

## Appraisers focus on the future at the 2018 LDAC conference

**Rodman Schley, MAI, SRA**, chair of the 2018 Leadership Development and Advisory Council, and Vice Chair Steve Henry, MAI, welcomed more than 100 Appraisal Institute professionals to Washington, D.C., May 16–18 for the annual LDAC conference.

AI President James L. Murrett, MAI, SRA, opened the conference by talking about issues affecting the valuation profession and the Appraisal Institute, including regulatory modernization, education delivery and updates on the Governance Structure Project Team’s work. During the closing session, Jacinto Munoz, MAI, SRA, AI-GRS, AI-RRS, was elected 2019 vice chair; Henry, the 2018 vice chair, will serve as chair next year.

Schley, Henry and this year’s four discussion leaders engaged LDAC participants in lively debates on four main topics: best future opportunities for appraisers; expanding and building the professional community; going from good to great; and growing outside the box. The ideas, suggestions and proposals that came out of the discussion groups were compiled into reports that were delivered to the Appraisal Institute’s Executive Committee. Following are highlights from those reports.

Jeffrey Harris, MAI, had his discussion groups focus on future opportunities for appraisers, examining such areas as technology, recruitment and business prospects. The future of the small appraisal shop was hotly debated — cases were made for the nimbleness of a small business, while others noted it is hard to beat the resources available to larger firms. Responses also were mixed when conversations turned to specialization and diversification. Many extolled the virtues of being an expert in a particular field, while others thought a diverse background could provide significant opportunities for future assignments. Nearly everyone said consulting was a golden opportunity for appraisers, giving them more of a role at the beginning of deals rather than at the end.

Michael Lamb, MAI, SRA, AI-GRS, AI-RRS, asked his discussion groups to consider how the Appraisal Institute and individual appraisers might expand the professional community. Participants listed numerous options, ranging from ice-breaker events, social media outreach and TED talks to strategic alliances with other organizations. Recruiting new appraisers



PHOTOS: PETER CUTTIS PHOTOGRAPHY

**AI’s 2018 Leadership Development and Advisory Council operated under the direction of (top row) Rodman Schley, MAI, SRA, chair; Jeffrey Harris, MAI, discussion leader; (middle row) Charles Baker, SRA, AI-RRS, discussion leader; Michael Lamb, MAI, SRA, AI-GRS, AI-RRS, discussion leader; (bottom row) Jacinto Munoz, MAI, SRA, AI-GRS, AI-RRS, discussion leader; and Steve Henry, MAI, vice chair.**

was a large part of the discussion, with some people expressing concern about taking on trainees who could leave their firms and ultimately compete with them for work. Lamb noted that when you educate others, you’re not creating competition — you’re building community.

Charles Baker, SRA, AI-RRS, began his discussion groups by asking participants to rate themselves as appraisers. Not surprisingly, most rated themselves as good or great. However, when asked to rate others within the profession, participants were less generous. These assessments led to conversations about how to go from good to great, embracing change and the perception of the SRA designation. The groups suggested that AI professionals are, by and large, the best at what they do, but that end-users and consumers don’t always understand that, which leads to perception problems. The

### First-timer award

Molly Skipper of Edgewater, Maryland, received the William T. Anglyn Award at the Leadership Development and Advisory Council conference on May 18.

The Anglyn Award is presented on the last day of the annual LDAC conference to a first-year participant who exhibited exemplary leadership, integrity and outstanding contributions at the event. The award was created in 2000 in recognition of efforts by Ted Anglyn, MAI, to promote LDAC.



groups suggested additional outreach, promotion and visibility as key to elevating awareness of the AI brand, the talent of its professionals and the importance of its designations.

Jacinto Munoz, MAI, SRA, AI-GRS, AI-RRS, asked participants in his discussion groups to focus on growth, thinking critically and strategically about how to grow their business and the profession and how they'd like to see the Appraisal Institute evolve. Participants unanimously agreed that AI leads with education, and they said they would like even more

offerings and fewer cancellations. The need for a new generation of appraisers was another universal theme, with groups saying they thought the barriers to entry were discouraging people from entering the profession and they wanted to make it easier for trainees to connect with supervisors. They also thought there was opportunity to elevate recognition of the SRA designation.

► AI professionals interested in next year's LDAC conference, scheduled for May 15–17, can learn more about the program at <http://bit.ly/2Nmgnl2>.

### Calling on Capitol Hill

More than 100 Appraisal Institute professionals went to Capitol Hill on May 17 to discuss safety and soundness concerns and urge congressional support for regulatory relief and appraisal modernization.

► Read more about these issues at <http://bit.ly/2wJM6IU>.