

THE INSTRUCTOR SPOTLIGHT SERIES

Get to know the people behind the purpose

BY DEIDRE ALVES, M.ED.

Investing in our instructors has been one of our greatest assets. Leadership has been extremely supportive of this effort over the years, including the International Executive Committee's participation in our CLIMB Instructor Development Program. We are proud of our instructors who strive for excellence, and this series enables you to learn about what drives them to give back to the Association. One of the highest compliments I received from my work with IRWA so far is from a seasoned member who said, "Thank you for your genuine belief in us." I share this with you with true humility and a sense of the profound responsibility I have for the development of instructors, collaboration with industry experts and our education program. We all come together partnering as respected friends and colleagues for something greater than ourselves: our learners.

Our instructors are some of the most passionate and dedicated professionals I have ever had the joy of collaborating with. It is an honor to know them and more importantly, to call them friends. Friends such as Faith Roland, Fred Easton and Guillaume LaVictoire have graced the pages of this Instructor Spotlight Series. Now, it is a pleasure to present to you the next instructor in our series, Brian Taylor, SR/WA. Brian comes to us from Edmonton, Alberta and is the Region Head of Property and Facilities Management, Corporate Management and Services Sector for Natural Resources Canada across the Prairies and Northern Region, Government of Canada. He has depth of experience in commercial lease negotiation, acquisition and disposal of real property, valuation and appraisal, portfolio and asset strategies, as well as investment analysis.

BRIAN TAYLOR, SR/WA

1. What is the most rewarding part of instructing for the IRWA?

Without a doubt, the most rewarding part of instructing is getting to work with our people, who are all great industry experts in a variety of locations. I always love instructing and each time I teach a class, the participants give me a whole new set of stories of their experiences—it is great getting to know and work with folks from different industries, regions, religions, countries, etc. I have been fortunate to teach folks from the arctic to the equator. I have taught employees with oil companies, government bureaucrats and appraisers from Canada to the Middle East. With each class, I enjoy spending time to strip away any layers of differences and recognize that at our core, we're all people. We're people who care about our families, want to enjoy our time and wish to leave the world a better place.



2. IRWA's purpose is to improve the quality of life through infrastructure development. As an instructor, how do you contribute to the fulfillment of this purpose?

For me, one of the greatest benefits of belonging to an association is the ability to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect. This applies internally between our members and in how we interact with the public. Even though I work for a government agency, I am confident that members of my department provide the same level of professionalism and expertise when interacting with the public as they would with any other IRWA member company.

This is where my role as an instructor directly ties in. I am involved in instructing a range of topics, including technical appraisal courses, negotiation and communications, as well as ethical standards. My responsibility as an instructor is to ensure our education participants understand early on what is expected from them in the right of way industry, both from a technical side of how we do things and especially how we all interact with the public.

3. What is the most important thing you would you like your future students to know upon entering your class?

I begin every class advising the group that it is a busy schedule and a "mentally full" day. I expect everyone to regularly contribute to group discussions and give examples of how the topic has affected them in the past. In other words, if anyone was planning to sit here for the day listening to me talk so they can zone out – they are in the wrong room.

This has always been a well-received comment and I have always had a good, well-engaged group. We have a lot of fun and cover a broad range of discussions on the course topic. At the end of the class, everyone leaves feeling good about the volume, depth of material and examples that we, as a group, discussed.

I wish to thank Brian for his thoughtful reflections and for being a part of our special series. To book Brian or any of our other talented CLIMB Certified Instructors today in your Chapter, please visit <https://www.irwaonline.org/members/irwa-course-instructors> and click "Find an Instructor" or if you would like to nominate an instructor to be featured in our series, please contact education@irwaonline.org.



Deidre Alves is IRWA's Chief Learning Officer.