



East Florida
Chapter

CHAPTER OFFICE
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HOCKEY GAME

**ORLANDO
SOLAR BEARS**

VS

**FLORIDA
EVERBLADES**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2026

KIA CENTER \$50 PER TICKET (INCLUDES LIGHT APPETIZERS)
JOIN US IN OUR PRIVATE SUITE DOORS OPEN AT 8:00 PM - MEMBERSHIP
MEETING 6:45 PM - GAME 7:00 PM

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Behind the Chapter - Lauren Dowling



A Message from the President

As Chapter President, I have had an even greater opportunity this year to see just how much work happens behind the scenes to keep the East Florida Chapter moving forward. And at the center of so much of it is our Executive Director, Lauren Dowling.

Most of our members know Lauren. She is often the first call when we have a question, the person coordinating our education and events, and the one quietly making sure all the pieces come together.

What many may not know is just how long Lauren has been serving the Appraisal Institute - or how much change she has witnessed along the way.

Lauren began her career with the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers in 1988 as the first Executive Director of the San Diego Chapter. Nearly four decades later, she continues to bring that experience, institutional knowledge, and, most importantly, genuine care for our members to the East Florida Chapter. I recently had the opportunity to sit down with Lauren and talk about where it all began, what she has learned along the way, and what she sees for the future of our Chapter and profession.

Mike: You've been doing this for quite a while. How did it all start?

Lauren: I started in 1988 as the first Executive Director for the San Diego Chapter, and the job was completely different then. They gave me a computer - which was still pretty new - put me in an office and basically said, "Here you go"! I remember thinking, Here I go with what? I'm not sure I knew what they wanted from me, and I'm not sure they did either! My first membership meeting was a room of about 100 men, all in suits, and they asked me to sit at the head table facing everyone. I remember thinking, What did I get myself into? Back then, there was no internet. We mailed newsletters every month to 300 or 400 members, handled monthly meeting registrations without credit cards, and candidates were actually interviewed in person by groups of appraisers. Administratively, it was a very different job.



Mike: And eventually that journey brought you to Florida and the East Florida Chapter.

Lauren: I spent 15 years with the San Diego Chapter before moving to Florida. There wasn't an Executive Director position available here immediately, so I let people know I was here. Eventually, a position opened at the regional level, and not long after that I began working with the Chapter. I was able to bring some ideas from San Diego with me, and over time those ideas evolved into things that are unique to East Florida. The Real Estate Forum is a good example. We had an economic forum in San Diego, and that concept helped inspire what eventually became the Real Estate Forum here. It started with maybe 70 or 80 attendees, and today we're over 200.

Mike: After all these years, what do you enjoy most about working with the Chapter and our members?

Lauren: Meeting everyone. I like being around people and I like helping. I like getting things organized and working with all the different personalities that come through the Chapter. Every year brings different people and different personalities, and I learn from them, too. I remember years ago members with marketing backgrounds helped me improve the newsletter and brought the Real Estate Forum to new heights. That's one of the things I've enjoyed - everybody brings something different.

Mike: You've worked with a lot of Chapter presidents and boards over the years. What makes a leadership team successful?

Lauren: Being active - not just having your name on the board. Come to the meetings, bring ideas and talk about them. You never know whether an idea is going to work until you put it out there. I also think strategic planning is important. Get together at the beginning of the year, outside of a regular board meeting, and ask: What do we want to accomplish? What ideas do we have? Throw those ideas out there and build the year from that.

Mike: What is your advice to newer members who want to become more involved?

Lauren: Come to the meetings. Come to the social functions. Network. You have to put yourself in the right place at the right time. We also need our more experienced members to give back. One of our biggest challenges is helping younger people get into the profession. We have people who have taken the classes and done what they're supposed to do, but they need someone willing to mentor and supervise them. If we can't help them find that path into the profession, we're going to lose them to something else.

Mike: What is something about your role that members might not realize?

Lauren: One thing is making sure the Chapter stays within the Appraisal Institute's minimum chapter criteria. There are requirements and steps throughout the year that have to be followed, and part of my job is keeping the Chapter within that framework. Then there's education. We offered 35 +/- in classes in 2026, working together with the other Florida Executive Directors. Increasingly, we're also developing chapter-generated education and looking around the country for successful programs that other chapters have created.

Mike: You mentioned chapter-generated education. Is that an opportunity for our members as well?

Lauren: Absolutely. If you have a specialty, take that specialty and consider writing a two- or three-hour seminar about it. It gives you an opportunity to share what you know, become recognized within the Chapter for that expertise, and potentially even generate business from it. Years ago, candidates would often write or speak about their specialties. I think there is an opportunity to bring more of that back. We need people willing to develop seminars and share their expertise.

Mike: Last question. What would you most like our members to know?

Lauren: I enjoy working with our members, and I want them to use me as a resource. If I don't know the answer, I'll find out what that answer is if it's out there.

"I enjoy working with our members, and I want them to use me as a resource."

From the President

I think Lauren's last answer says it better than I could. What has always stood out to me about Lauren is that her role goes well beyond scheduling meetings, coordinating education, or keeping the Chapter on track. She genuinely cares about our members and the success of this organization.

Nearly four decades after walking into that first meeting in San Diego wondering what she had gotten herself into, Lauren is still helping members, solving problems, developing ideas, and adapting right alongside our profession.

As President, I have gained an even greater appreciation for just how much Lauren does that most of us never see. Our Chapter is fortunate to have her experience and institutional knowledge, but even more fortunate to have someone who still enjoys helping our members after all these years.

So I'll close by reinforcing Lauren's own message: use her as a resource. Get involved. Show up. Bring an idea. And, when you have the opportunity, give something back to the profession.

Lauren, on behalf of the East Florida Chapter - thank you for everything you do for us. - Mike

Welcome, New Members:

Zahir Millard - Student Affiliate
Hong Rainbow Young - Associate Member
David M. Heer Jr. - Student Affiliate
Shaniah Irvin - Associate Member
Anesia D. Saunders - Associate Member
Durran Davila- Associate Member
Eric Odegard - Associate Member
Zuleika Marie Polanko Lugo - Associate Member
Cayden Allen - Student Affiliate
Adam Judd - Associate Member
Albert Giammattei III -Associate Member
Dewan Ramdihall - Student Affiliate
Sonali Cannon - Affiliate

The Appraisal Scoop

Here's the scoop!

An exciting new way to participate in round group, interactive discussion took place on August 21 at the "Residential Level Up" at the Westin in Lake Mary. A room of residential appraisers met to discuss and learn from some of the best in the business, "Think Tank" style! Seth Shore, SRA kicked it off with his lead in the topic, "Highest and Best Use, Complex Analysis." Next was Sandy Adomatis, SRA, with the topic, "Valuation Tools for Green Construction Elements." Megan Johnson Judd, SRA, AI-RRS wrapped up with the topic, "Supporting Adjustments for Unusual Conditions of Features." It was a unique and new approach to some of the most important topics in the business.



Testimonial: Sunny Tyner-"The quality of the data shared was absolutely top shelf and I walked away with both new understandings and resources to make me a better appraiser - and add additional services to my appraisal offerings for clients!"





TUITION



SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The East Florida Chapter of the Appraisal Institute is excited to offer a scholarship for Appraisal Institute Courses required for State Certification.



*Valid toward tuition for Appraisal Institute Courses. Must be an active East Florida Chapter of the Appraisal Institute Associate Member.

ASSISTANCE



Oct 8, 2026	Real World Adjustments	Virtual	2 Hours
Oct 15, 2026	Florida Appraisal Laws and Rules	Virtual	3 Hours
Oct 22, 2026	2026-2027 7-Hour National USPAP	Virtual	7 Hours
Oct 29, 2026	ChatGPT for RE Appraisers – Beginning Edition	Virtual	7 Hours

**COMING
SOON**

**2027 EDUCATION
CALENDAR**

14TH ANNUAL CENTRAL FLORIDA REAL ESTATE FORUM September 16, 2026

