

III Receives Innovation Recognition from SITE

The Society of Insurance Trainers and Educators (SITE) presented International Insurance Institute with an honorable mention for its Innovation award for III's new online claims training program. Sandy Masters, SITE President said the following:

"Congratulations to International Insurance Institute on receiving the Lois A. Markovich Innovation Award honorable mention. The award recognizes organizations for new and innovative training programs as well as commitment to continued improvement through innovation. As insurance training organizations grapple with reduced budgets and a distributed workforce, International Insurance Institute, Inc. has demonstrated its commitment to help provide learning solutions that evolve with your customers' changing needs. The video technology approach you used with the reinforcement exercises that help make sure the training sticks was truly innovative. As trainers, we know that the majority of learners are visual. After viewing the video, I can say that you have successfully transformed a classroom experience by maintaining a high degree of interactivity and using demonstration role plays. This program is not a boring lecture, it truly helps the claim professional understand how to apply the techniques that allow them to provide superior customer service. You truly are helping to make the job of the adjuster easier so that they can succeed and in turn their company succeeds."

Claims Education Conference Recap

Several of the high-impact training sessions offered at the 4th Annual Claims Education Conference were focused on the art of claims negotiation. Dave Vanderparn, director of claims training for III, delivered the session titled, "The Opening Statement – A Powerful Negotiation Tool." Ken Sanders, Sr., international instructor for III, facilitated the informative session, "Staying in Your Conversation – The Best Kept Secret of Great Negotiators." For a full review of the entire conference, see the feature article in next issue of Claims Education Magazine.

► NEW CUSTOMERS

We are delighted to welcome and announce those who have joined International Insurance Institute's member list — either through on-site training programs or training materials.

United States

Brad Hinkle, Claims VP, Alliance United Insurance
 Jamie Martin, Claims Trainer, Selective Insurance
 Kathleen Britt, Claims Training Consultant, PEMCO
 Paul Garay, Divisional V.P., Great American Insurance
 Michelle Mahaffey, Supervisor, Transpac Solutions

International

Canada - Sherry Lukow, Manager, Aviva Canada

Manager Spotlight

Jane Eaton, AIC, SCLA, AMIM, Property & Inland Marine Claim Manager for Great American Insurance, graduated from Miami University in 1976 with her B.A. in Spanish and sociology. She began her insurance career in 1978 as an agency clerk.



"Like most people in the industry it seems, getting into insurance was an accident," she said. "I considered attending graduate school for social work. However, in the meantime, an employment agency connected me with an insurance agency job where no one else wanted to be the claim person — and the rest is history."

From claim trainee, to claim supervisor, to claim manager, Eaton has held various positions over the years and has never looked back. She says having a sense of humor is one of the keys to dealing with the stressful situations that can occur quite frequently in claims. Eaton recalled the warning of her first supervisor: Small children will throw rocks at you on the street when they find out what you do for a living. "Thankfully that hasn't happened so far," she quipped.

In 1991, Eaton joined Great American Insurance. When asked what she likes most about her current position, she cited the people with whom she works. "I have a great team, and our whole department works really well together," she said. "We all interact well with other parts of the division — underwriting, loss prevention, and so on.

"We recently had a national meeting where most of our divisions got together face-to-face for several days of meetings and classes. It's good to make connections with people you usually deal with over the phone or by e-mail."

Eaton enjoys the fact that the job is never "boring," as the Property and Inland Marine Division writes a variety of policies. She attributes her overall success to her perseverance. "I think claims is very cyclical," she explained. "There are always times when you feel like you'll never get it all done. However, if you just keep plugging away, then it will get less crazy. You'll end up learning from it and moving ahead."

Her advice to others is to keep in mind that claims is the reason insurance exists. "There would be no reason to buy a policy if a claim department wasn't able to handle the claim everyone hopes doesn't happen. We're often the only contact an insured or claimant has with the company. This contact usually stems from the fact that something bad has happened to them. If we remember that — and treat them like we'd hope to be treated in that situation — then we're doing what we need to do."

Eaton obviously thinks a lot about the way we all deal with each other. She quoted Ken Keyes, Jr, who said, "A loving person lives in a loving world. A hostile person lives in a hostile world. Everyone you meet is your mirror."

It is also evident that this consummate claim professional is a firm believer in training. "Not to kiss up or anything, but all of the III classes I've taken have been great," Eaton remarked when asked to name her favorite course. "I think they're the most helpful courses in the claim business — it's just so important to make customer service a priority."

Eaton relates this to the most important thing she has learned in her career. "It's really true you can catch more flies with honey than vinegar," she said. "Sometimes it's hard to remember that when you're working on a claim, but it often works if you keep it in the back of your mind and actually do it. I know that this is easier said than done." ■