

Inspired to Grow

Getting out what you put in

BY TAYLOR SASS



For many of IRWA's 10,000 members, our career path started in a similar way. We were thrown into a right of way position without really knowing what the term meant or where it would take us. On the first day of his first job, Max Pedowicz was no exception.

During his new hire orientation at Percheron, LLC, Max noticed an application to join the IRWA in the employee packet. After settling into his new job as a GIS Analyst, he remembered the application and began his research on the Association. Having graduated with a degree in Architecture from Texas A&M University in 2013, several of IRWA's courses caught his eye.

"I've always been interested in the patterns that develop as cities continue to grow and establish. Right of way plays a critical role in that process," said Max. "I wanted to know more about what goes on before and after the data is collected and analyzed."

Max found himself inspired to find out more about professional development opportunities. In March 2015, he saw that Chapter 8 in Houston, Texas was hosting an IRWA Young Professionals event. So he decided to attend his first meeting, paying for the meeting himself so he could check it out. It was then that Max made the commitment to begin his right of way

education pathway. Within just one year of joining IRWA, Max is now only one class shy of his Right of Way Agent certification.

"This past year, my perspective on the GIS work that I do has evolved dramatically," said Max. "I think that by having a broader view of the processes involved with appraisals, negotiations, route selections, relocations, environmental surveys and real estate law, it has made the same job I was doing yesterday much more interesting today."

Soon after his first Young Professional's meeting, Percheron saw his initiative and offered to fund his attendance to the IRWA Annual International Educational Conference in San Diego, California. His employer's willingness to help him learn more about the industry and support his continuing education was strong validation that he was on the right career path. In addition to the conference, Max pursued other

educational opportunities, including Region 2's Spring Forum.

"At every event I've been to, the speakers and sessions have been specifically designed for the Young Professionals. This has been very constructive for my career development because it provides a setting that is suited for people in my position to ask questions without feeling self-conscious," said Max.

Recognizing the need to show appreciation to his employer for supporting his career growth, Max made a concerted effort to bring something back to the office that would benefit his department and employer. It could be an idea gained from listening to a session, or a useful piece of information that he learned from talking with someone at one of the networking events.

Max's story is truly an example of the saying, "You get out what you put in." After showing personal initiative to invest in his career growth, he was rewarded with his employer's encouragement and support. The IRWA Young Professionals Group works to inspire its members to personally invest in their future, knowing that the industry will give back as much as they are willing to give. "I've learned that there will be opportunities for those who prepare patiently, show humility, and take the initiative at the right moment," said Max.

For more information about the IRWA Young Professional initiative, please contact us at irwayp@gmail.com, follow us on the Young Professionals group on IRWA's MemberNetwork and on twitter at @IRWAYP, and connect with us on LinkedIn. 

(See page 49 for more information on the YP event to be held on June 11th in Nashville, Tennessee!)



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