

A YEAR OF COLLABORATION

Reflecting on my year as IRWA's International President

BY JEFFREY JONES, SR/WA

Life is a journey, and when the IRWA came into my life 24 years ago, I jumped on board for an incredible adventure culminating with this past year as your International President. Now, for the first time in the last 10 years, I will be standing on the side as our new leaders for 2019-2020 raise their hands and recite the international oath of office at this year's Annual International Education Conference.

I look back and I can't believe the time went by so quickly—this final year has especially flown by. More importantly, I can't believe how many great things have happened recently.

A Look Back

Just this past February, I had the opportunity to join with IRWA's Manager of Field Operations, Jaime Rose Tieu, and IRWA's Young Professional Chair, Nikkiy Bestgen, to collaborate with Illinois Chapter 12 and their President, Smedmore Bernard. Together, we hosted a group of about 20-30 students from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to present the IRWA and the right of way profession. It was exciting to get together with these amazing young men and women to discuss what we do in our day-to-day work and to deliver our purpose of improving people's quality of life through infrastructure development. Personally, it was fun talking about acquisition, relocation and even a topic I don't get to talk about much: vacation of road right of way. The event ended with the

IRWA successfully gaining some new members. This event is covered further in the "Inside Association" section of this edition of *Right of Way Magazine*.

Another enjoyable and proud moment has been visiting Chapters and seeing the presentations of the RWA and RWP designations to members of the 40 for 40 Scholarship Program. This all began with a collaborative effort by IRWA Past President Mary Anne Marr, SR/WA, and the Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF) Chair Carol Croft, SR/WA, to honor the RWIEF's 40-year anniversary by providing scholarship opportunities to 40 IRWA members. It is great to hear the new RWA and RWP members thank the RWIEF for their contribution, show their appreciation and share what the scholarship has meant to them. Through this IRWA and RWIEF collaboration, we are improving the lives of members with educational commitments.

Continuing the theme of collaboration, the IRWA has partnered with the Appraisal Institute and the Appraisal Institute of Canada to announce the publishing of a new book, "Corridor Valuation, An Overview and New Alternatives." IRWA Past President Randy Williams, SR/WA, MAI, FRICS and Co-Chair of the AI/IRWA/AIC Corridor Valuation Steering Committee brought the book idea to the IGC in 2015 for our support. After much work by the AI/IRWA/AIC Corridor Valuation



Steering Committee, we have the final product. The book can be purchased through the IRWA website.

Appreciation

This is my final Presidential Outlook article for *Right of Way Magazine*, so I would like to thank many individuals for all their dedication to this Association. Thank you to the International Executive Committee team, our International Governing Council and all the volunteer members of the Committees and Communities of Practice. Also, a special thank you to all of our IRWA Headquarters staff for all you do for us.

I sincerely appreciate and thank you all for working with and supporting me as your International President. It has been an honor to meet, work and network with so many of our members and I have made many lasting friendships through this great organization. I am so grateful to the International Right of Way Association. Thank you! 🌟