

THE CENTERLINE NEWSLETTER

IRWA
GULF STATES
CHAPTER 8

2026
MAY



Chapter 8,
Well everyone, the time has come! Our 2025/2026 year has come to an end with our final chapter meeting in May. A couple weeks ago we had an insightful presentation from **Brad Diehl, Director of High Voltage Resilience Engineering at CenterPoint Energy**, discussing CenterPoint's Greater Houston Resiliency Initiative & System Resiliency Plan as they service the US's 4th largest populated metropolitan area. A week before that, ROWCares hosted their 34th annual Dan Ewing Memorial Golf Tournament at the Wildcat Golf Club.

As this season comes to an end and we have a change of guard on the board of directors, I'd like to personally thank each of our board members for their dedication and hard work this year. Additionally, I'd like to thank all of our committee chairs for their continued commitment to the chapter and of course all of our special committee members for everyone's continued participation. Lastly I want to thank you, everyone in Chapter 8 again for everyone's continued support and dedication to this Chapter for banking this another successful year. From the monthly meetings, to the happy hours, symposiums, golf tournaments, parties, etc., everyone's work efforts are truly on display. Those who have taken time out of their busy schedules to participate in events, those who have volunteered time, donated money, and shared knowledge via presentations, is what makes this group of people truly special. We are the best Chapter only because we have the best people.

~ Chico Negual



www.irwa8.org



IRWA CHAPTER 8 - HOUSTON



info@irwa8.org

IN THIS ISSUE

Letter from the President	1
Chapter 8 Officers & Committee Chairs	3
Chapter Highlights	4
Upcoming Events	6
Young Professionals	12
Furthering Your Education	13
Things You Should Know	23



CHAPTER 8 OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Officers

President

Chico Negual

chico.negual@contractlandstaff.com
479.283.7498

Vice President

Allison Craighead

allisonc@pinnaclelandgroup.com
713.582.4907

Secretary

Kirby Ewing

kewing@landsolutions.ca
469.261.6483

Treasurer

Lori Gerard

lori.gerard@centerpointenergy.com
832.245.7696

2 Year Director

Mercedes Osbern

mercedes.osbern@fhr.com
612.849.0825

Committees

Education

Auri Largent

auri.largent@gmail.com
713.907.3205

Membership

Kirby Ewing

kewing@landsolutions.ca
469.261.6483

Secretary

Kirby Ewing

kewing@landsolutions.ca
469.261.6483

Professional Development

Michael Staines

lmstaines@cobbhendley.com
713.485.8054

Communications

Karla Breitinger

kjbreitinger@eprod.com
713.381.3308

Young Professionals

Co-Chair

Tori Moses

tmoses@weissereng.com
281.579.7300

Co-Chair

Carson Childers

carson.childers@cbre.com
972.979.8837



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

Brad Diehl | Director, High Voltage Resilience Engineering CenterPoint Energy's Greater Houston Resiliency Initiative (GHRI) & System Resiliency Plan (SRP)

Brad Diehl, Director of High Voltage Resilience Engineering at CenterPoint Energy, shared an overview of the company's System Resiliency Plan and ongoing efforts to strengthen Houston's electric grid against severe weather and rapid growth.

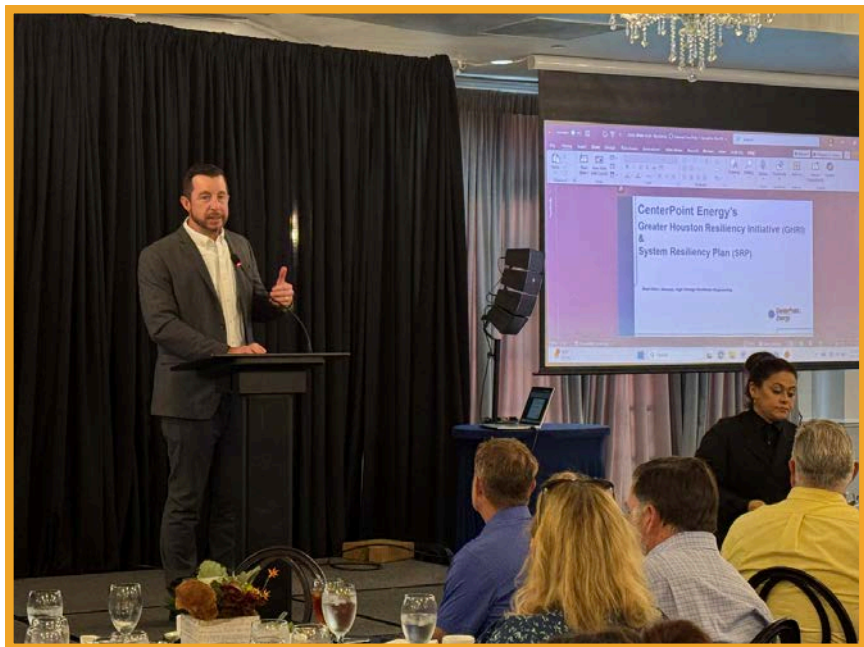
The presentation focused on improving the reliability and resilience of the greater Houston power system through upgrades to overhead and underground distribution lines, substations, and transmission infrastructure. Key initiatives include replacing aging wooden poles with stronger materials, expanding vegetation management, installing automated "self-healing" grid technology, improving flood protection at substations, and enhancing communication with customers during outages.

Brad highlighted the challenges Houston faces due to hurricanes, flooding, extreme temperatures, and rapid population growth, noting that Harris County ranks the highest-ranked risked counties in the nation for natural disasters.

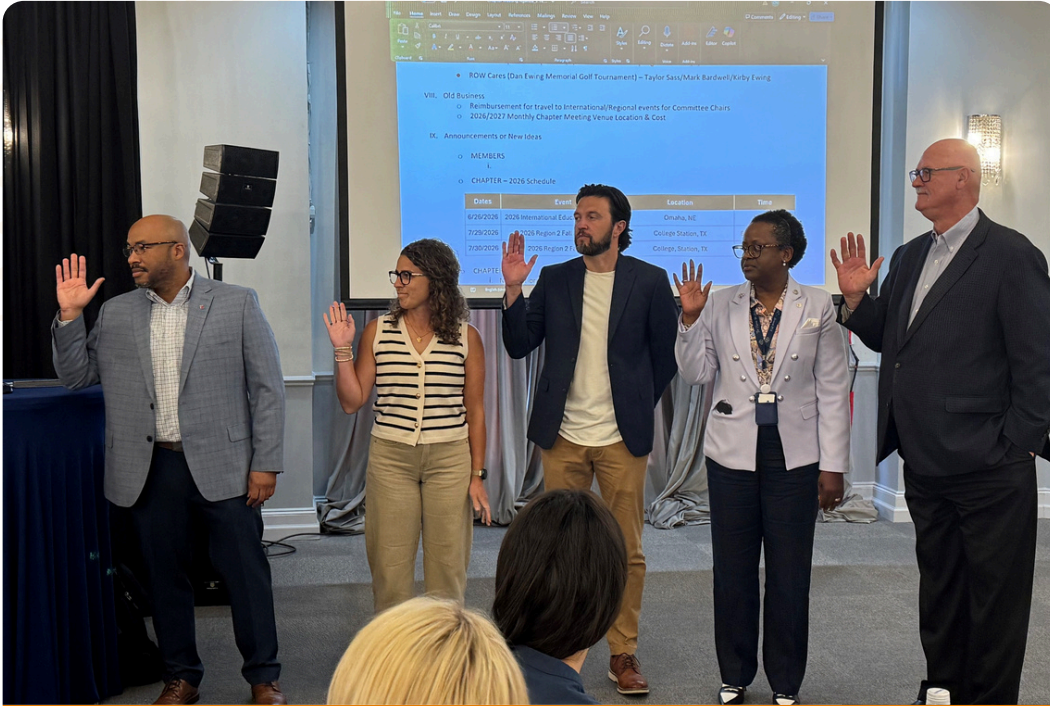
CenterPoint has already completed major resiliency improvements, including thousands of pole replacements, expanded tree trimming efforts, and new

automated switching devices designed to reduce outage duration and speed restoration times.

The company also discussed future investments in larger transmission projects to support increasing energy demand across Texas, while emphasizing its commitment to building a stronger, more resilient electric system for the Houston community.



CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



2026-2027 Board of Directors

Chico Negual, 2nd Year Director, Allison Craighead, President, Kirby Ewing, Vice President, Lori Gerard, Secretary, Taylor Sass, Treasurer (via Walt Sass)



Daniel Shaw, SR/WA



Congratulations

Chapter 8 has been selected as finalists for:
Chapter of the Year
Website of the Year
Newsletter of the Year



UPCOMING EVENTS

**International Education Conference
Omaha, Nebraska**



**2026 Region 2 Fall Forum
College Station, TX**



UPCOMING EVENTS

IRWA's **72ND** ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

WHEN:

Friday, June 26–Monday, June 29, 2026

WHERE:

Omaha, Nebraska

FULL REGISTRATION COST*:

Member Rate: Members: \$675 Non-Member Rate: \$975

(*must be an IRWA Member and register by March 20, 2026)

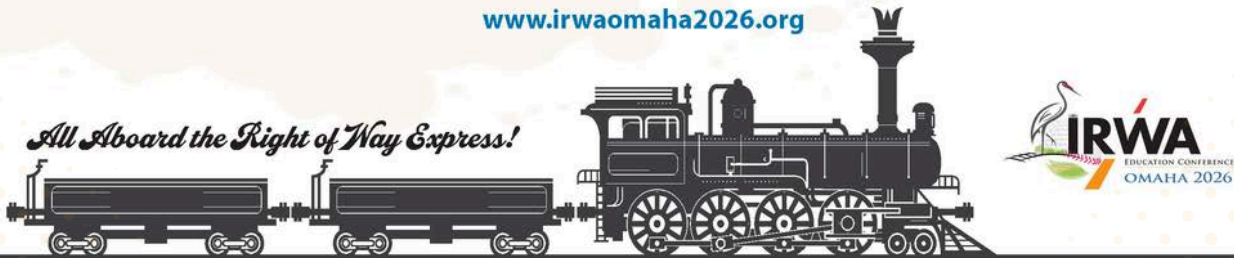
50+ education sessions on key right of way topics, including:

- Electric & Utilities
 - Environment
 - Ethics
 - International Relations
 - Marketing & Membership
 - Oil & Gas Pipeline
 - Professional Development
 - Project Management
 - Public Agencies
 - Real Estate Law
 - Real Property Asset Management
 - Relocation
 - Surveying & Engineering
 - Transportation
- **Learning That Reflects the Industry's Future:** Sessions are led by respected IRWA members and industry experts who share current insights and proven strategies to today's evolving right of way environment.
 - **Education That Delivers Real Results:** With more than 50 sessions across key right of way disciplines, attendees will gain immediately applicable knowledge that improves project outcomes and decision-making. Members can apply continuing education hours toward recertification for IRWA credentials including the SR/WA recertification.
 - **Join More Than 1,000 Professionals:** Build valuable relationships and gain a global perspective from professionals around the world who bring diverse solutions to shared infrastructure challenges.
 - **Engaging Events and Networking Opportunities:** Enjoy a variety of signature events including the Opening Ceremony, Exhibit Hall, Awards Luncheon and Closing Gala.
 - **Actionable Takeaways:** Return with ideas, templates and insights that immediately strengthen teams and enhance project outcomes.

The 2026 International Education Conference isn't just four days of learning, it's an investment in your people, your projects and your future. Attendees return more informed, better connected and equipped to deliver results that matter. Make the investment today and empower your team to deliver results that matter.

www.irwaomaha2026.org

All Aboard the Right of Way Express!



www.irwa8.org



IRWA CHAPTER 8 - HOUSTON



info@irwa8.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Save the Date!

SATURDAY NIGHT at the Steelhouse

1100 Dodge St.
Omaha, NE 68102
June 27, 2026
6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Get ready to rock out with RWIEF in Omaha! We're turning up the volume with a family-friendly **Backstage Bash at the Steelhouse** — the high-energy venue hosting the Right of Way International Education Foundation's (RWIEF) annual fundraiser. Omaha is bringing the noise this year, and you've got a front-row ticket to a night that hits all the right notes. Bring your crew, feel the buzz, and help us keep the rhythm of ROW education alive! Every dollar raised goes straight into supporting education for our industry — now *that's* music to our ears.

Want to take your support to headliner status? Become an event sponsor and help RWIEF turn it up to eleven!

To learn more, contact Kasy Baldauf, SR/WA, at Kasy.Baldauf@AirlIquide.com. Register for the event as an "add-on" with your conference registration at www.irwaonline.org OR via the Foundation's site at www.rwief.org.

Adults: \$70 pre-conference / \$85 at conference

Youth (6 to 19): \$20 pre-conference / \$35 at conference

Children (under 6): Free

- 🎵 Come and go at your convenience with your all-access wristband
- 🎵 Buffet and welcome drink with each ticket
- 🎵 Live music
- 🎵 Silent auction during evening
- 🎵 Live auction to close out evening



www.irwa8.org



IRWA CHAPTER 8 - HOUSTON



info@irwa8.org

UPCOMING EVENTS



GOLF TOURNAMENT

Tregaron Golf Course

13909 Glengarry Circle
Bellevue, NE, 68123

Sunday, June 28, 2026

In conjunction with the 72nd Annual International Education Conference, the Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF) and the Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation (CRWEF) are hosting their 29th Annual Golf Tournament. The tournament is limited to 144 participants, and all proceeds are donated to the Education Foundations.

REGISTRATION

Opens on February 2, 2026

Online registration is required.

Please go to www.rwief.org to register online.

Check in: 7:00 a.m. Tee Time: 8:00 a.m. Fee: \$150

** Rental clubs are available for \$60 per set. They will be provided by an outside vendor that requires advance registration. To be guaranteed a set, you must register online, include the rental clubs in the registration and pay in advance.*

SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship opportunities are available for individuals, Chapters or companies who wish to further support the goals of the Education Foundations. Sponsorships range from \$300 USD for an individual hole sponsorship to \$5,000 USD for the Premier Sponsorship.

Prizes will be given for closest to the pin on the par 3s, long drive for both men and women, as well as the top three places. A large raffle will also follow the event.



For more information, contact Mike Pattison at mike@pattisonappraisals.com or visit www.rwief.org for more details.



www.irwa8.org



IRWA CHAPTER 8 - HOUSTON

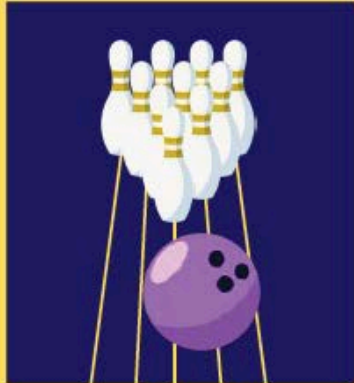


info@irwa8.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL YOUNG
PROFESSIONALS COMMITTEE

THURSDAY NIGHT EVENT



THE
HIDDEN
DOOR TO
THE
HOTTEST
PARTY ON
THE LANES

A ROARING GOOD NIGHT OF
BOWLING, FOOD, AND FRIENDS!

BRING \$\$\$ FOR 50/50 RAFFLE

5PM - 9PM
THURSDAY, JUNE 25



CHAM PANG LANES
910 HARNEY STREET, OMAHA, NE



www.irwa8.org



IRWA CHAPTER 8 - HOUSTON



info@irwa8.org

Leveraging Technology and Microsoft Connectivity in Right of Way Project Delivery

BY MERCEDES OBSERN AND MICHAEL STAINES, SR/WA

In today's right of way (ROW) environment, successful project delivery depends on more than technical expertise and regulatory knowledge. Increasingly, it relies on how effectively teams use technology to manage information and collaborate across disciplines to maintain accuracy throughout the project lifecycle in both the public and private sectors. Software tools designed specifically to support engineering and infrastructure work — when paired with integrated enterprise platforms — have become essential partners in this effort. While this is not an advertisement for these tools, we would be remiss to not mention the specific programs we rely on so heavily.

One such specialized tool is **Bluebeam**, a PDF-based software platform widely used by engineers and ROW professionals for reviewing plans, markup and collaboration. For ROW teams, Bluebeam is particularly valuable when working with right of way maps. Its ability to measure distances and areas directly from plans has been extremely helpful in certain projects. Bluebeam also has the capability to apply standardized markups and layer comments in a clear and traceable way that supports critical tasks between the various disciplines involved on the project.

The effectiveness of tools like Bluebeam is significantly enhanced when they are connected to the Microsoft tools used daily by ROW professionals. **Microsoft Word** supports the drafting and revision of conveyance documents, allowing plan markups and technical inputs to be translated into precise legal documentation. **SharePoint and OneDrive** provide centralized document control. These platforms have proven to be invaluable as they allow everyone real-time access to all project files and ensure documents remain version controlled.

Collaboration is further strengthened through **Microsoft Teams**, which serves as the primary hub for real-time communication and meetings. Plan reviews performed in Bluebeam can be discussed live in Teams meetings, while follow-up actions and documentation are shared seamlessly through Teams channels and linked SharePoint libraries. **Outlook** ties these workflows together by managing communication and scheduling, creating a documented and traceable record throughout the project lifecycle.

Before we had connected tools for agreement drafting, we often worked from whatever version was saved locally, which wasn't always the most current. Today, a shared, collaborative document allows everyone to work from the same source. This improves work product accuracy and allows for quicker turnaround times. Earlier processes left far more room for errors including duplicating efforts

and miscommunication. Because our work is inherently dynamic, plans routinely shift due to landowner feedback, permitting requirements and other constraints, it's essential that we fully leverage our technology to stay responsive in project planning.

To accommodate remote landowners, there are now services, like **Expedite Close**, that support electronic notaries. This removes barriers related to timing and travel for the execution of notarized agreements. A great example of when this has been successful is if a landowner is not available locally, whether they live out of state or are taking long-term travel out of state, this service allows them to still have their documents notarized, without delaying any project timelines. **DocuSign** and **AdobeSign** bring in the added benefit of routing documents for signature when a document doesn't need to be recorded. In addition, some counties also have the ability to electronically record documents like **Simplifile**. This can make a huge difference when working in a race-notice statute, where the timing of recording is everything.

Together, these tools create a connected ROW workflow, one where technical review, legal documentation, collaboration, and project communication reinforce each other. Embracing technology is not about replacing professional judgment or experience, but about enhancing them. By leveraging specialized tools like Bluebeam alongside Microsoft's integrated platform and other available technologies, ROW professionals are better equipped to deliver projects, however complex, efficiently and accurately in an increasingly demanding environment. ☺



Mercedes Osbern is a right of way manager with Flint Hills Resources, LC, based in Houston, Texas, where she leads the company's right of way efforts supporting pipeline operations, terminal and capital projects across multiple operating regions. She also supports Koch Industries' property management group. Mercedes currently holds the position of director — one year for Chapter 8 and is the former Region 2 Young Professionals Committee co-chair. She also has the honor of being a board member for ROW Cares, a non-profit organization comprised of right of way professionals to benefit local Houston area charities.



Michael Staines, J.D., SR/WA, R/W-NAC, is a ROW team lead and project manager at CobbFenley. Located in Houston, he currently serves as the PDC for Chapter 8 as well as Region 2 Young Professionals Committee co-chair.



FURTHERING YOUR EDUCATION

50 FOR FIFTY

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Funded by the Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF)

The Fifty for Fifty Scholarship Program provides fifty (50) \$2,500 scholarships to support IRWA members pursuing professional certification and continuing education. Scholarship funds may be applied toward eligible IRWA coursework and may be used for in-person, virtual, or on-demand courses.

SCHOLARSHIP ALLOCATION

- **Forty (40) scholarships** allocated equally among IRWA's ten (10) U.S. and Canadian Regions (Four scholarships per Region).
- **Up to five (5) scholarships** awarded to qualified applicants from IRWA international chapters (No more than one scholarship per international chapter).
- **Five (5) additional scholarships** awarded to U.S. and Canadian Regions based on documented excess demand.

Unused international scholarships may be reallocated to Regions based on excess qualified applications.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To qualify, applicants must:

- Be an **active IRWA member in good standing for at least one (1) year**.
- Have **formally declared candidacy for at least one IRWA certification program**.
- Submit an **essay of 300 words or less** addressing:
 1. Their strongest current potential contribution to IRWA and how this scholarship would enhance that contribution.
 2. What excites them about the future of IRWA and the right of way profession.
 3. The role they hope to play in the future of the profession and IRWA.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

- **Application Deadline: May 15, 2026.**
- **Notification of Recipients:** June 1, 2026.
- **Scholarship Term:** July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028.
- **Funds must be used within the scholarship term.**

To download the application and apply, click [here](#).

Learn more about this scholarship and other RWIEF initiatives at <https://www.rwief.org>



www.irwa8.org



IRWA CHAPTER 8 - HOUSTON



info@irwa8.org

Funding **FIFTY YEARS** of Right of Way Education

Funding your future

BY ANGEL BANKS, DAVID SINCLAIR, SR/WA, AND LESLIE FINNIGAN, SR/WA

After the first publication of "The Principles of Right of Way Textbook" in 1972, the American Right of Way Association (predecessor of IRWA) realized that specialized education would be an ongoing need for their members. To support this pursuit, a funding mechanism known as the Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF) was created in July of 1976. Read on for more of the Foundation's impact over the last 50 years.



FURTHERING YOUR EDUCATION

History

The Foundation was established by the Board of Directors of IRWA in 1976. The first meeting was held in November of 1976 with William L. Reid serving as president. A base contribution from the Louise and Y.T. Lum Family was the seed money for the Foundation with the purpose stated in the Articles of Incorporation to "receive gifts, bequests, devises and contributions" and "to hold, use, administer, and disburse the same under the auspices and supervision of the Board of Trustees" of the Foundation "for the furtherance of educational, literary, charitable and scientific purposes." For nearly 11 years, IRWA's International President also served as the Foundation president and by 1987, the Foundation had grown its corpus to \$100,000. In 1989, it was decided the Association and Foundation should operate more independently being separate organizations — the Foundation focusing on funding and the Association focusing on course curriculum. C. Jeffery Triplette, SR/WA, became the first independent Foundation president and led the Pacesetter campaign. By 1996, the campaign had grown the Foundation to more than \$500,000. In 1998, David W. Sinclair, SR/WA, became president, focusing on growth, funding, accountability and reshaping the Board of Trustees to be more reflective of the Association membership. The Foundation assumed full management of its finances from IRWA in 1998. By 2011, the Foundation had grown to more than \$1.25 million and, since its inception, had now committed approximately \$1.3 million to IRWA course development. In 2011, Carol A. Croft, SR/WA, became the first female president and continued the pattern of growth and funding education initiatives. She also expanded management of fundraising efforts by assuming ownership of the Monday Night Event and annual auction, previously managed by the Association, and implemented mechanisms to provide scholarships for different IRWA initiatives. In 2014, the Foundation made a bold and successful move to have Young Professionals from IRWA to serve limited terms as Trustees, capitalizing on their innovative and creative ideas. The benefits of this decision have been immeasurable to both the Association and Foundation. In 2022, Leslie Finnigan, SR/WA, became president and is now the "tip of the spear" in setting the Foundation's direction for the future, helping to make certain that innovative education initiatives can be funded and developed in a timely manner.

Working together

In 1978, the Foundation was recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Our mission is to raise, grow and supply funding for right of way education. We function as a funding partner for the Association. Think of us as a savings or investment account for current and future members. Contributions to the Foundation are considered a charitable donation by the IRS. This differs from the Association which is a 501(c)(6) professional association organization. IRWA must use their revenues to run the business in support of their members and member services. Dues paid to IRWA are considered a business expense by the IRS.

The Association has a challenging task to create courses, keep them updated and make them accessible across many platforms. This dynamic process requires an increasing financial commitment. Without a funding partner like the Foundation, the Association would have to fund these costs through their general budget, which would dramatically impact membership dues. For these reasons, the Foundation's mission is more relevant than ever to the success of the Association and its members.

The funding process

The Foundation does not develop or update courses; that is the purview of the Association. With member input, IRWA determines course and training needs. After considering production feasibility and costs, they submit to the Foundation proposals for one or more education products. The Foundation systematically evaluates each request, considering total cost and whether the project aligns with our mission. Projected future donations are estimated, Foundation funding already pledged and sunset dates for those funds are verified to confirm remaining unpledged funds. If funding is approved, a grant is made to the Association subject to a sunset date for completed deliverables. The Association then develops, manages and advertises the product.

Projects funded

Foundation funding has paid for new courses, course updates, conversion of classroom courses to online formats and a second printing of the revised "Principles of Right of Way Textbook." But that's not all. The Foundation has funded successful scholarship programs, including the Region Professional of the Year, 40 for 40 Launching Careers, 20/20 Vision, Leaders Light the Way 1.0 and 2.0, Carol A. Croft Finish Line and the Global Initiative. In 2025, RWIEF provided registration fees for 46 attendees to PEAK training, and this year will fund 30 additional registrations. We also





manage and grow the original seed monies provided by others for the Chapter of the Year Award, the Louise L. and Y. T. Lum Award, the Alan D. Wurtz Scholarship and the California State Association of Real Property Agents (SARPA) Scholarship.

Fundraising

Three fundraising events are held each year at the annual conference. The Foundation's Monday Night Event is a family-friendly gathering held at a unique host city venue. The evening features local food, live music and networking opportunities galore. A silent auction throughout the evening culminates in a live auction to close out the night. The second is an annual golf tournament, which is held at a distinctive area course and includes on-course contests, lunch and a raffle of top-flight equipment. Finally, an incredibly original contest raises funds from the back of a gorgeous Harley. Huh? In the Ride for the Foundation FUNdraiser, Steve Grandon connects prior year and next year conference sites by riding his Hog from one to the other. For a \$10 donation, anyone can enter a mileage guess for Steve's trip. The person with the closest mileage wins \$1,000! Ticket sales, donation of auction items and sponsorships from Association Chapters, Regions, industry corporations and members help cover the cost of these events. Profits are held and grown in the Foundation's corpus and used for right of way education. Additional funds come throughout the year from industry corporations, member donations, memorials and legacy giving.

New scholarship

We take our supporting role to heart and in celebration of fifty years, we are excited to announce a new program called the Fifty for Fifty Scholarship. The program will provide one \$2,500 scholarship to qualifying scholars who are pursuing certifications and continuing education. Up to 50 scholarships will be awarded for a total program grant of \$125,000. The Foundation will fund the program for a period of two years, beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028. The Association will administer the program. These scholarships will make a huge impact on the recipients and their employers.

Advancing careers

The Foundation applauds the efforts of right of way professionals to become better educated, and we welcome the opportunity to review new funding proposals. We are grateful for the continued support of Association members, both individual and corporate, without whom funding the ever-expanding education needs of the profession would not be possible. It has been our privilege to serve the IRWA membership these fifty years. 🎉



Angel Banks retired in 2024 after 33 years as right of way manager for the Metropolitan Sewerage District, a regional public sewer authority in Asheville, NC. She has served Carolinas Chapter 31 and Region 6, holding all offices. Angel just completed a fourth term with the Right of Way International Education Foundation.



David W. Sinclair, SR/WA, has worked in the right of way profession for 46 years and is presently an independent consultant supporting an energy client based in Houston, TX. Mr. Sinclair, recently served as a senior project manager for Paragon Partners, Ltd, and other executive roles with land service companies. Mr. Sinclair is presently a trustee and past president of the Right of Way International Education Foundation. He has held many leadership positions within IRWA; currently, he is an IRWA instructor and serves as the current treasurer of the International Oil & Gas Pipeline Committee.



Leslie Finnigan, SR/WA, has over 39 years of right of way experience. Since 1998 she has worked for Universal Field Services as the vice president for the western and northwestern regions. Leslie has been active in the IRWA since 1987, serving as Chapter 3s education chair for three years and then working her way through the officer positions to become Chapter president. She served Region 7 as the vice chair for two years and the region chair from 2001 to 2003. Leslie was awarded the Frank C. Balfour Professional of the Year at IRWA's 2019 Conference, which she also co-chaired. Leslie became a trustee on the Right of Way International Right of Way Education Foundation in 2015. After holding the positions of secretary and vice president in the Foundation, she was elected at president in 2022 and has served that office ever since.



2026 SCHEDULED COURSES

	Date	Course	Location
»»	1.21.2026	200 Principles of Real Estate Negotiation	Virtual
»»	2.3.2026	501 Residential Relocation Assistance	Virtual
»»	2.4.2026	901 Engineering Plan Development & Application	CenterPoint
»»	2.12.2026	700 Introduction to Property/Asset Management	Virtual
»»	2.19.2026	800 Principles of Real Estate Law	Virtual
»»	3.2.2026	215 Right of Way Acquisition for Pipeline Projects	CenterPoint
»»	3.18.2026	203 Alternative Dispute Resolution	Virtual
»»	3.18.2026	303 Project Management & Consultant Hiring Process	Virtual
»»	3.27.2026	102 Elevating Your Ethical Awareness	Virtual
»»	4.7.2026	421 The Valuation of Partial Acquisition	Virtual
»»	5.26.2026	105 The Uniform Act - Executive Summary	Virtual
»»	5.28.2026	203 Alternative Dispute Resolution	Virtual
»»	6.8.2026	502 Non-Residential Relocation Assistance	Virtual
»»	8.24.2026	900 Principles of Real Estate Engineering	Virtual



FURTHERING YOUR EDUCATION

105 - The Uniform Act Executive Summary

Start Date: 5/26/2026

End Date: 5/26/2026

No. of Days: 1 Day

Course Level: Core

CEU Credit: 8.00

Class Time: 8:00am - 5:00pm Pacific Time

Tuition: \$265 Member/\$385 Non-Member

Sponsored By: Chapter 8



Course Description: This course will benefit anyone who wants to learn more about the Uniform Relocation Assistance & Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, and provides a better understanding of land acquisition activities that receive federal financial assistance or that utilize federal regulations. Participants will have knowledge in relocation assistance and the steps in a typical land acquisition project; specifically, project components and impacts on both project schedules and budgets.

Instructor: TBD

Facility Information:

Virtual

Newrow Conference Call

Start Time: 8am Pacific

Participant Capacity: 20

[Click to Register: Course Description](#)

Course Coordinator:

Jamie Campbell

832.382.4338

jecampbell622@gmail.com



www.irwa8.org



IRWA CHAPTER 8 - HOUSTON



info@irwa8.org

FURTHERING YOUR EDUCATION

203 - Alternative Dispute Resolution

Start Date: 5/28/2026

End Date: 5/29/2026

No. of Days: 2 Days

Course Level: Intermediate

CEU Credit: 16.00

Class Time: 8:00am - 5:00pm Mountain Time

Tuition: \$415 Member/\$575 Non-Member

Sponsored By: Chapter 8



Course Description: This course provides the right of way professional with information regarding alternate methods to resolve negotiation disputes. Participants will learn how to identify different alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods and how to recognize each method's strengths and weaknesses. Participants will also learn how to bust through deadlock, how to save money when negotiations are not successful, and how to avoid getting involved in court proceedings.

Instructor: Pat Thayer, SR/WA, attended the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Pat is the 2017 Frank C. Balfour Professional of the Year Award winner. She is employed as a Sr. Project Manager for HDR and is co-locating between Alaska and Washington State. HDR is a Global, Employee owned Company providing a wide range of comprehensive land rights and right of way services which include, acquisition, permitting, and relocation for pipeline, power, energy, renewable, transportation, tribal and native allotment land, telecommunication, and governmental sectors. Pat has been involved in the Right of Way Industry since 1980 and has worked for both private and public sectors negotiating various property rights as well as providing relocation advisory services for projects in both the private and public sectors. Pat has worked on unique projects in Alaska, Utah, Oregon and Washington State. Pat has been an IRWA member for 33 years and holds her SR/WA designation. She is a member of Chapter 71 in Fairbanks, AK as well as a member at large with sister Chapter 49 in Anchorage, AK. Pat is a member at large of the International Pipeline Committee.

Facility Information:

Virtual

Newrow Conference Call

Start Time: 8am Mountain

Participant Capacity: 20

[Click to Register: Course Description](#)

Course Coordinator:

Laura De La Cruz

281.713.0989

laura.delacruz@wsbeng.com



www.irwa8.org



IRWA CHAPTER 8 - HOUSTON



info@irwa8.org

FURTHERING YOUR EDUCATION

502 - Non-Residential Relocation Assistance

Start Date: 6/8/2026

End Date: 6/9/2026

No. of Days: 2 Days

Course Level: Intermediate

CEU Credit: 16.00

Class Time: 8:00am - 5:00pm Pacific Time

Tuition: \$415 Member/\$575 Non-Member

Sponsored By: Chapter 8



Course Description: This course presents the processes necessary to relocate a business. Participants will learn how to apply provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, in conjunction with the Surface Transportation and Relocation Assistance Act of 1987, and subsequent revisions, to the relocations of non-residential entities.

Instructor: Leslie Findlay, SR/WA, R/W-RAC, is Vice President of Tierra Right of Way Services, Ltd. (Tierra). Leslie has been involved in right of way activities since 1998. She specializes in right of way, and is a subject matter expert in relocation assistance. Prior to joining Tierra, she served as a Project Manager for Universal Field Services and spent 15 years working in Real Estate Services at the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). At WSDOT, Leslie was responsible for the development and implementation of training courses for staff, consultant, and local agency employees. She also performed quality assurance oversight, provided relocation assistance services, and conducted project certification reviews on Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)-funded projects in Washington. Throughout her career, Leslie has served in leadership roles, provided training, and acted as a mentor to agencies and employees. Leslie holds the SR/WA designation and R/W-RAC certification from the International Right of Way Association (IRWA). She currently serves on the International Professional Education Committee, as the Vice Chair for the Instructor Development Sub-Committee. She is the former Chair of the IRWA's International Relocation Assistance Community of Practice, past President of IRWA's Puget Sound Chapter 4, and was named Chapter Professional of the Year in 2014. She is also a certified CLIMB instructor for IRWA Relocation courses.

Facility Information:

Virtual

Newrow Conference Call

Start Time: 8am Mountain

Participant Capacity: 20

[Click to Register:](#) [Course Description](#)

Course Coordinator:

LaTanya Whitaker

281.206.9509

latanya.whitaker@hdrinc.com



www.irwa8.org



IRWA CHAPTER 8 - HOUSTON



info@irwa8.org

Congratulations!

Chris Gossett SR/WA
Kevin Hicks SR/WA
Daniel Shaw SR/WA

On your SR/WA certification!



FURTHURING YOUR EDUCATION



Gain prestige. Over 87% of IRWA's agency partners and 75% of its corporate partners say SR/WA agents overall bring more value, skills and knowledge to projects.*

Stay relevant. Required continuing education and ethics course every 5 years ensures SR/WA agents maintain the highest level of industry expertise.

WHY SR/WA ?

- ✓ Highest level of competency in the right of way industry
- ✓ Accepted by public agencies as proof of qualifications
- ✓ Held to highest of ethical standards of professional practice

"Credibility with benefits."



More than 71% of IRWA members who possess the SR/WA say that it has increased and enhanced their professional reputation in the industry.*

HOW IS IT EARNED?

Required: 5+ years in right of way or infrastructure real estate. Relevant experience and education may also qualify.

Plus: 4-year degree or 2-year degree + 128 IRWA credit hours or 2 years of right of way experience.
Without a degree: 256 IRWA credit hours or 4 years of right of way experience.

Contact IRWA's Credentialing Manager, Francis Vicent at vicente@irwaonline.org for more info.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

272 credit hours from various right of way disciplines and relevant subject matters, including but not limited to:

- Ethics
- Eminent Domain Law
- Land Acquisition Negotiations
- Dispute Resolution
- Property Management
- Environmental Contamination
- Appraisal
- Real Estate Engineering
- Federal Relocation Entitlements

Capstone Exam — Intensive and comprehensive final assessment designed to ensure that participants have mastered and retained the critical knowledge and skills they've acquired while taking IRWA education courses.



READY TO GET STARTED?



310-538-0233

irwaonline.org



*Data collected from survey sent July 2024 by IRWA via email to its members.



www.irwa8.org



IRWA CHAPTER 8 - HOUSTON



info@irwa8.org

ARE YOU ON IRWA MEMBER NETWORK?



The only online community dedicated to the right of way industry

How to Access:

- Navigate to <https://membernetwork.irwaonline.org/home> and log in with your IRWA username and password.
- Download the Connected Community mobile app and input domain name: membernetwork.irwaonline.org for real-time access.



Download for iPhone



Download for Android



THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

IRWA Luncheons Approved for SR/WA Rectification Credits

As you may know, the IRWA International Credential Committee has moved to a “Self Reporting” model. Meaning, IRWA members simply report that they attended X amount of meetings for X amount of hours on their CE forms. Each luncheon attended will earn you one (1) hour re-certification credit. Be sure to pick up a form you can fill out and retain for your records at our next IRWA Chapter 8 Meeting!

Want a Free Lunch?

The Chapter 8 Board has decided to offer its members the opportunity to receive a free lunch for the submission, acceptance and publication of a newsletter article.

To Qualify:

1. You must be a current IRWA Chapter 8 Member (Chapter Chairs and Executive Officers excluded)
2. Submit a newsletter article and have it published in the Award-Winning The Centerline
3. You receive a free lunch voucher for one of the regularly scheduled lunch meetings.

Submit articles to Karla Breitinger via email at kjbreitinger@eprod.com



THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

About the IRWA

Since its inception as a not-for-profit association in 1934, the IRWA has united the efforts of its members toward professional development, strong ethics and improved service to employers and the public, along with advancements within the right of way profession. IRW is the unsurpassed sources of right of way educational programs and professional services world wide.

Our Members

Dedicated exclusively to the right of way profession, IRWA has nearly 10,000 members throughout the US, Canada and Africa. Our members are multi-disciplined professionals employed by private industry and government agencies as Acquisition Agents, Appraisers, Environment Professionals, Engineers, Lawyers, Property Managers, Relocations Assistance Agents, Surveyors and Title Experts.

Welcome New Members!

Tiffany Campbell

Royce Daves

Lyndsey Domingue

Davin Flores

Elizabeth Glotfelty

Hunter Graeber

Jeran Jackson-Hill

Michelle Kuper

Polee Love

Zach Pilkington

Madison Trimble

John Vicklund

Matthew Ware

