



THE IRWA LEARNER SPOTLIGHT SERIES

Get to know the learners from the IRWA professional education community

BY DEIDRE ALVES, M.ED.

Did you know that IRWA Education has touched the lives of thousands of professional infrastructure learners and is going very strong? This approved advancement in our educational products and services—along with the creation of a standards-based instructor development program, a streamlined industry-based credentialing pathway system, innovative curriculum, infrastructure partnerships and the creation of IRWA’s own newly designed proprietary University site, IRWA U—serve as a reminder that we can do great things together when we put purpose and people first. IRWA exists to serve the needs of infrastructure and right of way learners worldwide through both internal membership and external outwardly-facing educational efforts. I receive feedback on a daily basis with my favorite being: “Best IRWA class ever!” When I hear this, and I hear it often,

I know that we are doing something right. Together, we are growing and improving every day and these are great motivators.

Purpose and people are front and center and our professional education community is the reason why we strive to do and be our best. It’s uplifting to hear how IRWA Education is helping our global community.

Did You Know?

IRWA **U** is your one stop shop for all your IRWA right of way/ infrastructure education needs.

Become part of the IRWA professional learner community. Visit www.irwau.org today.



IN THIS SERIES, WE WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET SOME OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE LEARNERS FROM OUR COMMUNITY AND HEAR THEIR PERSPECTIVES ON THE IMPACT IRWA EDUCATION HAS IN THEIR LIVES.

Now, let's meet another learner from our professional education community, Tracie Larson, who is an Engineering Tech II from Stevens County Department of Public Works in Colville, Washington and an aspiring negotiations specialist. She began her career in the silicon wafer industry and worked her way up to an area trainer position, where she worked with new hires and taught courses to employees. When she re-entered the work force at the Stevens County Public Works office in 2006, Tracie discovered right of way, and she became enchanted and completely challenged by the many aspects of it. After being introduced to IRWA by a friend, Tracie wants to learn as much as she can to expand her career and one day teach others the same things she is so excited about learning now.



1. The collective purpose of our Association is to improve the quality of life through infrastructure development. How does learning through IRWA classes enable you to fulfill this purpose?

I am so excited about my IRWA experiences so far and anxious to learn as much as I can. Right of way is such a unique animal from one landowner to the next; one set of circumstances is never the same as the next! I love the challenge in that. I feel that with IRWA classes, I am learning the skills and importance of accommodating an inconvenienced or displaced landowner in a way that makes the land owner happy to comply with changes needed for the growth of our infrastructure. I have just begun my education through IRWA and I could not be more excited. I feel that everyone working any aspect of right of way should attend IRWA classes to become more effective and knowledgeable in their right of way expertise. I firmly believe that IRWA classes are a benefit to all communities.

2. What has been your most engaging and influential class so far and why?

I feel IRWA C200: **Principles of Real Estate Negotiation** has been the most engaging and influential class for me because after those specific two days, I made a decision that Negotiation and Acquisition is where I want to gain my specialist certificate. **Principles of Real Estate Negotiation** was the first class I took as an IRWA member. I can honestly say that before this class, I had not been completely engaged

or influenced by any training in a very long time. I absolutely love right of way and the challenges that mark all aspects of it. After two days in this class, I made a decision to make my first specialist credentials in Negotiation and Acquisition.

3. What is the impact of IRWA classes and/or credentialing on your professional life?

IRWA classes and future credentials have given me confidence, as well as a desire and knowledge to succeed as a right of way professional within my local government. Being an IRWA member and taking classes has given me an added confidence to do the job I have been performing for several years and an enthusiasm to grow as a right of way professional. I also have a new desire and drive to succeed with as much credentialing as I can and to one day become fortunate enough to instruct classes for IRWA myself. 🙌

We wish to thank Tracie Larson for sharing her thoughtful reflections on her IRWA learning experience. Our learning program thrives when we share and strengthen the IRWA purpose of improving the quality of people's lives through infrastructure development. If you would like to be featured in our next IRWA Learner Spotlight, contact education@irwaonline.org.

Deidre Alves is IRWA's Chief Learning Officer.

