



**September 19, 2017**

## **Preparing the Next Generation of IR Professionals**

One of the great joys of NIRI is the diversity of its members. I was particularly struck by this last week when more than 250 members participated in a series of educational and networking events in Boston, and later in Chicago.

As most know, NIRI's long-running Fundamentals of IR seminar is the "go-to" program for early-career IR professionals, and the program in Boston was no exception. The seminar featured an incredible array of senior practitioners sharing their knowledge and insight with a room full of eager learners. It was fun to meet both the faculty and the students. They represented every sector and valuation size, and came from as far away as Israel and Argentina. Not all were "young" age-wise – one was new to IR for his mega-cap company, but had recently been a CFO of a \$2 billion unit. Others were in their first job and less than six weeks in IR. But all were rapt with attention and engaged with excellent questions. The faculty were patient, open, and generous with their time.

I also enjoyed meeting members during NIRI Boston's kickoff event. The room was full and it was a delight to meet so many members with greatly varied experience in their IR field. The same held true when I attended NIRI Chicago's Annual IR Workshop. It always amazes me how generous members are with their time, working to organize and speak on NIRI programs. NIRI members have every right to cherish this spirit of giving.

Working together to advance a profession is an important part of our culture. In the 1830s, Alexis de Tocqueville, a French nobleman, author, and historian, wrote about the "spirit of association" in America. In *Democracy in America* he noted that whenever Americans faced a problem or wanted to achieve something, they joined together in association to work toward common goals. He believed that this spirit was a fundamental part of the American character and essential to democracy.

That spirit lives today in NIRI. I salute that spirit and thank all the faculty and speakers who shared their gift of knowledge with so many NIRI members last week. And, by the way, that spirit will be seen across the country this week, with NIRI

chapters in Silicon Valley, San Francisco, Orange County, Philadelphia, Twin Cities, Dallas-Ft. Worth, and Los Angeles hosting programs, and NIRI Virtual offering a [webinar](#), “Be the Board’s Valued Partner,” on Wednesday. Chapter programs are in full swing, so I encourage you to visit the [Chapter Events](#) page on the NIRI website to learn more about the planned events in your area.

Finally, a reminder to register for the two NIRI [finance seminars](#) in New York during the week of November 6.

All the best,  
Gary



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