

Dear Members,

As summer begins, it's a good moment to reflect on the year so far and recognize the people who've helped keep things running smoothly. The Great Lakes Chapter has continued to operate seamlessly this year, thanks in large part to the leadership and experience of our new Executive Director, Sarah Walsh. We're grateful to Pete Arbour for identifying Sarah as a strong candidate to succeed Joan and for helping guide that transition. And to Sarah—thank you for hitting the ground running and bringing your expertise to the role. Your contributions have already made a meaningful impact.



As a chapter, our core focus is providing high-quality education and meaningful opportunities to network and connect. Participation in our events is what keeps our community strong. When experienced members show up and engage, it helps create the kind of environment that encourages newer members to get involved and shows prospective members the value of joining. As you consider your schedule in the coming months, please consider making chapter events a priority.

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Looking ahead, we're especially excited about our fall collaborative event with the International Right of Way Association. This joint conference will be held in Traverse City on September 10, 11, and 12. It's shaping up to be a standout gathering, combining continuing education, industry insights, and great opportunities to connect with professionals across both organizations. If you haven't attended a chapter event recently, this is a great one to put on your calendar.

Last month, I had the privilege of representing the chapter, with Ken Siegle, at the Leadership Development and Advisory Council (LDAC) conference in Washington, D.C. As always, LDAC delivered a mix of advocacy, strategic thinking, and honest conversation about the future of our profession. Our delegation met with legislators to speak on behalf of appraisers and reinforce the essential role we play in the broader real estate and financial ecosystem. It's always energizing to see the level of commitment and forward thinking our peers bring to the table—and to be reminded that what we do has real, national significance.

At the same time, recent events within the Institute have sparked justified concern. The removal of Craig Steinley from his position as Vice President has led many members to question the direction and transparency of leadership at the national level. These are important issues, and they've been felt throughout the organization. That said, I remain confident in the dedication of national staff and leadership to keep the Appraisal Institute moving forward. Here in the Great Lakes Chapter, our focus remains on communication, accountability, and doing what we've always done best: serving our members and supporting the profession.

Thank you all for your professionalism and your continued involvement. I look forward to seeing many of you at our future events.

Sincerely,

Andy.

Andrew E. Sill, MAI

President, Great Lakes Chapter, Appraisal Institute

GLCAI EVENTS 2025

Thank you to everyone who has attended events with the Great Lakes Chapter this year. Here are just a few of our events.



**7-hour USPAP and 2-hour Michigan Law
Grand Rapids**



WESTERN MICHIGAN ECONOMIC SUMMIT

Membership Updates



Bret Shrader Receives his MAI Designation

Bret Shrader is a Vice President with nine years of real estate and consulting experience. He is in the Valuation & Advisory Services Group's Detroit (Southfield), Michigan office. His primary geographic focus is Southeast/Central Michigan.

Lesley Baron, MAI receives her AI-GRS designation



Lesley Baron, MAI, has more than 30 years of experience in the appraisal industry. A specialist in valuation and analysis of major commercial properties, she holds an MAI from the Appraisal Institute. A Certified General Appraiser, she is also a member of the International Association of Assessing Officers. Prior to joining MVS, Ms. Baron served as a Consultant for the City of Detroit Office of the Assessor. She was also a Senior Manager/Property Tax for Chrysler Corporation.



Associate Members

Kimberly Lynn Cole
Tara Cunningham
Courtney Gervais

Student Affiliate

Muzanenhamo
Hakutambgi Kahari

Membership Updates



After 36 years of distinguished leadership, George E. Bratcher, Jr., founder of Bratcher & Associates, will begin transitioning out of the company's daily operations. Established in 1988, Bratcher & Associates has earned a reputation for excellence in real estate appraisal, with George personally appraising properties in at least 16 states across the country.

George's journey in Battle Creek began in 1983 when he was appointed City Assessor. Five years later, he founded Bratcher & Associates, growing the firm into a respected and reliable appraisal service provider throughout the region.

Effective May 1, 2025, the company will usher in a new era under the leadership of Robin Morehart and will be rebranded as Bratcher Morehart & Associates. Robin, who has worked closely with George for the past four years, has been licensed as an appraiser since 2021 and earned her Certified Residential Appraisal License in 2024. Her leadership brings a forward-thinking vision with a focus on technological advancement, innovation, and enhanced client services.

Robin began her real estate career in 2015 and quickly discovered a passion for property appraisal. Under George's mentorship, she has developed a strong foundation and is committed to continuing the firm's legacy while leading it into the future.

John Vandehei, a longtime team member with over 20 years of appraisal experience in Southwest Michigan, will remain in his current role, continuing to provide expert appraisal services to the local community.

Justin Holm has joined Bratcher Morehart & Associates as a limited licensed appraiser and is actively working toward his certified residential license. In addition to his role in real estate appraisal, he proudly serves as a firefighter for the City of Battle Creek. Justin holds a bachelor's degree from Olivet College, is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, and brings valuable experience from his previous work as a field claims adjuster.

While George is stepping back from ownership, he will remain engaged with the firm and the broader real estate community. A licensed real estate professional since 1979, George will continue to offer his extensive experience as an Associate Broker with Coldwell Banker Morehart Realty, where he will focus on commercial real estate transactions. Robin will also continue her role as a Realtor with the firm.

Get to Know AIERF

The Appraisal Institute Education and Relief Foundation (AIERF) was born out of the 2018 union of the AI Education Trust and AI Relief Foundation in order to most effectively and efficiently serve real estate appraisal professionals now and into the future.

For more than 50 years, the Appraisal Institute Education Trust (AIET) fostered the advancement of the real estate appraisal profession and played a critical role in supporting valuation education. AIET supported a vast range of initiatives, from world-renowned resources such as the Y.T. and Louise Lee Lum Library, to programs that will help secure the future of the valuation industry, including research grants and scholarships.

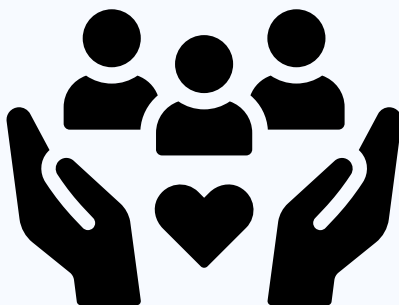
Since the formation of the Appraisal Institute Relief Foundation (AIRF) following the 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes, more than \$300,000 in emergency financial assistance has been provided to appraisers and other individuals in need.

Looking to the future, the AI Education and Relief Foundation will continue to seek opportunities to support and promote the profession of real estate valuation and the individuals who comprise the profession.

For more information, contact AIERF at 312-335-4133 or aierf@appraisalinstitute.org.



The AIERF provides scholarships to members looking to further their education to receive their designation or become certified



In 2005, the AI Relief Foundation was formed out of concerns many AI professionals were expressing soon after Gulf Coast hurricanes as to how they could help their colleagues. Today, the AI Education and Relief Foundation stands ready to provide emergency financial assistance to our colleagues in need.



With its extensive collection of books, journals and other resources and growing database connections, the Lum Library provides support for the research needs of all Appraisal Institute members, as well as the profession at large.

Upcoming Education

JUNE 2025

2024-2025 7-Hour National USPAP Update Course

June 12, 2025

Hampton Inn and Suites
Flint/Grand Blanc

Michigan Appraising Licensing Law and Rules

June 12, 2025

Hampton Inn and Suites
Flint/Grand Blanc

Join the Chicago, Great Lakes, North Star and Wisconsin chapters for the first ever joint Women's Initiative Committee event. This free session will bring together 3 generations of female appraisers to discuss how they got into the industry, how they have progressed in the profession and more.



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Upcoming Event



Registration is now open
for the 2025 Golf Outing
Tuesday, September 23

Location:

Sheperd's Hollow Golf Club
9085 Big Lake Rd, Clarkston, MI 48348
www.sheperdshollow.com

Deadline:

To guarantee your spot, please register
by August 23, 2025

Start Time:

Registration/Driving Range starting at 8
am
Shotgun start at 9 am
Dinner served at 3 pm

Hole Sponsorship:

Hole sponsorships are available at
\$250/hole. If you are interested, please
call Mike Williams at 734-994-0554

Price

\$145/person includes 18 holes of golf with
cart, box lunch, drink tickets, Burger Bar
dinner, and a multitude of prizes
Dinner only is \$60



2025 Great Lakes Board of Directors and Region Reps

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Eran Singer, MAI

Region III Alternate Representatives

David B. Mielnicki, MAI, SRA

Douglas C. Adams, MAI

Andy Sill, MAI and Ken Siegle, MAI attend LDAC



The Leadership Development and Advisory Council (LDAC) is a group of dedicated appraisers who come together once a year in Washington, D.C., to formulate solutions to challenges faced by the appraisal profession.

LDAC fosters creative thought from talented real estate appraisal professionals and generates future leaders of the Appraisal Institute. LDAC also establishes an appraiser presence in Congress demonstrating that the Appraisal Institute recognizes the importance of active involvement in the political process.

LDAC has served as a source of leadership and as an inspiration for new programming ideas for the Appraisal Institute since 1969. Through a series of roundtable discussions, LDAC provides a forum where ideas and opinions on targeted topics of concern to the appraisal profession are exchanged.



Meet PAREA Graduate - Ashley Shallal

How did you become interested in becoming an appraiser?

My background is in mortgage lending and property renovation. I spent several years reviewing appraisals with clients and gained valuable insight into the construction process. After our daughter started school, transitioning to a more flexible career that built on my experience felt like a natural next step.

How did you hear about PAREA?

My husband and I had always wanted to start our own business, but local appraisers required a non-compete agreement for shadowing opportunities. While researching licensing requirements in Michigan, I came across a mention of experience hours or PAREA. I had never heard of PAREA until I looked it up that day.

What was the most interesting thing you learned while doing PAREA?

Completing an appraisal report involves many details, and I gained valuable insight by learning from mentors with different specialties. One focused on appraisal reviews, while the other did a lot of work with lawyers. It was always interesting to hear whether something I wrote would hold up in court. The exposure to their varied experiences was truly invaluable.

What is the most interesting thing about being an appraiser?

The appraisal field offers diverse career opportunities. I recently attended the Appraisal Institute's Economic Summit in Grand Rapids, where I met appraisers specializing in a variety of segments. It's encouraging to see so many different avenues available when choosing a new career path.