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Communicator

December 2022/January 2023
Volume 6, Issue 2

President's Message

Membership Luncheon >>>

**Our next luncheon
will be held on
February 1, 2023.**

Topic:

CEQA Update for Right of Way Professionals

Speakers:

*Ali Tehrani, Esq. & Megan Kilmer, Esq
of Best Best & Krieger LLP*



3767 Iowa Ave. #4549
Riverside, California
92507

By Hector Casillas, SR/WA

Chapter 57 IRWA Members...

On behalf of the entire Chapter 57 Board, happy New Year! We hope your holidays were filled with joy and laughter.

I'm happy to report the chapter successfully hosted its first education course in over three years which was held in November, Course 100 was a hit and it sold out! Many thanks to Education Chairs, Kelley Kelley and Tim Green, for their efforts

in bringing valuable training to all members. Stay tuned for future course offerings they are securing this year.

Robbie Hechanova, Kelley Kelley, and I are planning on attending the IRWA Annual Education Conference in Denver, CO, June 25-28, 2023 where we will vote on IRWA business and elect new officers. We welcome all members to [register](#) and join us in Denver.

In some sad news, the IRWA Right of Way Education Foundation's past president, Mrs. Carol A. Croft, passed away on October 15, 2022 and in honor of her legacy, Chapter 57 donated \$500 to the foundation as our token of appreciation. I'd like to note, our members have directly benefited from scholarships from the foundation. Ms. Darcy Mendoza was the recipient of the Leader's Light the Way Scholarship in 2022 and I was the recipient of

the State Association of Real Property Agents Scholarship in 2016. The chapter is grateful for the contributions the foundation has and

The chapter is grateful to RWIEF's commitment to educate its members.

continues to make in educating its members and assisting those in the various paths towards earning an IRWA designation. As a reminder, there is still time to apply for the Foundatin's new Leader's Light the Way 2.0 scholarship, all the details are in their [website](#). Good luck to all of those applying. I'm looking forward to seeing more Chapter 57 members receiving these scholarships!

In other news, the chapter will be opening nominations for officers soon and if you're interested in serving and volunteering at the local chapter level, please [email](#) Nominations & Elections Chair, Ms. Christie Santolucito.

Please like us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on our new Instagram page (IRWA Chapter 57) to keep up with the latest information.

I am looking forward to seeing you at our next in person event.

Stay safe,
Hector Casillas, SR/WA

IRWA Courses – Regional 1

C402 Introduction to the Income Capitalization Approach, 1/19/23, Virtual Class

C804 Skills of Expert Testimony, 1/30/23, Virtual Class (Instructor TBD)

C801 U.S. Land Titles, 1/30/23, Virtual Class (Instructor TBD)

C604 Environmental Due Diligence and Liability, 1/31/23, Virtual Class

C417 The Valuation of Environmentally Contaminated Real Estate, 2/1/23, Virtual Class (Instructor TBD)

C902 Property Descriptions, 2/8/23, Virtual Class (CH. 44)

C701 Property/Asset Management: Leasing, 2/9/23, Virtual Class

C409 Integrating Appraisal Standards, 2/13/23, Instructor-Led Virtual Class (Instructor TBD)

C209 Negotiating Effectively with a Diverse Clientele, 2/15/23, Virtual Class (Instructor TBD)

C505 Advanced Residential Relocation Assistance, 2/15/23, Virtual Class (Instructor TBD)

Additional courses are listed on IRWA's website at www.irwaonline.org

Are you interested in taking a free class? Contact Kelley Kelley, Timothy Green, or any of the Board members, to find out how you can become a coordinator.

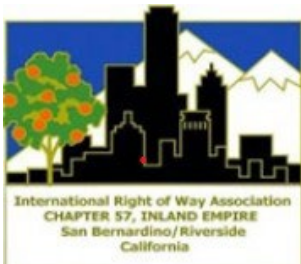


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IRWA Mission Statement

The International Right of Way Association will be the worldwide leader for innovation and excellence in the acquisition and management of right of way and public use.



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Staff Augmentation

Empowerment through Independent Problem Solving

An invaluable skill as one travels through life

By Yasmin L. Stump, ESQ.

When the holidays came to close in 2022, I carefully packed my Christmas tree ornaments away, as I do each year, and came across one that represents far more than merely a whimsical or elegant embellishment for my tree. My black Converse high-top athletic shoe ornament reminded me of an extremely valuable lesson I learned decades ago about effective problem solving.

In the mid-1970s, I was in eighth grade and attended a parochial school in Indiana. While green-and-gray plaid skirts and white blouses were mandatory uniforms for girls in the seventh and eighth grades, the dress code was far more flexible for our footwear. But this flexibility created a hierarchy in the students' popularity. All the cool kids wore Converse high tops, which were extremely expensive at that time. It is serendipitous that this same brand of shoes has recently enjoyed a resurgence in fashion popularity.

The problem for me was that my financially strict parents were adamant they would not spend money on what they considered a frivolous fad. Looking back, now that I am older and more objective, I agree that costly gym shoes were not a wise investment, not to mention a less than flattering accessory with my school's eighth-grade uniform and knee socks. At that time though, my parents' practical position did little to console a young teenager who was trying to fit in with her classmates, particularly since any gym shoes other than Converse were labeled as "buddies," and their

wearers were often the subjects of painful ridicule.

Being a strong-willed youngster, I would not allow myself to be dissuaded by my parents' refusal to buy a pair of Converse for me. I was steadfast in my determination to obtain a pair, even if I had to purchase them myself, which is exactly what I did. First, I searched and found a pair on sale, albeit the shoe color was limited to a single color — black. Second, I used the money I saved from babysitting to purchase them. Not only was I able to attain my goal, but I did so cost effectively, undoubtedly influenced by my parents' thriftiness. I can remember the elation I felt the first time I wore the shoes and walked across the school playground that crisp autumn morning. The other students were abuzz with talk about my new footwear. Although the object of my goal may have been superficial and materialistic, my feeling of jubilation was due to something more meaningful than possessing an in-style item or that my new shoes were the subject of conversation during morning recess. I was thrilled I figured out a way to attain a goal by devising and carrying out a plan. From that point forward, I knew that I would be able to independently confront any challenge.

Problem-Solving Skills are Crucial

This lesson I learned at the tender age of 13 about effective problem solving has been one of the most powerful in my life. While the skill to problem solve is invaluable in an individual's professional and personal lives, managers do not always find it well practiced. Business and

Continues on Page 7

Did you know? >>>

Fun Real Estate Trivia

Flats are the single units in a bigger building that people can rent in the United Kingdom. These same units are called apartments in the United States.



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We'd love to hear from you!

Would you like the Chapter to host a luncheon on your favorite topic? Do you know anyone who would like to speak at an upcoming luncheon? If so, please contact Robbie Hechanova R/W-RAC, President-Elect, at (909) 503-6639, or via e-mail at rhechano@socalgas.com.

Have comments or suggestions for the newsletter?

We value your opinion and welcome your input! If you have any comments or recommendations for the newsletter, please contact Sheryn Smay, SR/WA, Newsletter Chair, at (951) 826-5343 or via e-mail at ssmay@riversideca.gov.



Leaders Light the Way Memorial Scholarship 2.0

Leaders Light the Way

MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP 2.0

Funded by the Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF)



The IRWA supports leadership and professional development in the Association and encourages you to apply for this **\$2,500** scholarship that can be applied toward IRWA education courses.

Applications must be submitted by **March 1, 2023**.

APPLY HERE



APPLICATIONS DUE MARCH 1, 2023!

[Application](#)

[More Information](#)

Purpose:

This scholarship offers an impactful way to combine the RWIEF's mission and values of past IRWA leaders. The goal of this program is to identify and support mid-cycle members who can be future IRWA leaders by funding their pursuit of IRWA credentials and professional development. One \$2,500 scholarship toward IRWA education courses will be available to each of IRWA's 68 Chapters within the 10 Regions. The RWIEF will fund the program (up to \$170,000) for two years from June 2022 to May 2024. IRWA will manage the program.

Eligibility:

Scholarship applicants must be active IRWA members in good standing for at least five years, hold the RWA or RWP credential, and have served as either a former or current Chapter or Region officer, or on a Chapter committee. Scholarship funding can only be used toward the registration fee for eligible courses. Courses must be completed by May 31, 2024.

[IRWA Chapter 57 Web site](#)





About RWIEF

THE RIGHT OF WAY INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION WAS ESTABLISHED FOR THE PRUPOSE OF FUNDING RIGHT OF WAY EDUCATION INITIATIVES. THE FOUNDATION FOCUSES ON GENERATING FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND DETERMINES HOW MUST TO ALLOCATE THOSE FUNDS FOR THE BETTERMENT OF RIGHT OF WAY EDUCATION. OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS, FUNDS HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED FOR EDUCATIONAL SUMMITS, CREATION OF NEW COURSES, UPGRADES OF EXISTING COURSES, CONVERSION TO ON-LINE DELIVERY METHODS, AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS. CUTTING-EDGE EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE GROWTH AND ADVANCEMENT OF OUR PROFESSION AND TO EACH OF US AS PROFESSIONALS IN THIS FAST-PACED, EVER-CHANGING INDUSTRY.



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Empowerment (continued)

organizational leaders routinely encounter individuals who, although they have other impressive qualities and skills, are woefully inadequate in effective problem solving. Team members often bombard leaders with questions about what to do next about the challenges they confront. Some employees seem incapable of identifying an issue, much less crafting a workable solution. Others have admirable goals but have no idea of how to attain them, and there are those who seem to meander through their professional lives with absolutely no direction whatsoever. If one has a goal but no plan about how to attain it, it's like getting in a car and knowing what your destination is but not the route on how to get there. If one has no defined goals, then it is like driving around aimlessly.

Can Problem-Solving Skills be Taught?

Is effective problem solving only an innate trait, a skill attained through years of advanced education and training, or can it be taught in the workplace? Clearly, some are endowed naturally with strong problem-solving skills, and others have been educated in subjects in which such skills are taught, honed and critical to success. Law students are taught to employ the method with the acronym "IRAC" (Issue, Rule of law, Application and Conclusion) when they read and evaluate cases found in their voluminous law school textbooks.

Similarly, in preparation for working in the corporate world or becoming entrepreneurs, business students are taught about various company models with issues that students must identify and appropriately resolve.

While some people may have the innate ability to problem solve, and others may have gained the skills through years of post-secondary education, like other skills, problem solving can be taught on the job. In a November 20, 2013 blog post by Sabrina Baker on the Society for Human Resource Management website, she noted that this question about problem-solving skills is like the age-old question about leadership skills and assured readers that such skills can indeed be taught.

At a time in history when fierce competition exists to hire and retain talented professionals in the right of way industry, one of the most valuable gifts a leader can give team members is to teach them the skill to effectively solve problems on their own. In her article, "Leadership Tips to Help Your Employees Solve Their Own Problems," on Rhythm Systems' website, business growth consultant Cathy McCullough explained, "Change is coming at us with little remorse. It's fast and furious and in all honesty, you don't have the time to solve every single problem all day long for every employee." Teaching your employees to effectively solve

problems not only frees up time and boosts efficiency for managers but also increases team members' confidence and significantly bolsters their professional development.

Creating a Culture that Promotes Effective Problem Solving

Leaders can teach problem-solving skills, but to do so successfully, an appropriate culture needs to be created. McCullough explained, "often leaders fail to create environments where this kind of behavior can flourish." She recommended that to do so, managers be approachable. In my firm, approachability is fostered through an open-door policy. Younger team members are encouraged to consult with those more experienced to discuss issues and potential resolutions.

Additionally, leaders can assist with developing problem-solving skills by listening carefully to their team members when they present a challenge and vet a solution. While a manager may be tempted to merely tell an employee what to do in such a situation, problem-solving skills are developed by asking them questions. For instance, they can be asked to identify an issue, what their optimal outcome or expectation is, the various resolutions for resolving the issue and the one that they would recommend or pursue.

"Team members should be encouraged to expand beyond their comfort zone and think independently..."

Team members should be encouraged to expand beyond their comfort zone and think independently, rather than consistently relying upon others for direction. In my firm, independent thinking is advocated by the principle of never asking a question to which you can find the answer on your own. Although it may take longer initially for employees to find an answer, the process of searching for and obtaining the answer will allow them to retain that answer and boost their self-confidence by doing so.

A culture that promotes effective problem solving also includes a tranquil environment. The first reaction of an employee who has a thorny issue may be to panic, jump to incorrect conclusions or create drama. As the Business Partner Magazine blog "How to Train Employees on Problem Solving Skills" ("BPM blog") recommended, "Remind them to stay calm when a problem arises." They can be asked to sit down, take a few deep breaths and suspend reaction to the situation until they have obtained all pertinent information. The

need to remain serene is critical because judgment is marred by emotional reaction. The ability to remain calm in a crisis starts at the top. Managers need to lead by example and exhibit composure when they confront obstacles.

Set Healthy Boundaries

A culture that promotes problem solving includes establishing boundaries for both managers and employees. To encourage independent problem solving, leaders need to avoid being micromanagers, and, as stated in the BPM blog, "[they need to stop looking over their employees' shoulders] to ensure that they are doing everything right." Likewise, team members also need to understand boundaries with their supervisors for problem solving. They need to appropriately inform their supervisors about the status of their assignments, and a process needs to be developed and followed so that the leader is adequately informed.

A Skill for Life

Teaching effective problem-solving skills is precious to team members beyond the workplace. According to the BPM blog, "Problem-solving skills can be useful in all areas of life. Your employees will become more well-rounded individuals with their problem-solving skills." Ultimately, team members who become more well-rounded in all areas of their lives will be happier and more committed to their work. The time devoted to develop only be a wise organization but

Reprinted from IRWA's Right of Way Magazine: The Voice of the Right of Way Profession, Leadership: Empowerment through Independent Problem Solving, January/February 2023



Yasmin L. Stump, Esq. is an IRWA Chapter 10 past president. She is the president and founder of Yasmin L. Stump Law Group, PC in Indiana and has practiced in real estate transactions and litigation, as well as been a member of the right of way industry, for more than 30 years. Yasmin has 40 years of leadership experience with business and nonprofit organizations and is authoring this column, Leadership.

IRWA Mentor Match



This IRWA is proud to announce the launch of this exciting new member benefit that reflects our commitment to you and your professional development. This unique online networking and career development tool helps you find, connect and share your experiences with your fellow industry peers across the globe! You can simply apply to our IRWA Mentor Match program by following the four steps below:

1. START

First, complete your IRWA profile by ensuring that your contact information, professional profile picture, and bio are all up to date. You can even import your education and job history information from LinkedIn. A complete and accurate profile is crucial to the success of selecting and matching.

2. ENROLL

Next, decide whether you're looking to be a mentor, mentee, or both and sign up today by clicking on the links below:

- Enroll [here](#) as a Mentor
- Enroll [here](#) as a Mentee

Make selections for each of the program demographics to set your preferences. Demographics include: topics, venue, specialties, career stage and start/end date. Please note: Some fields are required for enrollment. The more information you provide, the easier it will be to make the best match. Keep in mind: in order to request a mentor or mentee, you must be enrolled in the program.

3. SEARCH

Then, use the Mentor Program Directory to input your search criteria. You can also take advantage of features to help you find and recruit matches:

- Track your mentoring relationships
- Participate in discussion forums on mentoring topics
- Search for helpful mentoring resources

4. CONNECT

Congratulations! You're all set. You completed steps 1-3 and are now ready for the fun to begin! Enter one or more searches. If you're unsure of the search criteria, select "Search for ALL of the selected values." The Mentor Program Directory will do the work for you and populate the results.

Next, click on the member's name who you're interested in establishing a mentor/mentee connection with. The link will bring you to their profile page. If you think it's an ideal match, look under their profile image for the Mentor Match badge, which when clicked will allow you to request a connection. If it's not a desired match, you can simply select the back button to return to your previous search results.

Let the mentoring begin!





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Joe Villegas, MAI
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CHAPTER 57**

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Secretary	Ramie Dawit
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Immediate Past-President, 2021-22 Parliamentarian and Advisor to the Board	Matt Nusenow, P.E.
Advisors to the Board	
Past President 2020-21	Peggy Barnes
Past President 2019-20	Kim Bibolet, SR/WA, R/W-NAC
Past President 2018-19	Christine Santolucito, R/W-RAC
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Education Co-Chair	Timothy Green
Membership	Griffin Wayne
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Professional Development (2nd Year)	Mike Romo, SR/WA
Professional Development (3rd Year)	Patti Zendejas-Feist, SR/WA
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Events	Darcy Mendoza
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A great big "Atta Boy!" goes to:

Carlos Obando for earning his SR/WA (Oil and Gas Industry)

&

Brenda H. Fusco, R/W-AC for completing the Right of Way Appraisal Cross Certification - Path 1



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APRIL 6, 2023

REGION 1 SPRING FORUM
APRIL 14-15, 2023
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HOSTED BY CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 57 PICNIC
APRIL 22, 2023
(EARTH DAY!)