



# CAPITOL

# IDEAS

Participants focus on  
growth — not just  
change — during  
2011 LDAC



By **Jay W. Schneider**, executive editor

**THE ECONOMY, THE APPRAISAL INDUSTRY AND THE APPRAISAL INSTITUTE**

**ITSELF** are facing enormous changes. Because of that, says Mark Verrett, Associate member and 2011 chair of the Leadership Development and Advisory Council, "I wanted to convey to

participants that this year's event was as important as it's ever been."

With that goal in mind, Verrett, 2011 LDAC Vice Chair Joe Woods, SRA, and the four discussion leaders directed LDAC participants to focus on the idea of growth — not just change — during the July 26-28 event in Washington, D.C.

Capitol Hill also was a focus of LDAC as the more than 100 participants spent an afternoon meeting with lawmakers and their staffs. (See "Skill on the Hill," page 27.)

Each year, the four LDAC discussion leaders forward their reports to AI's Strategic Planning Committee for consideration.

**Highlights from this year's reports include:**

More than 100 Appraisal Institute members attending this year's Leadership Development and Advisory Council session made their way to the U.S. Capitol to meet with lawmakers and discuss issues affecting the appraisal profession.

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Discussion leader Robin Amarin, MAI, senior appraiser at Atrium Real Estate Services in Austin, Texas, surprised several members of her discussion groups when she told them the extent of the Appraisal Institute's growing

international presence. AI has members in about 60 countries, and roughly 17 percent of appraisers who received their designation in 2010 were international members. While a few members expressed concern over how foreign membership influences the Appraisal Institute, most see international growth as a positive move.

Amarin says most participants want better integration of U.S. and international membership, and their suggestions include opening international chapters and possibly an international Appraisal Institute office, creating a liaison or ambassador position to help align international goals and practices with those in the U.S., partnering with overseas colleges and universities to promote AI and its educational offerings, and promoting AI designations to non-U.S. government agencies. Participants also want to see the Appraisal Institute increase internal promotion of its growing international presence.

Robin Amarin's report can be viewed in its entirety at: [www.appraisalinstitute.org/myappraisalinstitute/CmteMbrsDwnld/BOD/downloads/2010/LDACSummary2011Amarin.pdf](http://www.appraisalinstitute.org/myappraisalinstitute/CmteMbrsDwnld/BOD/downloads/2010/LDACSummary2011Amarin.pdf).

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— Mark Verrett, Associate member

**THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX**

Participants in discussion groups led by Claire Aufrance, MAI, owner of Aufrance Valuations in Greensboro, N.C., were asked if they are open to being positioned as analysts and consultants rather than only as real estate appraisers. Their answer was a resounding "yes," but many say they are unsure how to make that next step.

Participants want to see the Appraisal Institute introduce new classes and courses or tweak existing ones to help them bridge their knowledge gap. We have the skills and need to learn practical applications besides appraisals, noted one participant. They suggest the Appraisal Institute promote itself as an organization of real estate analysts, and they

envision an outreach program, an advertising campaign and website changes to reflect members' range of expertise. In addition to enhanced education, participants support adding an analyst or consultant designation within AI.

Claire Aufrance's report can be viewed in its entirety at: [www.appraisalinstitute.org/myappraisalinstitute/CmteMbrsDwnld/BOD/downloads/2010/LDACSummary2011Aufrance.pdf](http://www.appraisalinstitute.org/myappraisalinstitute/CmteMbrsDwnld/BOD/downloads/2010/LDACSummary2011Aufrance.pdf).



## THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

Participants in discussion groups led by Michael Goldstein, MAI, principal at Hlubb & Goldstein Valuation Group in Fulton, Md., talked about education delivery, particularly the future of the Appraisal Institute's education delivery. Participants believe that traditional classroom education will always be important — they especially appreciate opportunities to interact with other students — but they want technology better integrated into the Appraisal Institute's courses. Maintaining AI's high-quality education is paramount they say, so they see changes targeting delivery methods and not content.

Discussion groups floated the idea of a virtual classroom — a setup similar to that used by major online universities — where an instructor is based nearly anywhere, and students view and participate in the class via video conferencing from almost anywhere. This type of education would reduce travel costs and would shorten the time appraisers would be away from their businesses, as well as serve international students by making them feel like part of the group, according to participants. Concern about the loss of classroom camaraderie could

be overcome by having students gather at various locations and use video conferencing as a group, they said. Participants also suggest a combination of instructional methods — a few days of instruction via video and a few days in a traditional classroom.

One area where participants really want to see growth: digital textbooks and instruction materials. They want the Appraisal Institute to offer eBook materials for the Nook, Kindle, iPad and other eReaders.

Michael Goldstein's report can be viewed in its entirety at: [www.appraisalinstitute.org/myappraisalinstitute/CmteMbrsDwnld/BOD/downloads/2010/LDACSummary2011Goldstein.pdf](http://www.appraisalinstitute.org/myappraisalinstitute/CmteMbrsDwnld/BOD/downloads/2010/LDACSummary2011Goldstein.pdf).



## OPEN INVITATION

The average age of designated Appraisal Institute members is 62, and AI research shows that considerable attrition is expected over the next five to 10 years as a significant number of members retire. Discussion leader Eric Haims, MAI, senior vice president at Jerome Haims Realty in New York City, had his discussion groups consider, in light of potential membership losses, the purely hypothetical idea of opening up the Appraisal Institute to non-real estate appraisers.

Participants say they are open to the idea and ready to welcome non-real estate appraisers into the Appraisal Institute as long as AI is very selective as to who's invited. The more the professional groups are connected to real estate or valuation, the better, discussion participants say. Among the potential groups suggested: academicians, lawyers, consultants, urban planners, engineers, architects, bankers/lenders, underwriters, and machine and equipment appraisers.

Haims says that participants are open to taking in non-real estate appraiser members not so much to grow membership, but to expand their networking options. They also like the idea of new professional groups adding qualifications and specialties to the Appraisal Institute that will increase AI's prestige and credibility. ▲

Eric Haims' report can be viewed in its entirety at: [www.appraisalinstitute.org/myappraisalinstitute/CmteMbrsDwnld/BOD/downloads/2010/LDACSummary2011Haims.pdf](http://www.appraisalinstitute.org/myappraisalinstitute/CmteMbrsDwnld/BOD/downloads/2010/LDACSummary2011Haims.pdf).

## AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

James T. Ferstl, MAI, vice president at Affiliated Real Estate Appraisers in Little Rock, Ark., and an Appraisal Institute member since 2004, received the William T. Anglyn Award at the Leadership Development and Advisory Council on July 28 in Washington, D.C.

"The conference itself was extremely informative, but the real value in LDAC for me was being able to network with my peers outside the sessions," Ferstl says.

As for winning the award, "It never crossed my mind that I would even be considered. I was at a loss for words, which is seldom the case for me."

The Anglyn Award is presented on the last day of each year's conference to a first-year



James T. Ferstl, MAI

participant who exhibited exemplary leadership, integrity and outstanding contributions to that year's LDAC. The award was developed in 2000

in recognition of efforts by Ted Anglyn, MAI, to promote LDAC.