

## **A Personal message from E. Curtis Carter**

It is my personal belief that any professional must have a PASSION for his/her chosen field in order to excel in that field. I am very passionate about the real estate appraisal business. This passion began many years ago when I was a senior at the University of Georgia, majoring in Real Estate and Urban Development. I was approached one day by one of my professors who asked if I would like to perform a special job for a client. If I was willing to do so, I could obtain credit for a full quarter's course work. Intrigued, I asked about the details.

I was told that private investors had placed an option to purchase the historic Georgian Hotel. These investors had asked the University if the Real Estate Department would consult with them regarding the most feasible use or uses for this property, and provide an estimate of value. This would be my assignment, if I chose to accept it. I had taken appraisal courses at the University, but had never performed a "real" appraisal. As well, I was told that a feasibility analysis would be necessary. I had no clue what this was. So I asked. My professor laughed and said "Well, Curtis, that is part of the assignment; learn what it is, what it entails, and how to perform it." A wise man, indeed.

I did just that – explored, researched, and began the work process. The property was in disrepair at that time, with only two commercial tenants on the main level – the rest of the building was boarded up. I therefore found it necessary to call upon many experts, and thus met many interesting people: city leaders, Development Authority personnel, city planners, architects, historians, electrical/plumbing and structural engineers, and commercial renovators. With their expertise and wisdom, and very kind advice to a green-behind-the-ears appraiser/consultant "wannabe," I completed the assignment.

I received a "B" on the report. Thinking I had done an exceptional job, I argued a bit with my professor – staying on the Dean's list was important to me. He had little to say. At the beginning of the next quarter, I noted that I had a "grade change." I checked and saw that he had changed my grade to an "A." I called, of course, asking why. I learned another valuable lesson from this professor when he said "Curtis, you were supposed to finish in three months. It took you four. It was an "A" report, but I wanted you to understand that timeliness is very important in the business world." I have never forgotten Dr. Haney, what he taught me, nor what I learned performing my first real appraisal assignment. The business was in my blood – and still is today.

I smile every time I pass by the Georgian.

P.S.: About six years later, the Georgian Hotel became what I'd envisioned.