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IRWA's Higher Calling

MARK RIECK, IRWA EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



As I go about my everyday business at IRWA, my attention tends to focus on servicing our members, education and certification, as you would expect. But it is important to remember that upholding a high ethical standard as a group of professionals is also crucial to maintaining a solid reputation. This is why being a part of IRWA, and making that commitment to a high ethical standard, is so important to the profession. I only need to step one foot outside of our headquarters office, and I am instantly reminded of just how important strong ethics are in distinguishing IRWA members in the industry.

IRWA has become synonymous with high ethical standards. It is one of the key components that differentiate us from other professionals – both here and across the globe. When I

participated in IRWA's first course presented in China, I was pleased to see how the participants embraced our Code of Ethics. In South Africa, I was happy when the first class they requested was on Ethics and the Right of Way Professional, because I feel this subject is such a crucial part of our organization.

“Strong ethics are distinguishing IRWA members in the industry.”

IRWA Code of Ethics

RECOGNIZING the responsibility of our profession to the people and business of our country, and believing that we should encourage and foster high ethical standards in our profession, we do hereby adopt the following **CODE OF ETHICS** for our constant guidance and inspiration predicated upon the basic principles of truth, justice and fair play.

To show faith in the worthiness of our profession by industry, honesty and courtesy, in order to merit a reputation for high quality of service and fair dealing.

To add to the knowledge of our profession by constant study and to share the lessons of our experience with our fellow members.

To build an ever increasing confidence and good will with the public and our employers by poise, self-restraint and constructive cooperation.

To ascertain and weigh all of the facts relative to real properties in making an appraisal thereof, using the best and most approved methods of determining the just and fair market value.

To conduct ourselves in the most ethical and competent manner when testifying as an expert witness in court as to the market value of the real properties, thus meriting confidence in our knowledge and integrity.

To accept our full share of responsibility in constructive public service to community, state and nation.

To strive to attain and to express a sincerity of character that shall enrich our human contacts, ever aiming toward that ideal - “The Practice of the Golden Rule.”

Recognizing how important the topic is to our membership and organization, the International Ethics Committee is in the midst of a two-year project to review our entire ethics program and its administration. This charge is being led by Committee Chair, Bill Dee and Committee Vice-Chair Theresa Brennan. You can expect a complete report in June when we meet in Seattle for our International Education Conference.

I know you will also enjoy the conference's SR/WA Breakfast keynote speaker, Michael Josephson, founder of the Josephson Institute of Ethics. Michael is a global leader on the topic, and the Josephson Institute's Character Counts program has been chosen as this year's Charity of Choice. Character Counts is a school-based program that promotes the Josephson Institute's Six Pillars of Character to students worldwide. His six pillars include being trustworthy, treating others with respect, being responsible, treating others fairly, acting compassionate and caring, and being a good citizen. These pillars mesh well with our Code of Ethics, and his presentation is sure to be very illuminating.

Maintaining an environment of strong ethics is everyone's responsibility, and you can expect to see much more on this important topic going forward. As right of way professionals, we take our work seriously, and our commitment to ethics is no exception. And in the spirit of keeping our ethics at a high level, it never hurts to reread our Code and remind ourselves of the reasoning behind our actions.