

Partner Profile – Janet Ruiz

Janet Ruiz is the California representative for the Insurance Information Institute and is based in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Ruiz joined the I.I.I. in January 2015, bringing with her 25 years of experience in the insurance industry. She worked for almost 10 years with the California office of Fireman's Fund Insurance Company, the 150-year-old insurance company that specialized in entertainment, commercial and high net worth homeowners insurance. At Fireman's Fund, she was responsible for external communications, including strategic communication planning and media relations. Prior to joining Fireman's Fund, she held positions in public affairs, management (CEA unit), and underwriting with State Farm Insurance Company for 16 years, also in California. Ruiz has worked in video and photography production and has done volunteer work in community and public relations nationally.

Ruiz has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Thomas Edison State College in New Jersey. She earned a chartered property and casualty underwriter designation (CPCU) and an associate's designation in management from the Insurance Institute of America.

Q: What is the background/history of your organization?

A: For nearly 60 years, the Insurance Information Institute (I.I.I.) has been the leading independent source of objective information, insight, analysis and referral on insurance for a wide range of audiences, including: Consumers, insurance professionals, the media, government and regulatory organizations, educational institutions and students.

The I.I.I.'s mission is to improve public understanding of insurance—what it does and how it works. And with this goal in mind, our website, blog and social media channels offer a wealth of research, white papers, videos, articles, infographics and other resources to inform and educate—while the annual Insurance Fact Book is the definitive research resource of its kind.

The I.I.I. is an industry supported organization, but does not lobby for insurance businesses; instead, our central function is to provide accurate and timely information on insurance subjects.60, the "Triple I" has had a single mission: To improve public understanding of insurance—what it does and how it works. We here to serve everybody: consumers; students and educational institutions; insurance professionals; government and regulatory organizations; and the media.

Q: How did you get interested in research/disaster safety/response and recovery/resilience?

A: We understand the important role insurance plays in research/disaster, safety response and recovery/resilience.

Insurers are financial first responders and risk mitigators. Insurers provide economic financial stability as capital protectors, partners in social society, sustaining the supply chain and capital infusers.

We support development – community building, enabling infrastructure improvements, innovation and credit facilitation.

Q: What do you see to be the future of earthquake science/engineering/research/outreach/response and recovery to increase resiliency? What

do you think is moving the cause of resilience forward?

A: We are focused on supporting the earthquake science/engineering and research organizations to find solutions for safer buildings, improve infrastructure to mitigate loss, and provide early warning systems to save lives. Resilience is a key pillar for us in order to prevent failure, expedite recovery and transform performance.

Q: Can you tell us about a specific project your organization is working on in earthquake safety/science/engineering/research/resilience/outreach field?

A: I.I.I. works with the California Earthquake Authority to promote financial preparedness through insurance and mitigation such as retrofitting older structures. We do this through our outreach to the media emphasizing the importance of having the financial means to rebuild and recover after an earthquake.

We also partner with the Southern California Earthquake Center and the Earthquake Country Alliance on the annual Great ShakeOut Events and provide communications support to get the important safety messages out to the public on earthquake safety. We especially value our involvement with the NERC. It gives us the opportunity to be a part of the overall conversation and build partnerships with many stakeholders.

Q: Do you have any other comments or words of wisdom for our readers?

A: Preparing for earthquakes is key to recovery. It takes all of us working together on resilience to put all the pieces in place that foster safe and prosperous communities.