

# An Exciting Future Awaits

## Unlimited possibilities for our future

MARY ANNE MARR, SR/WA



The Association is fortunate to have so many opportunities in front of us. Yet, because most of our initiatives span over multiple years, it's essential that we have consistency in our purpose and mission so that we are all moving in the same direction.

In August, the International Governing Council (IGC) met to align our internal priorities and put plans in motion to achieve our goals. The first step was to clearly define a relevant purpose and mission statement for the IRWA. Why? Because it brings a deeper meaning and level of significance to the work we do. Our newly adopted purpose states, "We improve people's quality of life through infrastructure development," while our mission statement is "We empower professionals by elevating ethics, learning and a standard of excellence within the global infrastructure real estate community."

In thinking about the impact we have on individual lives and communities, it's not always easy to put things into perspective. International Vice President, Jeff Jones, SR/WA shared something that really resonated with me. He said, "A new highway project might save someone 10 minutes each way on a daily commute. That's 20 minutes a day—or three weeks a year—that they can allocate to something more satisfying than driving."

This is just one of the many benefits our work as professionals offers to

people everywhere. Do you have a similar way of describing what you do as an infrastructure professional to contribute to our higher purpose? I encourage you to share your stories. They are unique for each and every one of us, and they connect us to our higher purpose.

Achieving our overall mission relies on professional development, and education is a key component of what differentiates us in the marketplace.

IRWA's Partnership for Infrastructure Professional Education is doing a great job overseeing the curriculum, instruction and educational partnerships. As the team launches innovative educational offerings, they are also exploring new delivery methods. One example is the filming of country-specific modules for our VEIT 100i course. A segment on Mexican law was filmed earlier this year, and plans are in place for South African and Australian segments. And to make education even more accessible, they are pursuing online streaming so that we can connect students across the globe to a live classroom environment.

I'm continually amazed by the commitment and dedication our volunteer leaders have for the Association and the profession. As we look to the future, we recognize the importance of investing in the next generation of leaders—our young professionals. We are ready and willing to consider new ideas and develop

content and programming that attracts and engages our younger members. So we invited several young professionals to attend the recent IGC meeting and share their perspective. And they have some great ideas! In the coming year, we plan to delve deeper into their recommendations and implement new initiatives that deliver value.

An Emerging Leaders program is also in the works for members ages 46 to 55, many of whom have expressed a desire to advance IRWA's initiatives. As they build their leadership skills, this program will not only support their professional growth, it will also work to garner increased employer support.

Of course, we will continue to offer seminars, forums and meetings that bring value to members across all levels of the organization. Sharing the educational content from Chapter and Committee events is a vital goal for the coming year, and I encourage members to attend the regional symposiums and the Congress for Global Infrastructure Real Estate scheduled in 2017.

This is a just small sampling of the many programs we're working on—all designed to bring tangible value to our members. And as a truly global community of infrastructure real estate professionals, we have a unique opportunity to share our higher purpose with the rest of the world, as we improve people's quality of life everywhere. 🌟