

FUNDING YOUR FUTURE



BY ANGEL BANKS, SR/WA

The Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF). Whew, that's a long name! You may have heard of us but may not know what we do or how we do it. For all the answers, read on.

Who are we?

Created in 1976, we are a nonprofit corporation whose purpose is raising funds to grow and use for right of way education. As a 501(c)3 entity, donations to the Foundation are tax deductible, and this structure provides a secure holding place to grow a funding corpus dedicated to right of way education.

How do we interact with IRWA?

Although a separate entity, we function as a funding partner. RWIEF helps ensure that IRWA members receive cutting-edge education to thrive in an ever-changing industry. The Association has a challenging task to create right of way education courses and training programs, all while keeping them current and making the products easily accessible to members. This dynamic process requires levels of funding they do not have. Funding from the Foundation helps subsidize the Association's education initiatives.

How does the education funding process work?

Through member input, the Association determines course and training needs. After considering production feasibility and costs, they submit to the Foundation proposals for one or more education products in need of funding. The Foundation considers total costs and whether the project aligns with our purpose. If approved, funding is provided to the Association and subject to a sunset date for the completed deliverable. The Association then develops, manages and advertises the product.

What has RWIEF accomplished?

Foundation funding has paid for new courses, updating courses, converting classroom courses to online formats and revising the "Principles of Right of Way" textbook. But that's not all. Funding for the Leadership Institute produced 11 online leadership training modules that are FREE to Association members (Go to irwaonline.org, select the Education tab, and scroll down through Students, Online Education and Visit The Library. Look for the \$ symbol.) The Foundation has also directly 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 Leaders Light the Way 2.0. RWIEF also manages/grows original funds 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.

How do we raise education funds?

Two major events are held each year at the IRWA conference. The Foundation's Monday Night Event is a family-friendly gathering held in an interesting, host city venue. This energetic evening features favorite local food and music along with networking opportunities galore. Ongoing through the evening is a silent auction that culminates in a live auction to close out the night. Our Tuesday golf tournament for 144 duffers is held at a distinctive area course. The day includes transportation, lunch and a raffle of top-flight equipment.

Ticket sales, donation of auction items and sponsorships from Association Chapters, Regions, industry corporations and members help cover costs of these events. Profits are held and grown in the Foundation's corpus and used for right of way education.

Additional funds come through the year from industry corporations and member donations, memorials and legacy giving. Also, a unique contest raises funds from the back of a beautiful Harley. Huh? In the Ride for the Foundation FUNdraiser, Steve Grandon connects prior year and next year conference sites by riding his Harley from one to the other. For a \$5 donation, anyone can enter a mileage guess for Steve's ride. The person with the closest mileage wins \$1,000!

Why does all this matter to you?

College degree programs specific to right of way are not readily available. Billions of dollars are spent annually in the acquisition, management and transfer of rights of way, and specialized education is essential to the industry. To ensure that right of way professionals maintain the highest standards of competency, new courses and training must keep pace with the evolving marketplace. This effort takes secure funding now, and will into the future, making RWIEF a critical education partner for IRWA. With the Foundation's help, Association members enjoy more varied and advanced training options than ever before.

How can you help support right of way education?

There are multiple ways to support RWIEF's funding. Include a donation with your IRWA membership renewal. Attend RWIEF fundraising events. Volunteer to work at an event. Be a sponsor at our Monday Night Event. Donate an item for the annual auction. Sponsor a hole at our annual golf tournament. Collect donations at your Chapter and Region meetings. Enter the Ride for the Foundation FUNdraiser contest. Make a gift in memory of a loved one or a mentor who has helped you. Consider legacy giving. All these avenues provide a way for you to give back. Thank you for helping RWIEF raise the level of expertise across our industry! 🙌



Angel Banks is the right of way manager for the Metropolitan Sewerage District, a regional public sewer authority in Asheville, NC. She created their right of way division in 1991, establishing policies/procedures for easements over 1,100 miles of sewer lines. Angel developed agreements with area municipalities allowing greenway uses over MSD's sewer easements. She joined IRWA in 1991 and served Carolina's Chapter 31, becoming president in 2004. From 2004, she served in Region 6 offices and was Chair from 2007-2009.

She worked with the IRWA Leadership Institute and was awarded the Region 6 Professional of the Year in 2013. Angel is now serving her fourth term as a Trustee of the Right of Way International Education Foundation.

Thank you

