



The Travel Institute announces Auto Club Enterprises as first-ever recipient of newly established travel industry Educational Excellence Award

ACE is a 'great role model' for travel agencies and owners

FRAMINGHAM, MA, November 1, 2022 –The Travel Institute announces Auto Club Enterprises, or ACE, the largest group of AAA Clubs, is the inaugural recipient of its new, annual, travel industry ***Educational Excellence Award***, established to recognize those organizations and individuals demonstrating a significant, ongoing commitment to quality education for travel advisors and making a substantial, meaningful investment to ensure delivery of education to the ultimate benefit of travelers and the industry.

“It’s crystal clear—education is the difference for organizations and advisors who stand the test of time and enjoy long-term success in our ever-changing industry. Auto Club Enterprises is unwavering in its allegiance to ensuring advisor competency, which makes them a great role model for agencies and owners alike. It’s a distinct privilege to honor ACE with our first-ever Educational Excellence Award,” announced Diane Petras, CTIE, president of The Travel Institute, the strategic travel education partner to countless industry organizations, educational institutions and individuals.

The award was presented by Petras Sunday, October 30, during ACE’s annual AAA Travel Show, attended each year by ACE leadership and partners, travel advisors and travelers, intended to inspire and educate travelers about a variety of worldwide destinations.

ACE has more than a century of longevity with affiliate clubs in 22 states. It successfully serves more than 17 million members with travel, insurance and other membership products and services. The Travel Institute’s Patty Noonan, CTC, director of sales, who leads the partnership with ACE, said ACE’s enduring success as an industry leader is not by chance. “Their education philosophy is more than an attitude. Education is integrated into their operation in both how they treat their employees and in how they expect them to perform. I see it regularly in the courses and content they utilize, the sheer numbers of travel advisors they educate each year, how they evaluate staff, award merit increases and educational trips, and more,” Noonan shared.

Receiving the award, ACE Senior Vice President Mike Johnson said, “We pride ourselves on delivering legendary service; it is the cornerstone of our core mission and values. We know that investing in education to enhance our advisor’s knowledge and expertise are critical to our ability to do just that. I am honored to receive this award from the Travel Institute; it is an affirmation of our commitment to ongoing education investment. Not only are they a critical partner in our success; they are the industry’s gold standard in education for many decades running.”

According to Petras, the new Educational Excellence Award is one of a kind for the travel industry and acknowledges the undeniable, critical, and positive impact of ongoing education for the travel industry community, including education for front-line travel advisors, middle management, and executive leaders, while also furthering higher educational and professional standards for individual organizations and the industry alike.

“Our goal in creating this award is to shine further light on the valuable role education plays for both successful travel advisors and for the travelers they serve,” Petras continued. “We don’t have industry education standards to enter the industry, but those agents and organizations that pursue them will undoubtedly be more successful,” Petras concluded.

Calls for nominations will take place each January going forward with judging based on utilization of quality educational content/programming, ongoing investment, and overall impact. Additionally:

- Any contributor to education in the travel industry is eligible.
- A person or organization may be nominated and/or receive the award more than once.
- A nominator may be asked by The Travel Institute’s award committee to provide additional relevant information about the person or organization nominated.
- Recipients will be selected based on educational program content, structure, format and delivery.

“It’s truly an honor to recognize Auto Club Enterprises, an organization that clearly puts agents and travelers first by advocating for and ensuring empowered, educated agents with the capabilities and confidence to maximize a traveler’s return on investment,” Petras concluded.

[About The Travel Institute](#)

A collaborative industry effort created in 1964, The Travel Institute has continuously evolved to maintain its role as the global leader in travel industry education and certification while staying true to its mission: *dedicated solely to advancing the professionalism of both agents and industry leaders in support of individual and industry success*. A non-profit, independent organization, The Travel Institute also works with leaders throughout the industry to create and deliver relevant, meaningful and rigorous coursework. Using exclusive proctored, closed-book testing to ensure its graduates earn credentials that demonstrate the highest standards of expertise and service, The Travel Institute has certified more than 27,000 Certified Travel Associate (CTA®), Certified Travel Counselor (CTC®), and Certified Travel Industry Executive (CTIE®) graduates and also administers the Travel Agent Proficiency, or TAP®, exam to confirm students new to the industry demonstrate a mastery of travel industry basics. A trusted partner to industry suppliers and educational institutions, The Travel Institute has trained hundreds of thousands more through additional courses, webinars, and in its online Premium Member content. Throughout North America, many successful agents and high-profile leaders credit their [success](#) to coursework from The Travel Institute. Learn more at [The Travel Institute](#).

[About Auto Club Enterprises](#)

Auto Club Enterprises, formerly The Automobile Club of Southern California, was founded in 1900 by 10 Los Angeles-area businessmen and professionals and is a member affiliate of AAA. Over the years, the Auto Club has expanded to offer membership, insurance, travel, discounts, financial, and of course automotive services to more than 7 million members. Learn about some of the Auto Club’s highlighted achievements over the decades. Learn more at [ACE](#).