

Letter from the IIABW President:

Most agency principals I know are worried about the future of the insurance workforce. Over 60% of our industry will be retiring in the next seven years so owners like me are concerned about who will eventually be purchasing our agencies. IIABW's Young Agents is an important resource to help ensure there will be a strong, committed pool of insurance professionals for decades to come.

IIABW's Young Agents is a statewide network of insurance professionals which strives for professional growth through educational achievement, leadership development, legislative involvement, and insurance career perpetuation. Once we get good people in our industry, the Young Agents helps them find success which we all know can be challenging during the first few years.

Our state's Young Agents program provides an opportunity for our producers, CSRs, underwriters and marketing representatives to learn from industry leaders and from each other. They develop relationships that will help them thrive, thus ensuring they make insurance their career.

I talked to several successful agents who were involved early in their careers in the Young Agents. Here is what they found most valuable about the experience:

*It was nice to spend time with colleagues that were facing the same issues, and pressures I was. The interface with the company people was also invaluable - many of the connections I made back then are still effective today!*

- David Hargreaves CIC, CRM, Argus Insurance Inc.

*As a producer from a smaller agency, I found it valuable connecting with producers from other parts of the state who did not compete with our agency. We shared sales techniques and market knowledge that was critical early in my career.*

- John McDonald, McDonald McGarry, Edmonds

*As I begin my 39<sup>th</sup> year in the industry, I can easily point to my association with the Big I Young Agents as one of the most rewarding experiences of my early career. I count myself as fortunate to have participated in the Young Agents program and I believe it contributed to my success in the industry.*

- Alan Cottle, CPCU, Argus Insurance Inc

*Being involved in the Young Agents was arguably the best thing I did when I first was trying to break in to our business. I found mentorship that really impacted my long term success and made me feel so much more confident to grow and develop as an agent. The Young Agents group is a must for any new agent wanting to excel and prosper in our business!*

- Dave Gregory, Stonebraker McQuary Insurance

The Young Agents Committee sponsors educational and fun networking events each quarter. To keep up on Young Agents activities, go to their Facebook Fan Page ([facebook.com/IIABW.YoungAgents](https://facebook.com/IIABW.YoungAgents)). I encourage owners to get their younger, newer employees involved in the IIABW Young Agents. It is an investment in your business's most valuable asset: your employees.

- Pat Otter, IIABW President 2014