



# MAKING A VITAL IMPACT

CLIMB instructors—teaching *and* learning—with purpose

BY DEIDRE ALVES, M.ED.

Held in the beginning of May, CLIMB 3 marked the culmination of IRWA's Jubilee Year of Instructor Development. But the story of our amazing Instructor Development Program has just begun!

As part of the Partnership for Infrastructure Professional Education's fiscal year commitment to IRWA, we have ambitiously and successfully executed three CLIMBs. The first was held in Los Angeles, California for instructor recertification, the second was held in Dallas, Texas for new instructors and the final CLIMB—held in Minneapolis, Minnesota—presented another opportunity for instructor recertification.



## WORLD-CLASS FACULTY

I am proud to say that we now have a world-class CLIMB Certified instructor faculty who are all at baseline instructional standards competency, trained in leading-edge teaching methods, and poised and ready to make an amazing impact on our students and our infrastructure industry. And I am pleased to report that we celebrate this extraordinary achievement with a total release of 139 CLIMB Certified Instructors. This robust and dynamic group will retain this prestigious IRWA faculty standing through July 1, 2022—working toward fulfilling our purpose of improving the quality of life through infrastructure development...and IRWA education.

This remarkable achievement represents the combined efforts, talents and steadfast commitment from a number of dedicated individuals. First, we would not have had such an amazing outcome without our outstanding instructor students who had the courage to make the IRWA CLIMB and tackle the “Khumbu,” our Team Challenge and Assessment for the CLIMB. Second, we have our honorable IRWA leadership to thank, currently helmed by Jerry Colburn, SR/WA, and formerly by Mary Anne Marr, SR/WA, as well as our CEO Mark Rieck who encouraged, supported and entrusted us with the important responsibility of nurturing and cultivating these extraordinary individuals.

### A SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Teamwork and collaboration are what make our programs so successful. We would like to give a special acknowledgement to our ingenious Partnership—Chair Tami Benson, SR/WA, and Co-Vice Chairs Carol Brooks, SR/WA, and Janet Walker, SR/WA, who delivered and executed the program with great success. And a special thanks to our IEC Liaison Jeff Jones, SR/WA, who rolled up his sleeves to help every time with enthusiasm and heart, proving no job was ever too large or too small. Finally, I would like to acknowledge Headquarters staff Amir Vafamanesh and Carlos Gonzalez—an amazing duo who exemplifies the word excellence.

As we successfully close our Jubilee Year of Instructor Development and launch our next year of Instructor Development—The CLIMB Acceleration Year— here’s to the faculty and students of IRWA University.

CLIMB is special, CLIMB is courage, CLIMB is purpose.  
CLIMB is all heart.

Congratulations to the CLIMB Class of 2017!

I would like to extend my congratulations to the IRWA's 139 CLIMB Certified Instructors. The IRWA Instructor Development Program has completed the initial round of CLIMB presentations with CLIMB 3 in Minneapolis. It has been exciting to watch these 139 industry professionals as they utilized the CLIMB tools and techniques throughout the class. I have also seen the CLIMB tools shared on social media by students, course coordinators and instructors. Needless to say, this program will bring a great positive interaction between the instructor and the students. #climbhigh

- Jeff Jones, SR/WA



With each CLIMB we discovered what an amazing and dedicated group of instructors we have. We definitely pushed the limits with a boot-camp intensity, and I'm pleased to say that our instructors pressed on with patience and passion. We witnessed eagerness among them to become learning leaders— instructing classes where the student is involved and at the center of the experience. We are confident that all of IRWA's CLIMB certified instructors will positively change the learning experience for all of their class participants.



-Tamara Benson, SR/WA



Deidre's team leadership and passion for education stood out front and center the whole time. A special acknowledgement to Tami Benson, who provided exceptional instruction for the course and whose leadership of the PIPE team, in conjunction with Carol and Janet, bodes well for the future of the IRWA University and the complement of well-trained, qualified instructors.

-Sandy Grigg, SR/WA



We left the CLIMB with a toolbox full of choices to empower us to teach, assess, check for understanding and relate to the students that will be in our class. I feel that each person that attended the CLIMB (if they elect to) gained new knowledge about relating to their co-workers, peers and clients. This experience was priceless if embraced with a positive attitude.

-CLIMB 2 Student Testimony

CLIMB was such an eye-opening experience! Working behind the scenes—setting up the technology and overseeing logistics—allowed me to observe what an inspiring group of instructors we have in IRWA. I know they will go on to use what they've learned from the CLIMB and thrive.

- Carlos Gonzalez



Thank you all for your hard work putting on the CLIMB session in Minneapolis. Your tireless efforts were evident in the quality of the experience. I confess I was an early doubter of its value, but was won over by the quality and content of the class. Again, thank you all for an enriching two days!

-William Busch, SRWA



I think these teaching methods provide an excellent environment for students to learn and retain what they have learned. During this entire training everyone was totally engaged and showed an openness and willingness to learn. IRWA CLIMB ROCKS!!!

-CLIMB 2 Student Testimony

"I want to give back." That was the phrase echoed by many of our 139 newly CLIMB Certified Instructors when asked why they were there. They were ready to set out of their comfort zone, and CLIMB is where they would discover over 20 innovative learning techniques for ensuring successful knowledge transfer and application. They make even the densest material come alive. And the more an instructor blends these tools into their teaching, the more likely students will be able to retain that information and apply it in their own jobs. I've never been around a more passionate and dedicated group! This recent CLIMB not only inspired me, it emphasized the role that IRWA plays in helping our instructors empower their students with the knowledge needed to do their jobs more effectively. Essentially, it's all about building a better world together.

-Amir Vafamanesh

