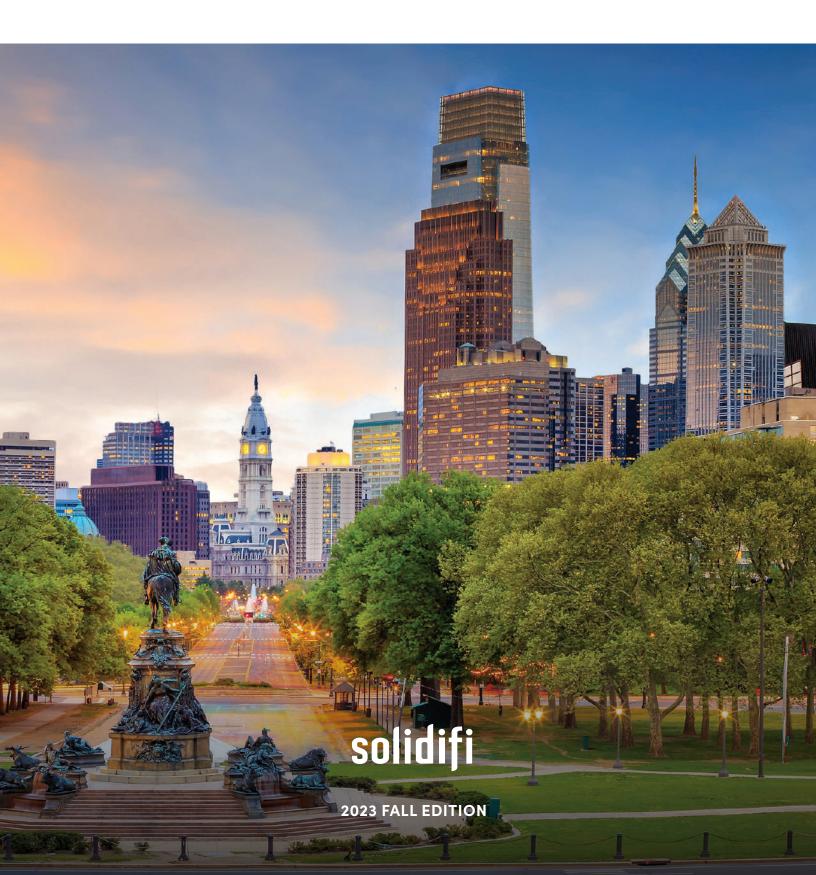
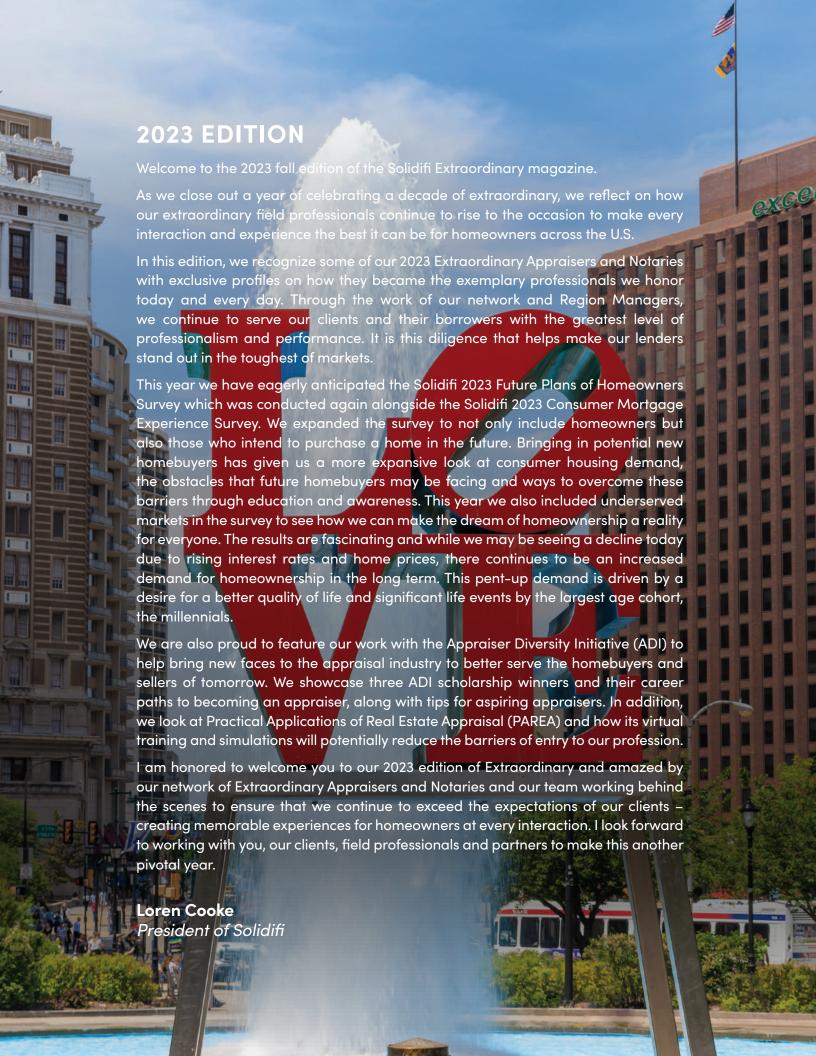
# EXTRAORDINARY

**EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE** 





# solidifi

# EXPERIENCE EXTRAORDINARY

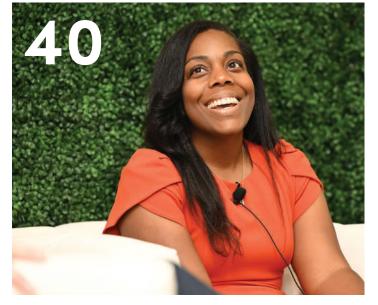
















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### **ACKNOWLEDGING EXTRAORDINARY**

Solidifi reviews the thousands of notaries we work with to identify those who demonstrate high levels of Solidifi's top three values: outstanding performance, exceptional customer service, and a commitment to quality. The Extraordinary Notary designation is a recognized symbol of excellence throughout the industry. It acknowledges notaries as committed professionals that go above and beyond for the lender and homeowner. Solidifi holds our Extraordinary Notaries in the highest regard and views them as valued partners of the Solidifi team.

We are thrilled to welcome the following individuals into the elite class of Extraordinary Notaries



# WILLIAM ERICKSON

William Erickson has been a real estate agent since 1993 and a notary since 2015. He serves the Fort Myers, Florida marketplace. Solidifi appreciates William's positive and encouraging attitude and how he always follows through with the signing company in a timely manner.

### MY PATH TO BECOMING AN APPRAISER

I have been a full-time REALTOR® in Florida for more than 30 years. About eight years ago a title company asked me if I could help them out with closings. I liked the idea of adding a second income stream to my business. Florida is flooded with full-time and part-time REALTORS®. I decided to secure my professional notary mobile closing title to stand out among the competition.

### THE REWARDS OF THE PROFESSION

Serving my customers is the most rewarding part. Prior to becoming a real estate agent, I was an owner/operator of a restaurant. This is where the foundation of my commitment to customer service was formed. To succeed in the restaurant business, we emphasized great, prompt service. As a result, service is in my DNA.

### **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

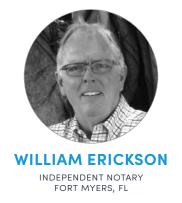
During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, when everything was shut down, "adapt" was my key word to get the job done. I did closings in assisted living facilities wearing a mask, and even through a car, window to window, in a garage, when temperatures were over 100 degrees.

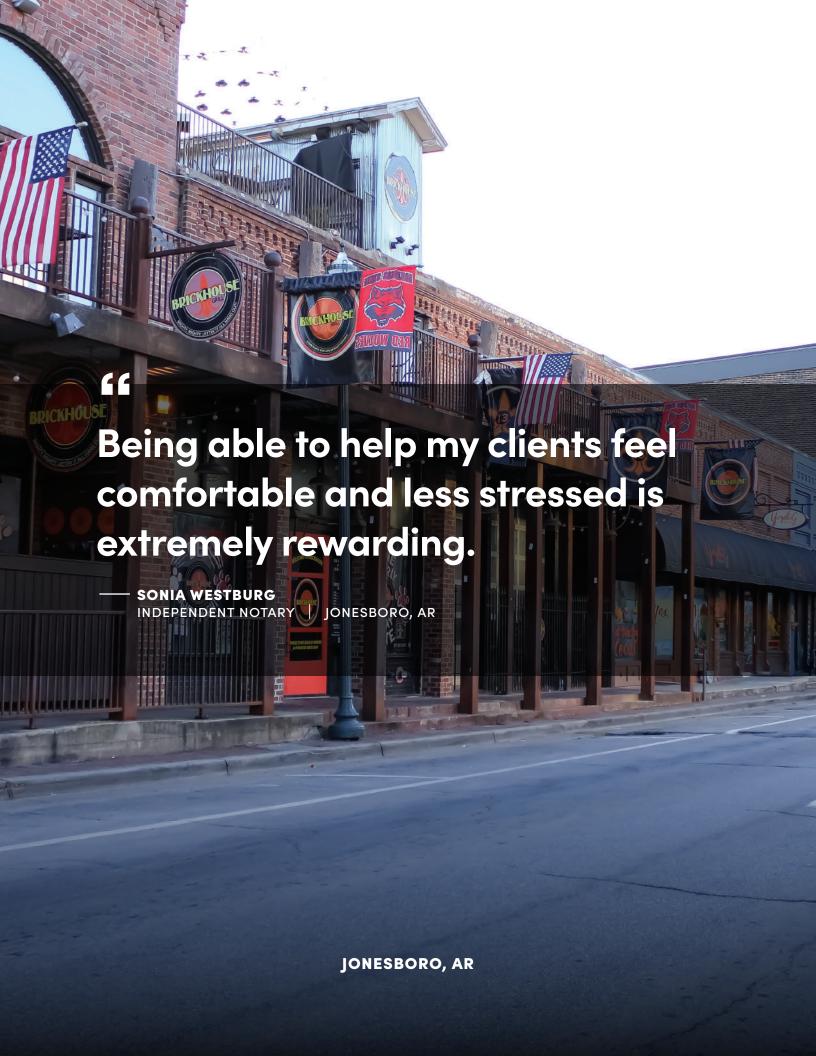
#### THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

Maintain a positive and encouraging attitude, and ensure timely follow-through with the signing company.

### **PARTNERING WITH SOLIDIFI**

The thing I like most about Solidifi is someone is always available to answer questions and manage schedules.





# **SONIA WESTBURG**

Sonia Westburg has been a mobile notary/loan signing agent since 2017, covering the northeast area of Arkansas. Solidifi appreciates her exceptional attention to detail and her contribution to making the homeownership experience extraordinary, every time.

### MY PATH TO BECOMING A NOTARY

Prior to becoming an independent, I was working as a full-time notary for a company. I became my own boss after being hospitalized with health issues. The long slow path to recovery made it difficult for me to commit to a standard 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. position. I was already a notary from my previous position and a conversation with my sister led me to this line of work.

### THE REWARDS OF THE PROFESSION

The lead-up to a loan closing is often extremely stressful. I help my clients understand what to expect starting with the confirmation phone call when I introduce myself. Being able to help my clients feel comfortable and less stressed about the process is extremely rewarding.

### **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

I had a closing where I had made note of the wife's name but when I opened the file to print it, I noticed that on the deed there was a different name listed as the spouse. Turns out it was the husband's father's name that was listed as the spouse on the deed. By catching this and notifying title before the documents were printed, I was able to save, not only time, but also printing expenses, potentially a repeat or delayed closing appointment, and stress for the clients.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

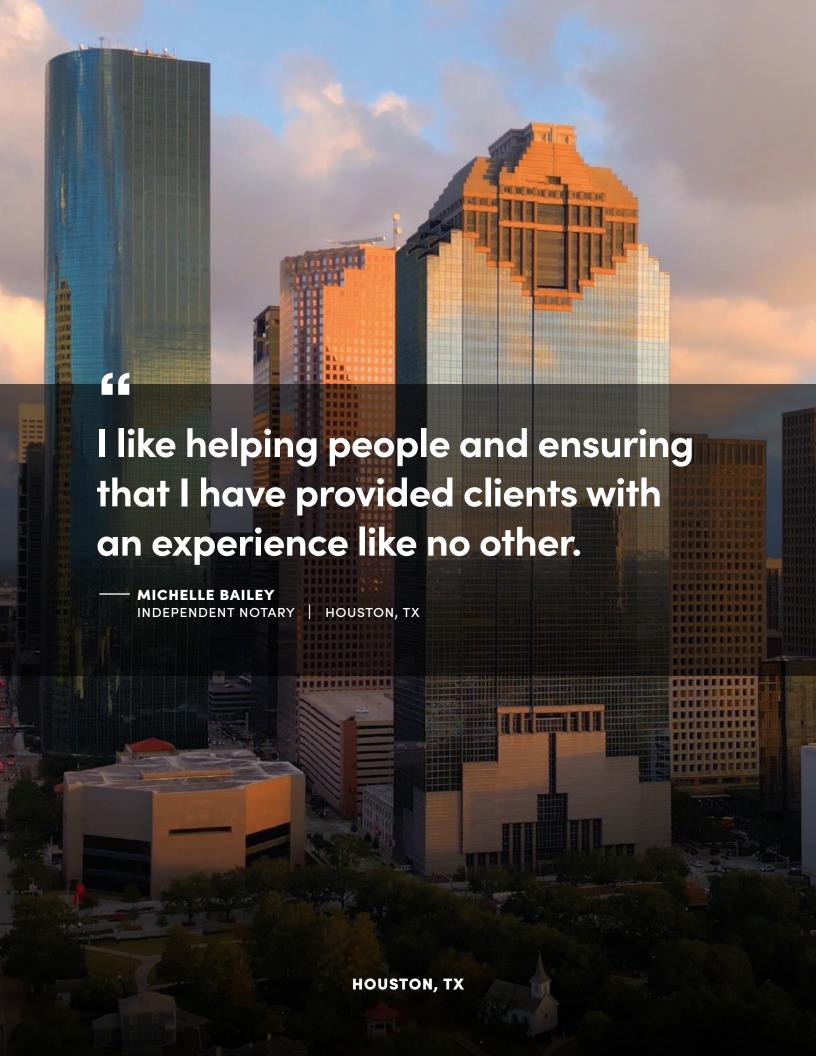
I always arrive at my appointments prepared and knowledgeable about the process. My clients have mentioned many times that they prefer how I conduct my closings. I am thrilled to say that I have repeat clients that have asked for me multiple times and refer me to their friends and neighbors. I am honored that they trust me when it comes to such an important milestone in their lives.

### **PARTNERING WITH SOLIDIFI**

Solidifi was one of the first title companies that I started working with as an independent contractor. Their customer service is quick to respond to any questions. The team is very courteous, professional and easy to work with too.



NDEPENDENT NOTAR' JONESBORO, AR



# MICHELLE BAILEY

Michelle Bailey has been a notary for more than 22 years. Her service areas consist of Harris County, Fort Bend County, and Montgomery County in Houston, Texas. Solidifi appreciates Michelle's consistent ability to provide clear, concise instructions and communication to those she interacts with throughout the notary process.

### MY PATH TO BECOMING A NOTARY

I became a notary in 2000 while working in the healthcare field. I was working as an administrative assistant for the VP of Finance at a healthcare organization. I performed notarizations for the hospital where I was stationed. When I left that company for a position with another organization, I decided to continue to renew my commission. I knew that it would be an asset to me in the future. My career in healthcare continued for 18 years, evolving into leadership roles. In 2018, I formed my own company so I could utilize my commission in a way that would benefit clients, lenders, title companies, the public and myself.

### THE REWARDS OF THE PROFESSION

I enjoy meeting new and interesting people, as well as providing them with a streamlined process that helps decrease anxiety during the closing of their property.

### **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

Once I received a call at 8:00 pm from a title company representative asking if I could complete a signing for 9:00 pm. Even though the location was outside of my range of travel, I performed the closing. Shortly thereafter I received another call from the title company stressing the importance and need for the closing to take place before midnight. I completed the closing and uploaded the scan backs before 12:00 a.m. Both the title company and the client were very thankful.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism is important because it makes a statement about me as a person and the people I represent. Being accountable, respectful, courteous, empathetic, and caring encompasses what professionalism means to me.

### **PARTNERING WITH SOLIDIFI**

Solidifi is considerate of my time, the distance that I travel for closings, and the compensation that they offer. Documents for closings are always delivered in a timely manner and instructions are clear and detailed. It is refreshing doing business with Solidifi!





# **JOANNE COOPER**

Joanne Cooper is a notary who serves clients in South West Riverside County and parts of North County, San Diego in California. Her consistent professionalism and commitment to providing exceptional customer service are qualities that Solidifi considers her hallmarks.

### MY PATH TO BECOMING A NOTARY

I became a notary back in 2009. I had been working in human resources at the County of Riverside but, wanting to meet the needs of my young family, I felt I could no longer work regular office hours. I needed flexibility but still wanted to serve the public. My manager at the County was a notary. After speaking with her I realized that I should become a self-employed notary.

### THE REWARDS OF THE PROFESSION

I have more than 30 years of experience in customer service. I enjoy helping people. For borrowers, their home is usually their largest investment, so I want to make it as smooth and stress free as possible for them to sign their loan documents. I also want the escrow/title/lenders to feel confident that I can help facilitate their closings and get the job done correctly.

### **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

I was scheduled to meet a couple in their home. The husband was there but his wife was stuck at work because her vehicle wouldn't start and everyone else had left the office. It was the last day for them to sign before their rate lock expired, so we couldn't postpone the signing. So, I drove the husband to the wife's office and got the documents signed there. Turned out her vehicle had to be towed to a garage for repair, so I drove her and her husband home, too. They were very thankful.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

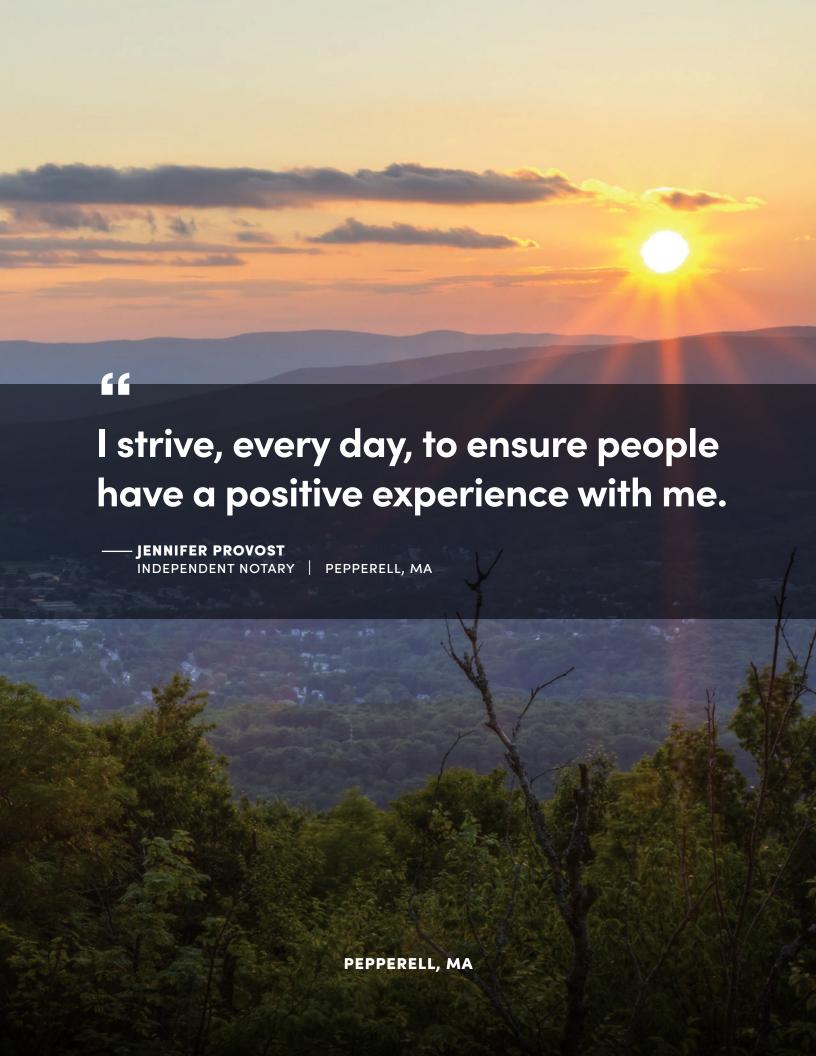
Professionalism is being courteous, respectful and patient. For most signings, we are the human face of the lender and title/escrow. We must present ourselves so that the borrowers are confident in doing business with their lender of choice.

### **PARTNERING WITH SOLIDIFI**

I have worked with Solidifi for many years. The Solidifi staff is very professional, friendly, and supportive. The loan docs are usually available in a timely manner which helps make the borrower's and the notary's schedule run much more smoothly. I also appreciate that their payment for signings is very prompt.



INDEPENDENT NOTARY MURRIETA, CA



# JENNIFER PROVOST

Jennifer Provost became a notary in 1996 and became an independent notary in 2008 servicing the Pepperell, Massachusetts area. At Solidifi she is admired for her professionalism and personable nature with clients and colleagues.

### MY PATH TO BECOMING A NOTARY

I have been a notary since 1996, providing notary services while working in various law offices as a real estate paralegal. In 2008 I became an independent notary. Things really took off in 2010 when I completed my first mobile signing.

### THE REWARDS OF THE PROFESSION

It is very rewarding to be a small, but important part of a customer's real estate transaction. Even if it's a bumpy ride getting to the end, it's always a great feeling when the transaction ends with the borrower smiling.

### **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

I arrived at an appointment with a man whose wife had recently passed away. The title company wanted to adjourn the signing because they were missing the death certificate. The borrower was certain that he had sent it in and was not happy about having the signing adjourned. I was able to scan the death certificate and send it to the title company. It was approved and the signing went ahead as planned.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

The best compliment I have ever received was from a wealth management signing. At the end of the appointment, the signer said to me that I was very personable and professional, and that it was a rare quality for someone to have both. His comment touched my heart.

### **PARTNERING WITH SOLIDIFI**

Working with Solidifi is a pleasure. Their signings very rarely get canceled; documents are free of issues and errors; and the staff is always accessible, helpful and professional. If only all title companies would take notes from Solidifi!





# PROVIDING AN EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCE CONTINUES TO DRIVE FUTURE BUSINESS

# FINDINGS FROM THE SOLIDIFI 2023 CONSUMER MORTGAGE EXPERIENCE AND THE SOLIDIFI 2023 FUTURE PLANS OF HOMEOWNERS SURVEYS

The impact of higher interest rates, rising home prices and supply constraints continue to shock the housing market. Despite this, homeowners continue to show resilience in these challenging times and are moving forward with their long-term plans to invest in their future through real estate. While there is growing demand to buy a home, many future buyers have no idea how to make it happen. How can we make the dream of homeownership a reality for future borrowers everywhere?

This year, alongside our annual Solidifi 2023 Consumer Mortgage Experience Survey, we also conducted the Solidifi 2023 Future Plans of Homeowners Survey to explore how market conditions influence borrowers' future real estate plans. This year's survey was expanded to highlight underserved markets. The Future Plans Survey revealed that borrowers are faced with affordability issues.

And while rising interest rates can be discouraging, many are adjusting their expectations and are willing to compromise to be able to buy a home for their family to grow and thrive.

The Solidifi 2023 Consumer Mortgage Experience Survey results reaffirmed findings of the past four years and revealed actionable takeaways across transaction types on how to increase customer satisfaction and create loyal brand advocates to secure future business.

The survey revealed homeownership helps establish stability and gives borrowers a plan for the future. Borrowers continue to see homeownership as a means of establishing stability and an investment in their future. Younger generations view a home as representing a place for children to grow and thrive.

### Despite the current mortgage interest rate environment, future buyers are more intent than in previous years to purchase in the next 3 to 5 years.

The majority of borrowers experienced issues with high interest rates, low inventory of homes or monthly mortgage costs in the past year. Yet 70% of buyers proceeded to purchase. As we look to the future, borrowers are more intent than ever to purchase a home as part of their long-term plans, but are adjusting their expectations or delaying their short-term plans. Results reveal that 1 in 3 consumers intend to buy a home within the next two years, and Millennials and Gen X are driving the future purchase market with 72% Millennials and 62% Gen X planning to purchase in the next 3 to 5 years. With the population size of the Millennial generation surpassing Boomers, this is sure to create more demand for housing.

More than 4 in 5 are willing to compromise for a home, with common sacrifices including buying a home that needs work, moving to a smaller home, or living further away.

- 38% Buy a home that needs a little work
- 33% Buy a smaller home
- 29% Move slightly further away
- 19% Move much farther away (out of area or out of state)
- 17% Buy a home that may not be your ideal type
- 15% Buy a home that needs a lot of work (a fixer-upper)

# The lasting impact of the flexible work environments and gig economy is evident.

Results reveal that people are moving for an overall better quality of life – driven by a combination of the need for more space inside and outside of the home, larger homes or homes with different features, or to be close to things they care about. In addition, fewer people are moving for work. Instead, there is a desire to move to more suburban areas continuing the urban sprawl of America and reinforcing the growing urban blight. In contrast, future borrowers in underserved markets desire to purchase in urban areas where they currently reside.

# In 2023 life events continue to drive mortgage decisions.

67% of borrowers refinanced or borrowed against the value of their home via a home equity loan or HELOC to pay for home improvements and/or to access cash for life events.

Those accessing cash for life events doubled in the last year. The most common reasons were to care for an aging relative, cover education expenses, and a new job.

Future borrowers are adjusting their expectations when it comes to interest rates.

The median interest rate that future borrowers would be willing to proceed with despite being high went from 5% in 2022 to 6% in 2023.

2.5 in 5 would borrow at 4–5% rates
2 in 5 would borrow at 6–7% rates
1 in 5 would borrow at 8–9% rates
Those in the 1 in 5 remain open to borrow even if

interest rates rise to 10% or higher.

# For future borrowers, the high cost of purchasing a home and a lack of feeling prepared are their largest barriers to entry.

Lenders are offering special programs to overcome barriers to homeownership and rising housing costs. Fewer than half of future buyers are aware of these programs with awareness being lowest among those who could benefit most. Lenders can leverage awareness campaigns to help draw future borrowers into the market, especially first-time homebuyers and underserved markets.

# Market factors have created an environment for disruption.

Results showed a dramatic decline in borrowers using the lender they used in the past. With increased interest rates, loyalty took a back seat to price: borrowers are rate shopping. Results indicate that lenders lost borrowers with transactional loyalty but retained loyal customers with deep relationships. Now more than ever, lenders continue to have the opportunity to leverage their existing portfolio to drive deeper relationships with their borrowers for the next market turn.

# Providing an extraordinary experience continues to drive future business.

There continues to be a direct relationship with higher satisfaction and a higher likelihood to use the same lender again. Overall, 92% of borrowers are satisfied with their mortgage lender. But, 95% of very satisfied borrowers are likely to use their lender again. And, 78% of very satisfied customers are very likely to use their lender again up from 60% in 2022.

# Borrowers continue to recognize the value of appraisals.

2 in 3 feel that appraisals are very valuable to them as a homebuyer year over year. 93% of those who had an appraisal done indicated they had no issues afterwards. Of the 7% who had issues afterwards, the top issue was the appraisal not being thorough. Fewer than 1 in 10 indicated their home was valued at less than they expected. The number one reason for satisfaction with the appraisal process is having a professional and knowledgeable appraiser, second to a thorough appraisal.

Solidifi had a 94% consumer satisfaction rating on the appraisal experience, and 100% who closed with Solidifi were very or somewhat satisfied, compared to 84% of borrowers satisfied when closing with anyone else.

# Appraisal scheduling options drive higher customer satisfaction.

Results point to the importance of scheduling to consumers revealing the less choice there is in scheduling, the lower the customer satisfaction rating across both the appraisal and the closing. 92% say it is important that the appraiser accommodate their schedule, up from 88% in 2022. 88% of borrowers who had lots of choice in the time for their appraisal rated their appraiser as excellent/very good vs. 65% of borrowers who had some choice in the time for their appraisal rated their appraisers as excellent/ very good vs. 57% of borrowers who had no choice in the time for their appraisal rated their appraiser as excellent/ very good. For the closing results reflect the dissatisfaction of being rescheduled multiple times with 84% of borrowers who did not have to reschedule their closing were very satisfied, compared to just 14% who were rescheduled one or more times. Those scheduling their closing online had the highest rate of being rescheduled at 35%. If rescheduled 4+ times, borrowers were not satisfied.

# Reaffirming results from the past four years, borrowers continue to value in–person interactions for both the appraisal and closing.

Across generations, borrowers continue to prefer faceto-face engagement as it is the single most significant financial transaction in a person's life and there is a greater level of trust and level of care appropriate for such a large investment. 80% of respondents prefer an in-person closing, and 6 in 7 borrowers feel it is important to have a closing agent in person. Of the 80% who prefer face-to-face interactions: 58% prefer a paper process, 18% prefer in person with fully electronic documents, and 25% prefer an in-person hybrid process. Borrowers continue to prefer digital upfront in the process, but this preference has not yet extended to the closing. This year, results indicate there are levers that can be pulled to bring awareness, adoption and acceptance of digital tools at points in the process, which will be increasingly important in a tightening market to reduce costs and continue to drive an extraordinary customer experience.

Solidifi leads the way in appraisal scheduling options: 93% who used Solidifi had a choice in appraisal scheduling compared to 64% who used another company.

# Proactive communication drives customer satisfaction.

92% of borrowers were satisfied if there was proactive communication and a smooth process vs. 54% of borrowers if they had to do any type of reaching out for information. First-time homebuyers were more likely to reach out to keep things on track or had to go through their real estate agent or lender. There is an opportunity to provide an extraordinary experience, every time. While borrowers generally indicated a positive experience, only half were very satisfied, and fewer than 1 in 3 felt it was incredible and the closing agent went the extra mile. Results show that setting the expectation and delivering in the expected timeframe drives satisfaction.

To download the 2023 survey results, visit: go.solidifi.com/2023mortgageexperiencesurvey

The **Solidifi 2023 Consumer Mortgage Experience Survey** assessed the two most-critical touchpoints in the mortgage transaction: the appraisal and the closing experience. It surveyed 1,000 residential borrowers 18 years of age or older in the United States who purchased, refinanced or closed on a home equity loan or line of credit within the last two years. Panelists included a mix of those who purchased a home, refinanced or obtained a home equity loan or line of credit with approximately one-third closing within the past year, and two-thirds closing one to two years ago.

The **Solidifi 2022 Future Plans of Homeowners Survey** surveyed 1,200+ residential borrowers 18 years of age or older in the United States who are a current homeowner or intent on owning a home at some point in the future. Just over half of respondents currently own a home at 54%, 10% previously owned a home and 36% have never owned a home. Panelists included a mix of future buyers across the U.S. and those in underserved markets.



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We are thrilled to welcome the following individuals into the elite class of Extraordinary Appraisers

# Being professional means consistently delivering high-quality appraisals. DEREK HUANG INDEPENDENT APPRAISER | SUNNYVALE, CA SUNNYVALE, CA

### **DEREK HUANG**

Derek Huang has been a certified independent appraiser for more than 20 years in the Silicon Valley area. He is highly regarded by Solidifi for the thoroughness of his reports and his dedication to helping his clients meet their deadlines.

### MY PATH TO BECOMING AN APPRAISER

After working for various high-tech and service companies for years, I was ready for a change. I became an appraiser in 2003. I assess properties in the heart of Silicon Valley specifically in Santa Clara, San Mateo and some of the counties in Alameda.

### THE REWARDS OF THE PROFESSION

A real estate appraisal career is challenging and fulfilling. It gives me the opportunity to work flexible hours and the potential to earn a high income.

### **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

During 2021 and early 2022 when interest rates were at their lowest, lenders and borrowers were scrambling to find appraisers to fulfill their assignments. I worked more than 14 hours daily to complete quality appraisal reports so lenders and borrowers could meet their deadlines.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism to me means consistently delivering highquality both in the way I conduct myself and the appraisal reports I produce.

### **PARTNERING WITH SOLIDIFI**

Solidifi is a leader in the industry. I'm proud to work for a company with such an excellent track record in the appraisal industry.





# **EVDOKIA STOYANOF**

Evdokia Stoyanof has been a certified independent appraiser for more than 14 years. She serves the McAllen, Texas area. Solidifi admires Evdokia's commitment to deadlines and her ability to juggle assignments to complete them by their preferred due date.

### MY PATH TO BECOMING AN APPRAISER

I started my appraisal career later in my professional life. A friend who was an appraiser in South Padre Island asked me to help him. In 2007, I got my appraiser trainee license. I passed the licensing exam in 2009 and started my own company in 2013 in McAllen, Texas.

### THE REWARDS OF THE PROFESSION

I enjoy being my own boss, managing my own schedule, and having control of my financial destiny. Plus, working from home and meeting new people every day are two more perks of the profession that I appreciate.

### **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

I make myself available to accommodate lender and homeowner schedules. For example, if my workload is backed up and I'm asked to complete a rush assignment, I will try my best to fulfill the order even if it means working extra hours or into the evening.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

A professional appraiser, to me, is someone who arrives on time to appointments, treats customers in a respectful manner and delivers property assessment reports on time.

### **PARTNERING WITH SOLIDIFI**

Solidifi is a professional, credible and understanding company. Their platform is easy to navigate, and I appreciate all the support I receive from my Region Manager.





### **NATHAN BAER**

Nathan Baer is a licensed independent appraiser in Woodland Hills, California. He obtained his license in 2016 and assesses residential properties in the area. Solidifi greatly values Nathan for his promptness and unwavering dedication to serving clients.

### MY PATH TO BECOMING AN APPRAISER

I began my real estate career in 2012 working for my uncle who purchased and flipped single-family homes throughout California. While on the job, I met appraisers. In 2013 a couple of them took me on as a trainee. I became a certified appraiser in 2016 and have conducted property assessments throughout southern California ever since.

### THE REWARDS OF THE PROFESSION

No day is ever the same. I enjoy the diversity of properties and people I see. There are so many unique neighborhoods in this city. I also appreciate the perks of being self-employed such as having a flexible schedule. I can work as much or as little as I want, and over the years I've been able to create a healthy work-life balance.

### **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

Recently I had a homeowner ask me, on our first call, if I could come over immediately for the appraisal because she was going into labor. This is one of many examples where I've had to accommodate the needs of the homeowner on short notice.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

Prompt communication with all parties is one of the biggest keys in this profession. In a world with so many distractions, it makes a huge difference to clients when you answer their phone calls and respond promptly to their emails and texts. Professionals in this industry also need accountability from other appraisers. I meet regularly with a team of appraisers to discuss market trends and complex assignments.

### **PARTNERING WITH SOLIDIFI**

Solidifi is truly a first-class AMC that values the relationship side. It has been rewarding to work with each member of the Solidifi team, including my outstanding Region Manager. I'm always confident in reaching out to the Solidifi team for help knowing that they have experienced people on staff. This partnership has made Solidifi the best AMC I have worked with.



NATHAN BAER
INDEPENDENT APPRAISER
WOODLAND HILLS, CA



# **ADAM NORTELL**

Adam Nortell has been a certified independent appraiser for more than 20 years. He conducts property assessments in McHenry County, Illinois. Solidifi appreciates Adam's flexibility and willingness to accommodate clients, homeowners and tenants to gather the necessary details he needs to deliver an accurate assessment.

### MY PATH TO BECOMING AN APPRAISER

Upon graduating from North Central College in Naperville, Illinois in 2000, I set my sights on having a career that would be interesting, exciting, and offer challenges and opportunities for growth. I chose real estate appraising. My career in the industry began in January 2001, and I received my certified real estate appraiser license in 2003.

#### THE REWARDS OF THE PROFESSION

No two days are alike. There are always new properties to inspect, new challenges to overcome, and when you do, there's a great sense of satisfaction that comes from helping people.

### **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

Once, I had a multi-family property to inspect but the tenants were not available to let me in during normal business hours. To complete the report on time, I scheduled the property inspection for a Sunday afternoon when all the occupants would be home. This was outside of my regular availability, as a result the real estate agent was very grateful that the inspection was completed on time, and without any hardship for the tenants.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

Acting professionally as a real estate appraiser encompasses many things. These include proper phone etiquette, appropriate attire during inspections, giving the time and respect to each person I engage with and performing each appraisal in an unbiased, clear, and credible manner.

### **PARTNERING WITH SOLIDIFI**

Of the many stakeholders I have had the opportunity to work with in the real estate industry, I have found collaborating with Solidifi to be the most rewarding and satisfactory. Solidifi works with some of the largest mortgage lenders in the country and provides a consistent volume of quality appraisal orders. I also really appreciate that Solidifi employs knowledgeable appraisal professionals who ensure that any issue, concerns or problems I may have on an assignment are dealt with promptly, so the appraisal and report can be completed in the most appropriate manner possible.





# **WENDY WENNER**

Wendy Wenner has been conducting property assessments since 1987 in the Sewell, New Jersey area. She is admired by Solidifi for the high-quality reports she consistently produces and the timely fashion in which she completes her appraisals.

### MY PATH TO BECOMING AN APPRAISER

I knew right out of high school that I wanted a career in real estate. At the age of 18, I became a REALTOR® but soon after, my plans changed. A friend of mine from real estate school told me about an appraisal firm that was hiring. Back then, in 1987, you did not need a license to appraise, so I became an appraiser immediately and never looked back!

### THE REWARDS OF THE PROFESSION

Being an appraiser turned out to be the perfect job when I was a working mom. It gave me the ability to have flexible hours while I raised three children. I also love that I control my income and can work as hard as I want to achieve my goals. My business has grown so much that my husband became an appraiser in 2000. My youngest son joined us in 2019. We now have a very successful family business.

### **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

When a deal is in progress time is of the essence. Sometimes things need to be expedited to get to the settlement table. I am always willing to help in any way possible to ensure a report is executed properly and quickly so as not to delay a settlement.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM

Being a professional appraiser means providing quality reports and knowing your territory well. Plus, you must always strive to learn and improve with the changes developing in the industry—real estate is never stagnant, it's always evolving.

### **PARTNERING WITH SOLIDIFI**

Solidifi offered me the opportunity to join their appraisal panel several years ago. I truly enjoy working with this company!



# **OPENING THE DOORS:**

# How the Appraiser Diversity Initiative and PAREA are changing the face of the appraisal industry

The Appraiser Diversity Initiative (ADI) Partners Join Forces on Stage at Valuation Expo 2023 to Honor ADI Scholarship Winners in Solidifi-sponsored Session

### **SOLIDIFI JOINS ADI PARTNERS AT VALUATION EXPO 2023**

For aspiring appraisers, finding a qualified mentor to oversee part of their training is often cited as a significant barrier to entry in the profession. Now Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) provides another pathway for aspiring appraisers to fulfill their experience requirements by taking advantage of innovative technology and real-world simulations. With the help of the Appraiser Diversity Initiative and its partners, we are creating a movement to actively grow the industry for all new entrants, from both the traditional supervisor/mentees and PAREA paths with the objective of bringing new entrants to the industry to better serve the homebuyers and sellers of tomorrow. Solidifi is leading the way to attract new entrants to the appraisal profession with more than 245 trainees onboarded with appraiser mentors through our national network of appraisers.

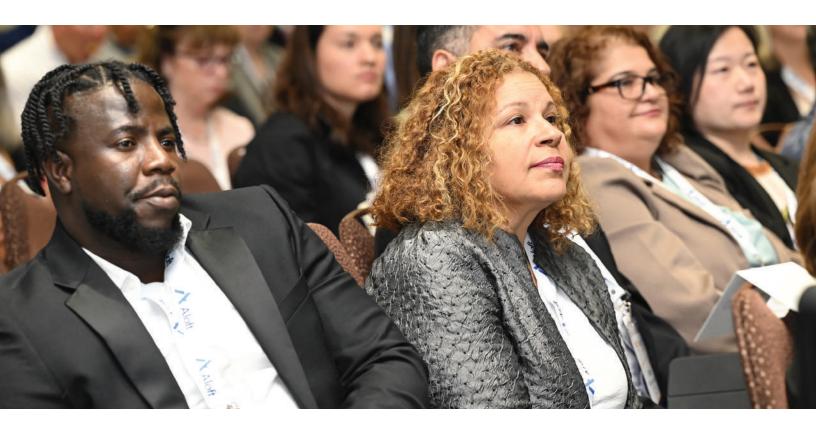
In August 2023 Solidifi kicked off the annual Valuation Expo conference and trade show in Las Vegas with a three-hour exclusive sponsored ADI session about PAREA and how the ADI is opening the doors to the appraisal industry. The session was a collaboration between ADI Partners, JPMorgan Chase and Wells Fargo. Loren Cooke, President of Solidifi, moderated the jam-packed event.

The session opened with our ADI partners: Bill Garber, Director of Government and External Relations at the Appraisal Institute; Rachel Beam, Director of Valuation Equity at Fannie Mae; Scott Reuter, Chief Appraiser and Director of Valuation at Freddie Mac; and Solidifi Chief Compliance Officer Colleen McCafferty. The panel discussed the great work our industry has been doing around ADI and fostering new appraiser talent which is



starting to change the face of the appraisal industry and will be accelerated by PAREA. Then the panel had a deep dive discussion about PAREA and how it has the potential to dramatically reduce the barriers of entry for new appraisal professionals. Today's reality is that it will take two to four years for an appraiser to get the experience hours they need to get licensed, and with PAREA the timeline could be potentially reduced to months. This will help drive a significant calibration of appraiser supply and demand issues in our industry. On stage, the Appraisal Institute gave a sneak peek of the new PAREA gamechanging simulated experience training which was the first time the training was unveiled to a public audience. In addition, ADI announced their new PAREA scholarship program which will work in conjunction with the existing scholarship program.

Loren Cooke led our lender panel which included Jarrett Scarpiello, Valuations Fulfilment Director, Collateral Valuations Group and Miriam Lopez, VP, MB Operations Manager II, Collateral Valuations Group, Staff Appraisers and Direct Engagement Panel from JPMorgan Chase, along with Hem Merriman, Senior Vice President and Head of Residential Valuation Quality Assurance at Wells Fargo, who shared how they are leading the way for diversity, equity and inclusion in our industry. The panel also shared firsthand insights into how PAREA is expected to impact their businesses and their strategies for supporting both PAREA and ADI and diversity in our industry.



The last panel honored the ADI scholarship recipients in attendance. Solidifi brought on stage Bri Bridges, Staff Appraiser Apprentice and ADI scholarship recipient, JPMorgan Chase and Miriam Lopez, Valuations Fulfilment Director, Collateral Valuations Group, IPMorgan Chase to discuss Bri's career path that led her to become a staff appraiser apprentice at JPMorgan Chase. Bri's enthusiasm and determination to become an appraiser, as well as tips and tricks were encouraging to the incoming trainees in the audience and resonated with those who have been in her shoes when they started their careers. Then, KW Appraisal owner and supervisor Kent Wang and his trainee Jason Shao discussed how PAREA could help them grow their appraisal business. The final panelists were Melanie Webb and Brent Quashie, both ADI scholarship recipients, who shared their stories that led them to be aspiring appraisers. Brent's path took him from military intelligence honorably serving our country overseas for multiple tours to being a drone pilot and owning a drone business to a future in real estate as an aspiring appraiser. Melinda shared her inspirational journey which started when she experienced "whitewashing" in her own home by her REALTOR™ before an appraisal was done and how it inspired her to want to make a difference in her daughter's life and future by becoming an appraiser.

Melinda's story shined a light on our "why" and the "why" of so many other ADI scholarship winners – to make the homeownership experience extraordinary, for everyone. As the leader in our space, Solidifi brought together our industry for this event, reinforcing that this movement needs all of us.

We were honored to host this session and facilitate these critical conversations to move our industry forward.



The Solidifi team at the Valuation Expo Conference

Thank you to our ADI partners, JPMorgan Chase, Wells Fargo, the ADI scholarship recipients, and those who attended. Together we are making a positive change, and we look forward to continuing to drive our industry forward. For more information, visit https://www.solidifi.com/appraiser-growth-and-diversity.



# ATTRACTING NEW ENTRANTS TO THE APPRAISAL INDUSTRY THROUGH THE APPRAISER DIVERSITY INITIATIVE

A collaboration with the Appraisal Institute, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and the National Urban League to build diversity and reduce barriers of entry to the appraisal profession

#### Since ADI inception\*:

488

awarded scholarships

**131** 

active in the program

107

completed scholarships

**56** 

working with supervisor/industry

#### JOIN THE MOVEMENT.

Learn more at https://www.appraisalinstitute.org/the-appraisal-profession/appraiser-diversity-initiative.

## **LOCATIONS WITH ADI** PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS LOOKING FOR SUPERVISORS

**ALABAMA** 

Birmingham Mobile

**ARKANSAS** 

Little Rock

**ARIZONA** 

Phoenix

**CALIFORNIA** 

Fresno

Los Angeles

Modesto

Oakland

Sacramento

San Diego

San Francisco

**COLORADO** 

Denver -Fort Collins

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA -WASHINGTON DC** 

> Metro area -MD/VA/DC

**DELAWARE** 

Wilmington

**FLORIDA** 

Fort Lauderdale

**Jacksonville** 

Orlando

Tallahassee

Tampa

**GEORGIA** 

Atlanta

Augusta

Macon

**ILLINOIS** 

Chicago

**INDIANA** 

Fort Wayne

**KENTUCKY** 

Louisville

**LOUISIANA** 

**Baton Rouge New Orleans** 

**MASSACHUSETTES** 

Boston

**MARYLAND** 

**Baltimore** 

Washington DC metro

**MICHIGAN** 

Detroit

**MINNESOTA** 

Minneapolis

**MISSOURI** 

Saint Louis

**MISSISSIPPI** 

Memphis

**NORTH CAROLINA** 

**Fayetteville** 

Raleigh - Durham

Winston Salem

**NEW YORK** 

**New York** 

OHIO

Columbus

**OKLAHOMA** 

Fort Smith

**PENNSYLVANIA** 

Philadelphia

Pittsburgh

**PUERTO RICO** 

Arecibo

Mayaguez

**Ponce** 

San Juan

**RHODE ISLAND** 

Providence

**SOUTH CAROLINA** 

Greenville

**TENNESSEE** 

Memphis

**TEXAS** 

**Beaumont** 

Dallas

El Paso

Houston

Lubbock

**Paris** 

San Antonio

**VIRGINIA** 

Richmond

Washington DC metro

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Tacoma

WISCONSIN

Green Bay

**WEST VIRGINIA** 

Charles Town

Contact the ADI team for more information about the Appraiser Diversity Initiative or to become a mentor at adi\_team@appraisalinstitute.org.

### ADI SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT SPOTLIGHT

#### The Next Generation of Real Estate Appraisers



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My passion is to add value to valuation and bring innovative ideas to life. Stepping outside the box and being a creative problem solver can lead to breakthroughs you would not imagine.

## **BRI BRIDGES**

At the Valuation Expo Conference this past August in Las Vegas, Solidifi had the opportunity to engage Bri Bridges, JPMorgan Chase Staff Appraiser Apprentice and Appraiser Trainee in IL and IN, along with her manager, Miriam Lopez. Miriam, a FL Certified Residential Appraiser, serves as the Valuations Fulfillment Director within the Collateral Valuations Group at JPMorgan Chase and her responsibilities include management of their staff appraisers.

Bri Bridges is the epitome of passion and determination. Possessing a keen interest in learning about real estate and investment opportunities, she attended an ADI appraisal seminar hosted by Chicago's Urban League. Shortly after she was awarded the ADI Scholarship in 2019. Upon successful completion of her classes, Bri recognized that finding a supervisor would be her biggest hurdle. She spent more than a year networking while working full-time as a marketing director. Having met with more than 30 people to find potential supervisors, Bri's internet research finally delivered the career-changing opportunity with JPMorgan Chase.

Bri loves a challenge and likes having systems and processes to use as guides. When appraising, she feels that every house is a unique challenge. It allows her to use her learned skills and give back. Serving the Chicago market, whose neighborhoods have historically been divided along racial lines, Bri believes seeing diversity represented in the industry is beneficial. She has had clients and customers tell her that it was so nice to see someone who looked like them fulfilling appraisal services, which makes Bri feel like she is contributing to change. The biggest part of being an appraiser apprentice for Bri is being able to give back to the community.

Bri's enthusiasm and determination to become an appraiser is contagious. She is passionate about creating positive change in the world, as is represented in her being an active proponent and ambassador for the Appraiser Diversity Initiative (ADI), frequently sharing her story at ADI seminars across the U.S. Her tips and tricks are always encouraging to the incoming trainees in the audience and resonate with those who have been in her shoes when they started their careers.

The biggest piece of advice Bri would give to aspiring appraisers is not to give up. She is two-plus years into the process, but hopes to be certified by year end. Networking and connecting with others is an ongoing endeavor. She feels lucky to have such great support to help her continue moving forward toward her goal. Miriam adds that in a down market, sometimes you have to get creative which led Bri to align with two JPMorgan Chase staff appraiser supervisors – one in IL and the other in IN. For Bri having a supervisor who wants you to succeed and is in your corner is a winning combination.

### **ADI SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT SPOTLIGHT**

#### The Next Generation of Real Estate Appraisers

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It is the community and monthly calls that have helped me through the process. It truly takes a village.



### **MELINDA WEBB**

Solidifi had the great pleasure of sitting down with ADI Scholarship Recipient Melinda Webb as she shared her inspirational journey to becoming an appraiser trainee which began after her real estate agent suggested that she "whitewash" her home before listing it for sale and having it appraised. This moment became a turning point and inspired her to want to make a difference in her childrens' lives, create her legacy, and build her future by becoming an appraiser.

She recalls vividly the experience of packing up her family's pictures and rushing out of their home because she was advised that she should not be present in their home when the appraiser arrived. Essentially she was made to feel as though she had to hide her identity and her children's identities just to help to sell their home. After buying another property in North Carolina and settling into their new home, she started to reflect on her experience selling her property. She began to research and dig into the real estate process. As she did so, she grew in her understanding of her power to make a difference. With this newfound sense of empowerment and a desire to make an impact in her community and in the lives of the families she would serve, Melinda felt a calling to join the appraisal profession with a goal to become a certified appraiser.

Melinda's background includes experience in academia and program management. She supported a number of initiatives focused on diversity and inclusion in the education sector. Drawing on this experience, Melinda's pursuit to become an appraiser started in July 2022. She successfully became an appraiser trainee in January 2023, completing her course work in just over six months. She is now in the process of searching for a supervisor.

"I describe my journey to becoming an appraiser as unfolding and evolving much like an onion and the peeling of the layers. As I have learned the steps to becoming an appraiser and have reached each stage, ADI and the scholarship have helped me get over any of the humps. It is the community and monthly calls that have helped me through the process. It truly takes a village."

Melinda's story has shined a light on the "why" for so many other recruits and ADI scholarship winners entering the profession, the importance of the Appraiser Diversity Initiative and Solidifi's mission – to make the homeownership experience extraordinary, for everyone.

For more information, visit https://www.solidifi.com/appraiser-growth-and-diversity.

## **ADI SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT SPOTLIGHT**

#### The Next Generation of Real Estate Appraisers

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I hope to create a better consumer experience and bring my expertise in drones into my career as an appraiser. It just seems a natural fit.



## **BRENT QUASHIE**

Brent's career has taken him down many paths, from military intelligence, honorably serving our country overseas in multiple tours, to owning a drone business, and towards a future in real estate as an aspiring appraiser.

Brent is currently a Registered Trainee Appraiser and Appraisal Institute Practicing Affiliate residing in the Tampa Bay Area and a scholar in the Appraiser Diversity Initiative program. He gained 20 years of leadership and analytical experience as a Senior Intelligence Analyst in the United States Marine Corps. He also owned a drone service company providing aerial mapping, photography, and video service in the Tampa Bay area, and is a licensed life insurance agent in the state of Florida. He earned a B.A. in Intelligence Studies with a concentration in criminal intelligence analysis.

During his military career, Brent worked on humanitarian assistance in the Philippines and served three tours in Iraq and one tour in Afghanistan before retiring as a Master Sergeant (E8). His military experience honed his attention to detail, focused on the importance of accurate data and information and sharpened his networking skills.

Brent left the Military in 2016 and opened a drone business while getting his degree. He had always wanted to explore a career in real estate, and upon completing his degree he decided to close his business and start something new. After watching a video from Appraisal Buzz on YouTube, Brent connected with the ADI team. He researched what being an appraiser was all about and how he could positively impact the industry. After meeting with the ADI team, Brent received a scholarship and started the education process for becoming a trainee appraiser in August 2022. He received his registered trainee appraiser license in September 2022 – completing his coursework in a record two months. His biggest challenge has been finding a supervisor with both the business and bandwidth to support a trainee. In between actively networking to find a supervisor, Brent works in insurance appraisals, an ancillary business.

With Brent's technology background, he sees this time in our industry as an opportunity to bridge the gap between technology and appraising.

"This is an especially exciting time in real estate with the appraisal modernization initiative, having new entrants being trained via PAREA and video simulations, and new forms designed to be seamless, more intuitive and user friendly. With my technology background, I hope to create a better consumer experience and bring my expertise in drones into my career as an appraiser. It just seems a natural fit."

For more information, visit https://www.solidifi.com/appraiser-growth-and-diversity.

## **MEET THE SOLIDIFI TEAM**

Meet some of the Region Managers on the Solidifi team who support our appraiser and notary partners.



### **MELISSA MITCHELL**

REGION MANAGER, NOTARY



#### What is something you've learned in this role that has made you successful?

As Region Manager I have learned that working together and maintaining good relationships with notaries, as well as my colleagues, helps the closing process run smoothly.

#### What sets Solidifi apart from the competition?

Solidifi works as a team with one goal: we provide our agents and borrowers the best experience from beginning to end. Sometimes, these transactions come with quite a few questions, our team works quickly to answer them and provide as much information as we can to complete the

transaction efficiently.

#### What's the most important thing a notary can do to be successful when partnering with Solidifi?

The most important thing a notary can do to maintain a successful partnership with Solidifi is to keep the lines of communication open and provide updates if changes are made. This keeps everyone in the loop, and helps the process run smoothly. We are quick to accommodate changes, so the sooner we know, the faster we can resolve any issues that may arise.

#### What is your favorite part of your role as a Region Manager?

My favorite parts of being a Region Manager are building relationships with new and existing notaries, utilizing my problem-solving skills, and recruiting the best agents to join our team.



#### **REBECCA SCHMIDT**

REGION MANAGER, NOTARY



#### What is something you've learned in this role that has made you successful?

This role has provided me with the opportunity to exercise my problem-solving skills in a fast-paced environment and collaborate with team members to achieve success.

#### What sets Solidifi apart from the competition?

One of Solidifi's top goals is to provide the very best service for our clients. Our team achieves this by forming meaningful relationships with the top notaries in our field. This gives us the ability to fully understand the needs of our notaries, make improvements, and form long lasting partnerships.

#### What's the most important thing a notary can do to be successful when partnering with Solidifi?

Strong communication and being detailed-oriented are two of the key traits a notary must exhibit to ensure a successful partnership with Solidifi. Notaries who exceed our expectations, adhere to requirements, and produce top-quality successful signings will enjoy a great partnership with Solidifi and grow with our company!

#### What is your favorite part of your role as a Region Manager?

My favorite part about being a Region Manager is that I get to make an impact on our company's success. It's very rewarding to see the results of our efforts through improved service levels and notary relationships.



#### **VIRGINIA "GINSEY" TYTKA**

REGION MANAGER, APPRAISER



## What is something you've learned in this role that has made you successful?

Making sure I understand the situation prior to relaying information, based off the lender and state specifics. As we know, it's the specifications and details that generate the appraisal.

#### What sets Solidifi apart from the competition?

I would say the relationship between the appraiser and the Region Manager. The opportunity to grow within this field stems from the relationships and knowledge gained from these partnerships.

## What's the most important thing an appraiser can do to be successful when partnering with Solidifi?

Communication. It is critical to have information about the status of appraisal to allow for a much smoother process.

#### What is your favorite part of your role as a Region Manager?

I love being involved in the process from start to finish. Knowing that throughout the whole process, the appraiser can contact me for any questions and concerns to ensure that the appraisal is completed correctly and in a timely manner for the borrower.



## ERIC THOMAS REGION MANAGER, APPRAISER



ILLINOIS

## What is something you've learned in this role that has made you successful?

Building relationships with appraisers and peers. Open communication between appraisers and Region Managers is crucial for success.

#### What sets Solidifi apart from the competition?

The Region Manager. We not only assist appraisers but also help lenders reassure their clients about having trusted individuals in the respective markets to provide the best quality service throughout the process.

## What's the most important thing an appraiser can do to be successful when partnering with Solidifi?

Communication. There is a borrower on the other end of this process so if any issues arise it's better to get ahead of it so we can have the time to explain to the appropriate parties what is going on.

#### What is your favorite part of your role as a Region Manager?

Seeing wins within the region and Solidifi. All the hard work that the appraisers and Solidifi put in as a whole is rewarding as we continue to strengthen and expand our relationships with our lender partners by helping to make the homeownership experience extraordinary for their borrowers.

#### A COMMITMENT TO PARTNERSHIP

One of the benefits of partnering with Solidifi is having a dedicated point of contact – your Region Manager. Each Region Manager oversees a specific geographical area across the U.S. and manages the panel of field professionals within that region. Focusing on one area allows the Region Manager to become familiar not only with the local field professionals, but with the challenges and attributes specific to their region. Field professionals have one assigned contact that they can reach out to consistently for questions and support.

## **SOLIDIFI PERKS**

Solidifi values the partnerships we have with all of our field professionals across the country. To show our continued appreciation, we are proud to offer the Solidifi Perks program to all of our active partners!



Solidifi has teamed up with a leading nationwide organization to offer discounts on various professional services. This program is complimentary and offers great savings on services for business needs, as well as dozens of additional services.

## We are excited to offer the following discounts to all of our active partners:



MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

By leveraging the purchasing power of more than 300,000 members, NPP can provide top discounts and special B2B pricing to businesses of all sizes. Enjoy exclusive deals on a catalog of items from companies such as:

- Staples
- Office Depot
- HP
- Verizon Wireless
- Dining, Retail, and more!



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT SOLIDIFI.COM/PERKS.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Meet the Solidifi team and learn more about our growing network at these upcoming events.



#### MBA ANNUAL CONVENTION & EXPO

OCTOBER 15 – OCTOBER 17, 2023 PHILADELPHIA, PA



#### **CBA LIVE**

MARCH 25 - MARCH 27, 2024 WASHINGTON, DC



#### SECONDARY AND CAPITAL MARKETS CONFERENCE

MAY 19 – MAY 22, 2024 NEW YORK, NY



#### NNA CONFERENCE

**MAY 13 – MAY 15, 2024** ORLANDO, FL



#### **VALUATION EXPO**

AUGUST 5 - AUGUST 7, 2024 LAS VEGAS, NV



#### **ALTA ONE**

OCTOBER 15 – OCTOBER 18, 2024 ORLANDO, FL

## HUMBLED BY YOUR KIND WORDS

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Solidifi is a great partner to work with. They have experienced staff and a welldesigned support platform. I appreciate and enjoy working with them.

Jeff Myers – Appraiser, CA

Solidifi exemplifies the meaning of teamwork and partnership. Whenever I have an issue that needs to be escalated, Solidifi makes every effort to make sure that my closings run as smoothly as possible. They are a key to my success as a signing agent.

Brittney Narcisse-Rosario - Notary, NY

Solidifi has been my partner in the appraisal business for many years. The Region Managers are fair, responsive and accessible when needed. The manager knows my target area and workload capacity, which allows for an efficient relationship that is beneficial for both.

Mark DeAngelis - Appraiser, NY

Solidifi has been an extremely stable, professional, and nurturing company that "lifts the wind beneath your wings" to ensure that we notaries feel provided for and appreciated.

Karen Ashby - Notary, AZ

I knew Solidifi was one of the top AMCs in Arizona and throughout the country. I have been working with Soldifi for several years now and it has been a wonderful experience.

Nita Sloan – Appraiser, AZ

I love the ease of their app, the fairness in their fee offers, the fact that we can communicate with administrative staff, and they pay in a timely manner. Solidifi is a wonderful company for notaries to work with, and they continue to be one of my top favorite signing services.

Miriam Adams - Notary, CA

My company has worked with Solidifi for well over five years, and Solidifi has been one of the easiest companies to discuss questions and/or issues with as they have always supplied a direct contact.

Seana Bedard – Appraiser, CT

I absolutely love the team at Solidifi. They are professional, helpful and knowledgeable. They pay a fair wage and treat their notaries respectfully. They are top notch!

Pam Tillman-Goff - Notary, CA



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