



Insurance Brokers & Agents of the West

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**Stewart Sawyer Elected President, New Officers & Directors Take Office at
2006 Annual Meeting and Installation**

LOS ANGELES, CA – J. Stewart Sawyer, III, MAAA, ACAS, vice president and actuary, director of market security for Acordia, Inc. in Seattle, WA was installed Wednesday as president of IBA West during the 2006 Annual Business Meeting and Installation Luncheon at the Westin LAX.

Sawyer presented a “state of the association” address to a gathering of more than 200 member agents and brokers.

Using the issue of disclosure of broker compensation as a case study, Sawyer highlighted the effectiveness of the association’s legislative and regulatory advocacy efforts.

“I am proud to say that IBA West had the vision and the leadership to successfully wage this fight on your behalf. But once again it was through your contributions to California First, that we had the funds to win this fight,” explained Sawyer.

“But the benefit did not stop there. To the north, Commissioner Kreidler’s staff put forth similar regulations that were ultimately revised to be less onerous for agents and brokers and more useful to customers.”

Looking ahead, Sawyer laid out an agenda for the coming year. He told the group he was committed to continuing to expand and improve IBA West's insurance products.

He also said he would like to find a way to share the professional expertise of the association's members with the news media to help consumers.

"As professional practitioners we know that you are more credible than paid public relations professionals. We want to share that expertise with the news media so we can help consumers with insurance issues."

Sawyer also said he hoped to develop ways to increase the number and diversity of young talent entering the industry. As a culmination of all the work IBA West has done in disclosure, Sawyer noted that starting tomorrow, Steve Young, IBA West general counsel would teach a series of classes on the disclosure guidelines, including potential legal ramifications.

Referring to continuing education, Sawyer noted the addition of a course on catastrophe preparedness being conducted by Insurance Skills Center as part of the IBA West operating plan to address this issue.

He also said the Pacific Northwest Chapter has developed a continuing education course on ethics to meet the new three-hour licensing requirement in Washington. ISC is also offering a class for California developed by Young.

"I am committed to making sure that IBA West provides you with the very best value for your membership," said Sawyer in closing. "Our goal is to help you do your job. I look forward to being the steward of your association for 2006."

In addition to Sawyer the following officers were elected to the 2005 Executive Committee:

- President-Elect, Paul F. Bystrowski of John O. Bronson Company, Inc. in Sacramento, CA
- Secretary-Treasurer, H. Scott Kerns, Bay Risk Insurance Services of Alameda, CA.
- IIABA State National Director, Andrew J. Valdivia, CPCU, ARM of White & Company Insurance, Inc. in Santa Monica, CA.

Elected to the IBA West Board of Directors were:

- Northern California Regional Director, William E. Ryan, Sweet & Baker Insurance Brokers, Inc., San Francisco
- Southern California Regional Director, Karen Oxman, CPCU, GNW-Evergreen Insurance Services, Inc., Encino

- IBA West Director at Large, Tim Manaka, AAI, FIA Insurance Services, Inc, Pasadena

The New Officers Are:

President: J. Stewart Sawyer, III, MAAA, ACAS

Sawyer is vice president and actuary of Acordia Northwest in Seattle, WA. Sawyer has served on the IBA West Board of Directors since 1995. He served as the Pacific Northwest Chapter president in 1991 and has been on the PNW Chapter Government Affairs Committee since 1988. He also served on the WAIB Executive Committee as a member-at-large. Sawyer started his career with State Farm Insurance Company 1964-71. In 1971-84 he was assistant vice president and associate actuary for Fireman's Fund. In 1984-87 he was vice president and chief actuary for United Pacific Insurance Company and joined Acordia in 1987.

President-Elect: Paul F. Bystrowski

Bystrowski is president/CEO of John O. Bronson Company, Inc. in Sacramento, CA where he has worked for over 20 years. Bystrowski began his career at the Stone Insurance Agency in Sacramento. He is active in the community and the insurance industry. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the University of California at Davis. He has served on the IBA West board as a director since 2002. He served as president of IBA Sacramento in 2000. In 1993, Bystrowski was awarded the Insurance Agency Professional of the Year by IBA of Sacramento.

Secretary-Treasurer: H. Scott Kerns

Kerns is president of Bay Risk Insurance Services in Alameda, an agency that he incorporated in 1994. Along with Kevin Molloy, Kerns transformed the agency then known as Tedrick-Higbee Insurance from \$6 to \$28 million in revenue. Kerns joined the agency in 1986 as an agent. He began his insurance career in 1979 with a direct writer, formed his own agency in 1982 which he operated until 1986. Kerns served on the board and president of the Oakland Association of Insurance Agents. He served on the IBA West Service Corp. board for three years. He is currently chairman of the Commercial Lines Committee of IBA West, where he has served for the past three years.

IIABA Director: Andrew Valdivia, CPCU, ARM

Valdivia is president of White & Co., Insurance Inc., Santa Monica where he has spent his entire 24-year insurance career. Valdivia is a past president of IBA West and also of IIAB of Los Angeles and IIA of Santa Monica. Valdivia has served as chairman of the IBA West Strategic Planning Council. Most recently, Valdivia has served as co-chair of the California First Advocacy Fund for IBA West.

Elected to the IBA West Board of Directors were:

Northern California Regional Director: William E. Ryan, Sweet & Baker Insurance Brokers, Inc., San Francisco. Ryan is executive vice president of Sweet & Baker. He began his career in insurance in 1994 at Calco Insurance Brokers in San Mateo. Later he worked at Diversified Risk in Emeryville before joining Sweet & Baker in 1998. Ryan has served as vice president and is currently president of IBA of San Francisco.

Southern California Regional Director: Karen Oxman, CPCU, GNW-Evergreen Insurance Services, Inc., Encino. Oxman is a principal at GNW-Evergreen Insurance where she started in 1985 as a producer. A CPCU, Oxman is a member of the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Chapter of CPCU and was the co-chair of the CPCU Southern California Chapters All Industry Day 1993. In 1996 she was elected president of the Board of Directors of the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers Association of Los Angeles. She is only the second woman to hold the position of president of that 100-year old organization.

IBA West Director at Large: Tim Manaka, AAI, FIA Insurance Services, Inc, Pasadena. Manaka is senior vice president of FIA Insurance Services. He began his career in insurance at Industrial Indemnity 26 years ago. Manaka served on the Young Brokers and Agents Committee, chaired the committee and also served as chairman of the national Young Agents Committee. Manaka also served on the board of the IIABA Los Angeles as well as being president. Currently Manaka is chairman of the Big "I" Diversity Task Force.

Returning Directors Include:

Betsey L. Brewer, CPCU, The Rule Company, Pasadena, CA; Richard E. Dinger, Crescenta Valley Insurance, Glendale, CA; M. Stuart Nelson of Point West Insurance Associates, Sacramento, CA; Clifton E. Thomas, Chubb & Son, San Francisco, CA; and Steven J. White, Smith & Feek, Bellevue, WA.

IBA WEST is the leading producer association in the West for Insurance Brokers and Agents. The history of Insurance Brokers and Agents of the West is quite unique as its creation took place on January 1, 1995, after the consolidation of two separate associations. After nearly 100 years of history and tradition while serving insurance producers, the two associations- Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of California and Western Association of Insurance Brokers, consolidated their associations to form a more dynamic alliance.

Today, IBA West represents more than 1,000 firms in California, Washington and Oregon and more than 14,000 insurance professionals. IBA West has more than 100 associate members, members who provide products and services for IBA West members to use and to sell.

In California, IBA West is affiliated with the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America.

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