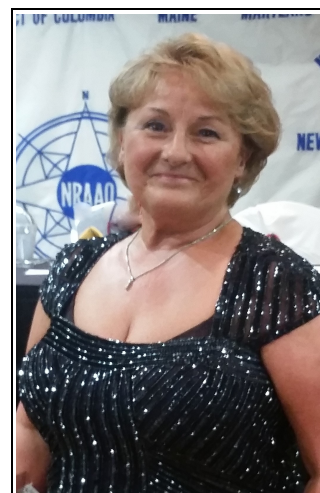


# Northeast News

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## Donna Ralston, CCMA II President 2016-2017



It's the Fall of 2016, where did the summer go? I hope it was a healthy, happy one for you all.

As I write this, I am looking forward to presiding over my first NRAAO Executive Board meeting, as your President. The agenda is usually straightforward dealing with the everyday management of our Association, but I would like to encourage you ALL to contact me if you have any concerns and/or requests of the Board in the future.

The meeting will be held on October 21 at the Steak Loft Restaurant in Mystic, CT, the city of our next conference!

The May 2017 conference is shaping up nicely and I think you will be excited when you see the educational opportunities and FUN activities we have planned for you.

The dates for the conference are May 21 – 24, 2017. It will be hosted at the Mystic Hilton, 20 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic, CT. You can find the famous Mystic Aquarium across the street, where you will find a variety of up-close animal encounters. They include seals, beluga whales and penguins, to name but a few! The opening cocktail party will be held there for your pleasure and enjoyment. Sign up, in advance, to swim with the beluga!

In addition to the training and educational opportunities you will have available to you, Mystic is full of history and culture... with the historic Mystic Seaport, a 19<sup>th</sup> century New England seafaring village just one block away and the Olde Mystic Village shopping area right across the street!

The NRAAO, first and foremost, is dedicated to providing additional training and educational opportunities for assessing officials all over the Northeast. Our members enjoy a dynamic environment in each of our diverse states to exchange ideas, information on global challenges and to learn more about the latest issues challenging Northeast Assessors today.

**So... "Mark your Calendars" for May, 2017 and**

**"Set Your Sails for a Whale of an Education!"**

## NRAAO

### 2016-2017 OFFICERS

Donna Ralston  
President - Connecticut

David Deitch  
Vice President - Connecticut

Paul G. Lesperance  
Treasurer - Maine

Everett "Gus" Martin  
Secretary - Massachusetts

John M. O'Connor Esq.  
Legal Counsel

Bruce Bolt  
Immediate Past President  
Maryland

Ginny Thompson  
President Elect  
Massachusetts

## **2017 Conference At A Glance**

### **Sunday 5/21/17**

Conference Registration

NRAAO Board of  
Directors' Meeting

*Opening Reception  
at the Mystic Aquarium*

### **Monday 5/22/17**

Conference Registration

Vendor Presentations

*Opening Breakfast*  
Annual NRAAO  
Business Meeting  
Awards Presentations  
Guest Speakers

IAAO Representatives Meeting

Educational Offerings

*Tour of Historic Mystic Seaport*

### **Tuesday 5/23/17**

*Annual Golf Outing  
Shennecossett Golf Course*

Conference Registration

Educational Offerings

### **Wednesday 5/24/17**

Conference Registration

Educational Offerings

*Evening Cocktail Reception*

*Closing Banquet &  
Installation of Officers*

## **NRAAO 2017 – MYSTIC, CONNECTICUT**

### **The Mystic Hilton**

**20 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic CT 06355**

Phone: (860) 572-2513 Fax: (860) 572-0328

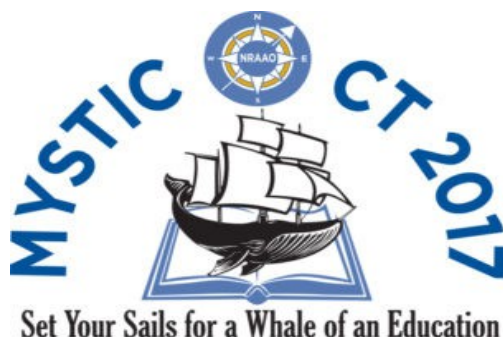
The 2017 NRAAO Conference will be held at the Mystic Hilton. The room rate is \$169.00. There is no parking fee. Room rates are subject to a 15% tax **UNLESS** a CT Cert. 112 is submitted to the Hotel prior to your arrival.

### **Reservations:**

The group block has been created and the group code is: RAA

### **Hotel Website:**

<http://hiltonmystic.com/>



## **FALL BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING**

All Northeast State Association Presidents, NRAAO Officers, NRAAO Committee Chairs and Representatives, are invited to attend the Fall Board of Director's Meeting scheduled for **Friday, October 21st, 2016** at the Steak Loft Restaurant in Mystic.

Call to Order is at 9am starting with Officers Reports, followed by reports from all NRAAO Committees and Conference Subcommittees. Please check with others in your state so that you are represented at this bi-annual meeting!

Contact Secretary Gus Martin with your R.S.V.P. or proxy.

[elmartinfarm@verizon.net](mailto:elmartinfarm@verizon.net)

**Visit [www.nraao.org](http://www.nraao.org) for all your Northeast News & Conference info!**

## **RICHARD PRENDERGAST LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

Jim Soresi has had a strong lifetime commitment to the assessing profession, the MAAO, NRAAO and the IAAO. His professionalism in his field, his ability to promote and gather others support, has been an asset to the MAAO, and the NRAAO.

He started out as an Assessor in the Prince George's County Assessment Office and quickly saw the change over from local to statewide assessment valuation. In 1983 he was appointed to be the Assistant Supervisor of Assessments for Prince George's County. He held this position for 17 years, until 2000 when he was appointed to be the Supervisor of Assessments for Prince George's County.

In the mid-nineties Jim became involved in both the MAAO and the NRAAO. He served as the Maryland IAAO representative to the NRAAO from 1994-2009. In addition, he held various leadership positions within the Maryland Association of Assessing Officers. He served as MAAO President during the 1995-1996 year. In 1995, Jim served as Chairman of the NRAAO/MAAO joint conference in Baltimore, Maryland. He served as President of the NRAAO during the 2001-2002 year and again as co-conference chair in 2009. This service of simultaneously holding a position in two important organizations would become a theme throughout Jim's career. Through Jim's outreach and dedication, Maryland has become more involved in the NRAAO.

For his dedication and effort, in 1996 Jim received the prestigious Catherine "Kay" Pardee Award from the Northeastern Regional Association of Assessing Officers. In both 2002 and 2003, Jim was selected by his fellow Marylanders to receive the prestigious Sherry Vermillya award from the NRAAO. Giving Jim the distinction of being one of only two two-time Sherry Vermillya award winners.

In July of 2010, Jim retired from State service after 43 years, he received a Citation from the Governor of Maryland for "his demonstration of high integrity and ability, meriting their trust and respect--outstanding service to the citizens of the State of Maryland."

Jim is an avid hunter, NASCAR fan and one-time race driver. Jim still owns every Corvette he ever bought. Jim and his wife Darlene, raised two boys, Joe and Chris, have a loyal dog and still live on his family's farm.

It is with great pride and pleasure, that he is honored in his home state, in front of a body that he cherishes, and the

**2016 Richard L. Prendergast Lifetime Achievement Award  
is presented to James P. Soresi**



## **CATHERINE "KAY" PARDEE AWARD**

This years' award nominee has been involved in the Assessment profession for over 35 years. She has been a Certified Assessor since 1986 and has served as a member and/or Chair of the following State committees: Conference, Elections, Nominating, Certification and Legislation.

She is a Past President of her State Association and has received the following awards:

- Assessor of the Year – 1992
- Presidents' Choice Award – 1992, 1998, 2010 & 2011

She has served the NRAAO as member and/or chair of the By-Laws, Policies and Procedures, and the Conference Advisory Committees. She was the *Kay Pardee Award* winner in 1995 and the *Sherry Vermilya Award* winner in 1994 and again in 2009. She received the *Richard L. Prendergast Lifetime Achievement Award* just last year and served as President of the NRAAO for the 1993-1994 term.



The Past Presidents of the NRAAO would like to present, for a second time, the 2016 Kay Pardee Award to:

**KAREN G. MARCHANT**  
Assessor, Londonderry, New Hampshire

## **IN MEMORIAM – THOMAS F. BROWNE, JR.**

Thomas F. Browne Jr., of Fairfield, beloved husband of Elizabeth "Betsy" Browne, passed on August 26, 2016 at the age of 71. He was a proud United States Naval veteran, serving during Vietnam. Tom retired as the Town Assessor for the Town of Fairfield with over 28 years of service. He was President of the CT Association of Assessing Officers, President of the NRAAO 1992-93 and was named Assessor of the Year in 1994. He was awarded the CAAO Distinguished Service Award in 2009 and was awarded the first Richard L. Prendergast Lifetime Achievement Award from the NRAAO in 2005. Tom had been an instructor at the UCONN Assessors School for over 27 years, mentored many assessors and was instrumental in the implementation of computerized mass appraisal systems throughout the state of Connecticut.

With permission, the following memorial written by Tony Homicki is shared with the NRAAO members:

A pause from me to the Past Presidents of the NRAAO about our dear friend & Past President of the NRAAO Tom Browne:

It isn't because Bill Gaffney gave a wonderful tribute / eulogy at yesterday's funeral mass,

It isn't because Tom's wife Betsy was as gracious and loving as anyone I have seen who lost her partner and true friend,

It isn't because hundreds of family and friends filled the church and attended the wake, and sent emails, notes and messages even from IAAO Tampa,

It isn't because the motorcade had four police motor cyclist and four unmarked police SUV's riding in front and behind and next to the procession,

It isn't because the military honor guard presentation was of the highest regard,

It isn't because the resurrection Choir in the church of our lady of the Assumption sounded like they were singing at St. Paul's cathedral,

It isn't because there were seven deacons (including our friend and associate Donn Ross) and priests at the altar, all of who did a reading,

It isn't because Pastor Cipriani gave us clarity of the words "light", "love" and "joy" and then referenced the Jimmy Stewart movie "It's a wonderful Life", and then read lyrics from the song "The music of the night", all part of a wonderful homily,

It's all because Tom loved his family and friends, he assessed from the heart, he was a mentor to many and cared about us all. It's all about one classy guy.

***Thomas F. Browne, Jr. ~ March 20, 1945 – August 26, 2016***



## 2016 SHERRY VERMILYA AWARD RECIPIENTS

In November 1992 the NRAAO Awards Committee recommended to the Executive Board that there be the “*Sherry Vermilya Award*.” This award shall be for outstanding service to the assessment profession and in honor and memory of Sherry Vermilya’s support of NRAAO principles and his untiring efforts to assist assessors throughout the entire country and in particular the northeast.

The *Sherry Vermilya Award* was discussed and accepted by the NRAAO Board at the 1993 Connecticut conference with the first jurisdictional presentations being given in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The NRAAO Awards Committee Chair Donna Ralston is pleased to recognize the following award recipients in 2016:

**Connecticut:** This years’ nominee from the State of Connecticut began his career like so many others with the revaluation company, Cole, Layer and Trumble, and worked for them for 21 years.

He then took the position as Assistant Assessor for the City of Hartford from 1993-2003, ultimately becoming Hartford's Assessor from 2003-2011. Upon his retirement from the City, he took a position in the smaller northern Connecticut community of Windsor.

- He is designated as an Accredited Senior Appraiser (ASA) with the American Society of Appraisers.
- He is Certified as a Municipal Assessor (CCMA II) and a Municipal Collector (CCMC) by the State of Connecticut.
- He is also certified as a Revaluation Supervisor by the Office of Policy and Management.
- In addition to those designations he is a Certified Maine Assessor (CMA).
- He has been the Treasurer and the Webmaster for the Connecticut Association of Assessing Officers (CAAO) since 2003 and is on the Information Technology and Finance Committees.
- He was awarded ‘Assessor of the Year’ in 2002, ‘Continuing Service Award’ in 2006 and the ‘Distinguished Service Award’ in 2010 by the CAAO.



This gentleman is also involved in assessing in his home state of Massachusetts. He is a member of the Board of Assessors in Wilbraham and he has performed revaluation work as a consultant in Northampton, Westhampton and Chicopee.

Connecticut is proud to present the 2016 Sherry Vermilya Award to: **Lawrence LaBarbera, Assessor, Windsor**

**Massachusetts: Ellen Maddox Blanchard**

1969 – Graduated from Dover-Sherborn Regional Senior High School, Dover, MA  
 1974 – Graduated from Northeastern University with a degree in teaching  
 1983 – 1988 She worked for the Plymouth Municipal Airport  
 1989 – Started working for the Town of Plymouth, MA  
 1992 – 1999 Started in the Assessor’s Office as a data-lister  
 1999 – 2001 Assistant Assessor in the Town of Bourne, MA  
 2001 – Present Director of Assessing, Town of Carver, MA

Current President of the Massachusetts Association of Assessing Officers (MAAO)  
 MAAO Executive Board member since 2011  
 MAAO Education Committee since 2008  
 Instructor for MAAO since 2008  
 Member of the NRAAO, IAAO, PCAA  
 Secretary/Treasurer of Plymouth County Assessor’s Association 2014  
 Member of the Historic District  
 Member of the Website Committee  
 Member of Hannah Shaw Order of Eastern Star  
 Member of the International Order of Rainbow for Girls (part of Mason’s)  
 Member of the Daughters of the American Revolution



She loves doing Genealogy, traveling with her husband and spending time with her 11 grandchildren

**Maryland:** The recipient of this years' award from Maryland is very enthusiastic about everything she does. She is devoted to being kind and helpful in all things and gets involved – hands-on, with anything she is asked to do. She began her employment with the SDAT agency in 1979 working in Tax Credits and 18 years ago moved into the Real Property Division.

Moving up the ranks, she is now one of only 24 County Supervisors in the entire State of Maryland. She administers and provides technical / instructional support for the staff of a database consisting of 100,000 residential and commercial accounts. She is highly motivated, always positive and loves getting involved. On a personal note, she is first generation from Brazil, loves world cup soccer and will even take her vacation to watch the matches.

Locally, she is a loyal member of her community & homeowner association. She has served on the Election Board, been involved with Habitat for Humanity, the recycling committee and was, at one time a soccer coach.

A Maryland Licensed Certified Residential Appraiser, the State of Maryland is proud to present the 2016 Sherry Vermilya Award to: **NANCY SCHMIDBAUER**, Supervisor of Assessment for Hartford County, with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation



**New Hampshire:** The New Hampshire nominee is Assessor in the Town of Milford.

She is a Certified New Hampshire Assessor (CNHA) and a Certified New Hampshire Dept. of Revenue Assessor Supervisor.

She is a current member of the Assessing Standards Board (ASB) and has been since 2012 where she has been a strong and reliable advocate for the rights of her fellow assessors and our association.

An active member of the NHAEO since 2008 where she has served on numerous committees. Our choice for this year's Sherry Vermilya Memorial Award goes to **Marti L. Noel**.

**Rhode Island:** The Rhode Island nominee has been a Member of NRAAO for many years, and had served on the 1991 Conference Committee for the NRAAO/Providence conference held at the Biltmore Hotel. Since then she was also an integral part of the 2000, 2007 and 2013 NRAAO/Newport Conference Committees.

This "model worker" began her career in 1988 as a clerk in the Providence Assessor's Office. She advanced to become the Administrative Assistant to the Assessor, and ended her Providence career as a senior Residential Appraiser in 2010.

She lives in the Town of Foster and served on the Town Planning Board from 2005 until 2010 when she became the Foster Tax Assessor. She has served on the RIAAO Executive Board and is currently the state association's Vice President. She has been named the 2019 NRAAO Conference Co-Chair.

This woman epitomizes the work ethic and common sense that is needed in our profession, while maintaining a terrific sense of humor and good nature. The Rhode Island Association of Assessing Officers proudly nominates **PATRICIA MOREAU**, Assessor from Foster, Rhode Island as the 2016 "Sherry Vermilya Award" recipient.



## **NRAAO MEMBER SEEKS POSITION ON IAAO EXECUTIVE BOARD**

### **For IAAO Executive Board Region 2**

**Stuart Topliff, Assessor**

**Town of Rocky Hill**

**Rocky Hill, Connecticut**

I am honored to be a member of IAAO and to be your candidate for Executive Board Region 2. I am committed to achieving our Vision 2020 goals. Our organization is the premier provider of mass valuation education. My commitment to the education of assessment professionals and focus will ensure the development of electronic educational offerings. This focus will lead our association into the modern world of learning. Developing our education will help us succeed in engaging new members and meet our goal of 10,000 members by 2020. I respectfully request your support.



### **IAAO Leadership**

- IAAO Representative, 2009–present
- Membership Services Committee, 2015–present
- Jeff Hunt, CAE, Memorial Candidates Assistance Trust Committee, 2012–2014
- Presenter, IAAO Annual Conference, 2015
- Moderator, IAAO Annual Conference, 2014

### **Regional Leadership**

- Northeastern Regional Association of Assessing Officers
  - Board of Directors, 2013-2015

### **State Leadership**

- Connecticut Chapter of IAAO
  - President 2016–present
  - Board of Directors
- Connecticut Association of Assessing Officers
  - President, 2013–2014
  - Education Committee
  - By-Laws Committee
- Instructor CCMA Course 1A

### **Experience**

- Assessor, Town of Rocky Hill, Connecticut, 2005–present
- Certified Connecticut Assessor II

### **Education**

- Bachelor's degree, University of Connecticut

Please support NRAAO member Stuart Topliff in his election for IAAO Executive Board. The NRAAO Executive Board voted to endorse Stuart and IAAO Members can vote electronically, or by mail ballot, beginning in November. Best of luck Stuart!

## MAY 15, 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

**President's Report** Bruce Bolt (MD) called the Spring Board Meeting to order. The President welcomed everyone to Ocean City and noted the Host Committee is wearing red shirts. President Bolt gave kudos to VP Pam Sanders and Education Chair Les Pruitt, complimenting them on all their efforts. State President Octavia Pauls also gave a warm welcome to Maryland.

**Treasurer's Report** Paul Lesperance (ME) provided an income and expense report for the period ending April 30, 2016, which was accepted as presented.

**Secretary's Report** Gus Martin (MA) administered roll call and reported that all 6 NRAAO Officers were present, as well as General Counsel, 14 Past Presidents, 5 State President, 5 NRAAO Reps, 4 IAAO Reps and 11 NRAAO Committee Chairs. The minutes of the Fall 2015 Board Meeting were approved as submitted by the Secretary.

**Membership Committee** Betsy Quist (CT) reported that the NRAAO Membership has dropped to 359. There are 17 Associate, 323 Active/Regular, 18 Subscribing and 1 Association Counsel. Membership by state: CT 77; DE 16; MA 64; MD 12; ME 19; NH 45; NJ 82; NY 8; PA 2; RI 25; VT 4; Misc 5. Betsy also reported there are 69 members taking advantage of the "two for one" membership.

**Budget Advisory / Audit Committee** Angelo Marino (NH) noted that the budget accepted at the Fall meeting was adopted. There was nothing to report at this time.

**Education Committee** Les Pruitt (MD) reported there were 185 full registrations at this educational conference. There was discussion concerning the various state requirements for continuing education. It was suggested to utilize the newsletter and website to get information out to the membership.

**Awards Committee** Donna Ralston (CT) announced that six states had nominated a recipient for the *Sherry Vermilya Award* this year. The *Kay Pardee* and *Richard Prendergast* awards will be presented at the closing banquet, as usual. Donna also mentioned she will be stepping down as Awards Chair next year as she takes on being NRAAO President.

**Scholarship Committee** Viviane Valentine (RI) reported that only seven of the ten scholarships were being utilized this year. None of the alternates were able to accept the scholarship. It was suggested to pick more than 2 alternates, in case they are needed. The Board decided to keep the new scholarship guidelines in place, selecting 10 alternates instead of 2.

**By-Laws / Infrastructure** Co-Chairs Linda Cwiek (RI) and Karen Marchant (NH) noted that the amended by-laws which were approved by this Executive Board in the fall, will be voted on at the general membership meeting Monday morning.

**Outreach Committee** Kathy Pierce (MA) noted her excitement of seeing there are now more members in Delaware. She continues her outreach in the northeast states that have limited involvement with the NRAAO.

**Newsletter** Editor Karen Beattie (RI) reminded the Board that space is not an issue with the digital newsletter and requested news items. Linda Cwiek said the next

newsletter should include an article about the Editor, Karen Beattie, recently earning her RES designation from the IAAO. Send any and all news items to Karen at [BeattieK@ScituateRI.org](mailto:BeattieK@ScituateRI.org)

### **Conference Advisory & Subcommittees**

Upcoming conference site committee reports followed:

**Maryland - 2016** President Bruce Bolt reminded everyone to wear their name badges to all classes and events while at conference. Les Pruitt noted that all the educational sessions being offered were accepted as continuing education by all the member states. **Connecticut - 2017** President Elect Donna Ralston noted their Committee has contracted with the Hilton Hotel for \$169 per night. Conference dates are May 21 to 24, 2017. There will be lots to do within walking distance. Marsha Standish is Conference Chair. **Massachusetts - 2018** Ginny Thompson reported the conference dates of April 29th to May 3 at the Quincy Marriott. Education will be coordinated by Bill Mitchell and Ellen Brideau. Massachusetts requested a 50/50 split, which was approved. Other upcoming conferences are: 2019 - Rhode Island. 2020 - New Jersey.

**Old Business** There was no old business to conduct.

**New Business** The Connecticut Host Committee was granted their second request for \$1,000 seed money. New Hampshire requested to host the 2021 NRAAO Conference, which was approved. Treasurer Paul Lesperance (ME) noted this would be his last year accepting the position of Treasurer for the Association, since he is retired. The following slate of officers will be sworn in at the closing banquet: President Donna Ralston and Vice President David Dietsch (CT); Secretary Gus Martin (MA); Treasurer Paul Lesperance (ME); and President Elect Ginny Thompson (MA).

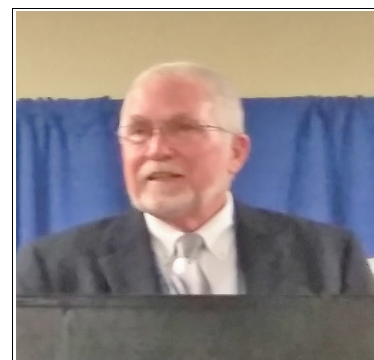


*Pictured: Paul Lesperance, Gus Martin, Ginny Thompson, John O'Connor, David Deitsch, and Donna Ralston. Sworn in by IAAO President Pete Rodda*



## IAAO PRESENCE AT NRAAO

IAAO President W.A. (Pete) Rodda, CAE, RES, attended the 2016 conference in Ocean City. Pete has been in the assessment business for more than 35 years in a rural North Carolina county. In President Rodda's address at the conference, he stated he didn't grow up intending to be an assessor. It was 'accidental'. Through his involvement with the IAAO he learned to listen and expand his education. The IAAO is all about education, and learning from experience.



President Rodda noted the importance of obtaining an IAAO Designation through the professional development program. An IAAO Designation helps recognize us as experts in our profession. He spoke about the direction of IAAO offering more online education for the membership. IAAO has recently started an Under 40 group, recognizing the importance of teaching our younger members to step up and take a leadership role. IAAO is continually updating its curriculum and developing a Body of Knowledge for assessment professionals.

Pete encouraged us to attend the annual conference, August 28 to September 1, in Tampa, Florida. He warned that it'll be hot and sticky, but that's ok, it'll be fine! A complete list of educational sessions and events can be found on the website [www.iaao.org](http://www.iaao.org). There are scholarships available to help defray the cost of attending conference, just ask your IAAO Representative for more information.

## 2016 NRAAO SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

One of the benefits of your NRAAO Membership is eligibility in the Annual Scholarship Drawing. In 2015 the Executive Board made changes to the Scholarship drawing and procedures, in order to benefit all members and also our conference host committee. The following rules were put in place for scholarship drawings:

- All paid members will be eligible for the drawing. Your dues must be paid prior to the Spring Executive Board Meeting to qualify.
- Scholarships will be for the next year's NRAAO Conference, equal to the early registration fee. Winners will be notified by the Scholarship Chair, and must be accepted or refused within 30 days of said notice.
- The Executive Board will vote at the Annual Spring Board Meeting on the number of scholarships to be awarded that particular year. There will be five alternate names drawn in case the winner cannot use the scholarship.
- Scholarship funds will be sent directly to the Host Committee.

The Executive Board voted to award ten conference registration scholarships in 2016. The following names were randomly selected by the Board from all the regular members in good standing. They were announced at the 2016 Awards Breakfast and will be offered a free registration to the NRAAO 2017 Conference in Mystic, Connecticut:

Dawn Crozier	Neptune, NJ	William Johnson	Hamilton, NJ
Christopher Duryee	Elizabeth, NJ	Wendy Jones	Plympton, MA
Joseph Ferraro	Berlin, CT	Suzanne Kogut	Smithfield, RI
Michael Flynn	Newton, MA	Sarah Scacco	Stratford, CT
William Gaffney	Shelton, CT	Norman Wood	Old Saybrook, CT

### Alternates:

First Alternate	Ann Marie Heering	Bethel, CT
Second Alternate	Kathleen French	Malden, MA
Third Alternate	Leslie Grant Pruitt	Princess Anne, MD
Fourth Alternate	Maryanne Lavner	Egg Harbor Township, NJ
Fifth Alternate	Ronald Keohan	Saugus, MA

Contact Scholarship Chair Viviane Valentine (RI) with questions about the NRAAO educational scholarship.  
[viv225@cox.net](mailto:viv225@cox.net)