certification; this emerged to establish the minimum standards of our profession. However, the Appraisal Institute, through their professional designation programs (MAI, SRPA, and SRA), has consistently set forth the highest of industry standards in both the professional services and ethical behavior of our members

Accordingly, a primary focus this year will be not only to continue programs and initiatives that safeguard membership retention; but to oversee and implement new membership recruitment. Recently, the Appraisal Institute has changed the parameters of associate membership; they now allow "trainees" and "aspiring appraisers" to apply thereby offering membership status for all appraisers.

Not unlike other state chapters across the country Rhode Island designated appraisers have an average age of approximately 55+ years. It is important that we increase our population of designated members commensurate with the growth of the appraisal profession. For us to remain a viable and respected organization we will need to find younger appraisers to replace existing designated members as they move toward inevitable retirement. This will only be accomplished by meeting the needs for high quality educational programs and the continuous mentoring of those associate members working towards a designation.

Another goal for the upcoming year will be the creation of a hard working and vigilant Governmental Affairs Committee. The recent financial crisis of 2008 will surely bring new challenges and regulatory changes to our industry. I envision this committee working closely with the Appraisal Institute on a national level along with our Rhode Island congressional and state delegations to promote the Appraisal Institute's policies and programs regarding legislation and regulations that are of importance to appraiser.

In closing, I think we can all agree that technology is our future. In fact, it has emerged as a vital part of our every day business. We are fortunate to be part of a progressive and innovative organization that uses high-tech to advance the cause of the appraisal industry. Between the years of 2005-2007 there have been over 6 million visitors to the Institute's web site of which 1.2 million alone searched the web to find an appraiser. On-line education continues to be a valuable resource for education. There are four unique "podcasts" available from "Expanding Your Career Horizons" to "Green Buildings." All of which will produce professional and knowledgeable appraisers.

The challenges are daunting. Nonetheless, as the newly elected president I am pleased to

acknowledge I am surrounded by the "best of the best." Together the newly elected officers and directors have many years of experience. Their knowledge of the industry will serve us well as we move forward in 2009. Collectively, their efforts will assure that the legacy of excellence continues!

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