



**Appraisal
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Southern California Chapter



**Linda Whittlesey, SRA
2023 SCCAI Chapter President**

TRAILBLAZERS:

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines a trailblazer as: *a pioneer, a pathfinder, one that blazes a trail to guide others*. As novice appraisers, we have all relied heavily on the trailblazers that came before us. Many of those pathfinders trained us; some officially supervised us. It is easy to see the debt that we owe to them; the portion of the road that they paved on our path to obtaining a license and perhaps a designation.

Think about some of the less obvious trailblazers that made it possible for us to succeed. What springs to mind for me are the pioneers that formed our professional associations. They created an important construct of ethics, standards and fellowship upon which we have built our careers. Undoubtedly, they did this for the benefit of the profession, not for self-aggrandizement or personal gain. We need to keep that altruistic spirit in mind in our volunteer efforts today.

But what about the women and men who bravely stepped into the appraisal profession at a time when it was markedly less diverse? Consider the fortitude of the initial wave of women that entered our profession at a time when nearly all of the women in the field were employed in a secretarial capacity. Think about the diverse men and women that not only joined our association, but *excelled* within it. These are individuals who achieved designations, became leaders and proceeded to assist a multitude of neophytes to succeed as appraisers. These individuals deserve our gratitude. For this reason, the 2023 Heritage Night event will honor not one but *three* Appraisal Institute Trailblazers: Beth Finestone, *MAI, AI-GRS, FRICS, CRE*, Paula Konikoff, *JD, MAI, AI-GRS* and Gilberto Valdez, *MAI, SRA, AI-GRS, AI-RRS*. I hope you will join us on October 12th, 2023 for a night of celebration. If Covid-19 taught us anything, it was to not take the *privilege* of gathering together for granted. Join the party: I'll save you a seat!