



President's Message

I welcome our membership to 2022! I hope this message finds you, your families, and your loved ones safe and healthy. I want to thank you for the opportunity to serve as the 2022 President of the Southern California Chapter of the Appraisal Institute ("SCCAI"). As we celebrate our 90th anniversary, we will continue to push forward stronger than ever as the largest Chapter of the Appraisal Institute. This chapter's deep and rich history is made even stronger with the addition of the Central California Chapter to the SCCAI family. This tremendous accomplishment could not have been achieved without the fantastic leadership found within the former Central California Chapter as well as our 2 past presidents, Steve Henry, MAI and Casey Merrill, MAI. As we begin to return to some level of normalcy (fingers crossed), I want to thank our past board members for helping us navigate the turbulence and volatility that confronted our organization with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Casey and Steve did not have the opportunity to engage with the membership as much as they would have liked but due to their quick and strategic decision making, we stayed on track relative to educational offerings and operational excellence, and we owe them a massive THANKS!

The year started off a little mixed, with our Installation Dinner being held in person but as things turned, we quickly pivoted and ultimately decided to host the LA/OC Market Trends Seminar virtually. The Installation Dinner was well attended with 83 people, which was likely due to the amazing Installing Officer, Michael Tidwell, SRA. After such a long time in isolation, it was incredible to see so many friends, family, and current and former colleagues again in person. There were many others who passed along well wishes and wanted to attend but made personal decisions not to, given the increased risks of the Omicron variant. Nevertheless, despite all of the circumstances ongoing at the time, I owe Michael an enormous debt of gratitude for accepting the huge task of being the Installing Officer. In typical Michael fashion, he made this an unforgettable and fun event!

As indicated, we shifted the format for this year's LA/OC Market Trends Seminar in January, which had 118 attendees in all. As with previous years, this seminar was filled with fantastic information and great speakers. We would like to thank Orell Anderson, MAI, Jason Borrás, and Michael Eggleston, MAI for their leadership in putting this fantastic event together. The first in-person offering this year started with a bang, which can be a little weird to say when describing a USPAP class. However, our chapter's own Michael Mason, MAI, SRA continues to pack in the crowds for this offering, which was held in February and had 52 attendees. Ultimately, whether in person or virtually, we must be grateful for the dedication of our instructors, as they keep the wheels on our top-notch education. Speaking of education, I would also like to thank Lianna Ayala for all of the wonderful work that she continues to perform on our behalf in her role of running the chapter office and ensuring that our educational offerings go off without a hitch. In her second year as our Executive Director, Lianna continues to be instrumental in obtaining approvals for the chapter's in-person and virtual seminars through BREA.

Additionally, we have been reviewing some of chapter costs and looking for areas where we can save money, as we did with the move of our chapter office during 2021, and she will be instrumental in navigating the outreach program I discussed at the Installation Dinner and will touch upon below.

It has been absolutely Incredible to see so many people attending our in-person events, and we are currently examining some other opportunities to encourage more participation in the live events. When I originally joined the chapter, educational offerings included “necessities” such as coffee, and we even distributed discount coupons to encourage attendance at local educational offerings. I want to make sure that our members feel like they are appreciated, so more to come on these strategies, but it will be soon!

I would like to thank our Chapter's Board and those leading and serving on committees. Your collective dedication to our chapter is truly valued and appreciated. We are extremely blessed to have these gifted and hard-working members on our 2022 Executive Board:

Vice President – Linda Whittlesey, SRA

Treasurer – Adam Bogorad, MAI

Secretary – Ernesto J. Lopez, MAI, AI-GRS

The 2022 Board would also like to thank Education Chair, Ryan Hargrove, MAI, SRA, AI-GRS as well as our Branch Chairs, Alex Liu, Jan Kelly, and Alex Jaffe, MAI for their time, commitment, and service to this organization. The SCCAI clearly has a rich heritage and tradition of service. As such, I would like to once again thank our Immediate Past President, Steve Henry, MAI for his commitment, leadership, and desire to keep the SCCAI operating at top efficiency.

The larger Appraisal Institute organization approved the Strategic Plan that will guide the organization's efforts in 2022, and beyond. The Board approved the overall Strategic Plan at its August 2021 meeting, and the strategic planning process included input from AI professionals who responded to surveys regarding membership needs. As previously announced, the Strategic Plan includes the following four goals:

- The Appraisal Institute will protect and improve the value of affiliation.
- The Appraisal Institute will provide leadership toward a unified and inclusive profession with diverse perspectives.
- Appraisal Institute professionals will be consistently sought out by users of valuation services.
- The Appraisal Institute will improve the diversity of its affiliated professionals.

These goals truly align with much of what I believe resonates with our membership as well as what I outlined as objectives for the Chapter, which include creating and sustaining a more diverse and inclusive Chapter, increased collaboration and cooperation with other local professional organizations, continued promotion of designations, recognition of accomplishments and milestones of chapter members, and not only attracting new appraisers to the profession but forging the much needed mentor/mentee relationship. Too often we try to “expand the tent”, but do not connect the dots, and we will strive to do a better job.

For those of you in attendance for the Installation Dinner, you heard a commitment from me to conduct outreach. This outreach is critical for the survival and sustainability of our profession, and I firmly believe that this must start early and be grassroots. As such, you also heard me say that I would like to engage in speaking opportunities at high schools, universities, professional clubs, etc. I really want our board members to connect with people in many of the neighborhoods that I was raised within but more importantly, I want the larger community to witness the level of diversity of thought and background found within our organization....just look at our Board. Therefore, if there is a specific school(s) that you believe would benefit from us paying a visit, or if you have a contact for such an

undertaking, please let us know, as we would love to get things moving on this endeavor. As we look to grow our organization and chapter, I would challenge each of you to reach out to a non-member and invite them to one of the mixers, meetings, or educational offerings our Chapter will host this year, as exposure to our organization is the only way we grow membership. We have some great events on the horizon, so no time like the present!

The future of our Chapter is highly dependent on creating opportunities to develop and mentor incoming talent, and a couple of our greatest tools are the Mason/Thornton scholarship fund and LDAC. I would encourage you all to apply or refer someone to the Mason/Thornton scholarship. Every year a portion of our profits go to this fund, and it continues to grow, so please take advantage of this amazing opportunity. As a multiple recipient and a “recommender”, I know how much it helps and how grateful recipients are when it is awarded. As many of you are aware, the Appraisal Institute’s Leadership and Development and Advisory Council (LDAC) has had several false starts, but it is full steam ahead this year and will be held from May 18 – 20 in Washington, D.C. Our chapter has been extremely active at LDAC in recent years, with the most recently completed LDAC being Chaired by our own Immediate Past President (IPP), Steve Henry, MAI. I have the distinct privilege of chairing the upcoming event in May 2022. LDAC, without a doubt, has been the most rewarding professional experience during my career. The program involves travel to Washington, D.C. for training and to meet with legislators in Congressional Offices about laws and bills impacting the appraisal profession but more importantly, it fosters conversations for the growth and development of our profession, which impacts us all. We are extremely lucky to have one of the largest LDAC contingents I have seen from a single chapter. In May 2022, SCCAI will be represented at LDAC by the following members:

- Linda Whittlesey, SRA
- Ryan Hargrove, MAI, SRA, AI-GRS
- William Jones, MAI, AI-GRS
- Alex Liu, Candidate
- Michael Tidwell, SRA
- Matthew VanEck, MAI

I look forward to a great and exciting 2022! These are some of the photos from the 90th Annual SCCAI Installation Dinner. Let’s create some more opportunities for new photos in the next newsletter by attending upcoming events.

See you all there!