



Apra Honors Jill Meister with 2026 Distinguished Service Award

June 25, 2026

Apra is proud to announce that **Jill Meister, Director of Prospect Development at Yale University**, has been selected as the recipient of the **2026 Apra Distinguished Service Award**, funded by the Apra Foundation. The award recognizes an individual whose extraordinary volunteer leadership and service have significantly advanced both the prospect development profession and Apra beyond the scope of their daily professional responsibilities.

With more than three decades of experience in prospect development, Jill has been a visionary leader, mentor, and advocate for the profession. Her career has been defined by a commitment to elevating prospect development as a strategic partner in fundraising while investing deeply in the growth of colleagues and the broader advancement community.

Throughout her years of service, Jill has demonstrated an unwavering belief that prospect development is not simply an operational function but “a meaningful way to contribute to the public good.” She has helped shape organizations where data-driven insight informs fundraising strategy and has consistently encouraged professionals to embrace innovation while remaining thoughtful stewards of information.

Jill’s influence extends well beyond her institution. A former Apra International President and long-time Board member, she has dedicated decades of volunteer leadership to strengthening the association and fostering collaboration across the profession. She has also inspired countless colleagues through mentorship, encouraging others to “share knowledge, take on leadership roles, and contribute to the profession’s collective learning.”

Her nomination highlighted that “a defining characteristic of Jill’s career is her commitment to mentoring and developing the next generation of prospect development

professionals,” and praised her for cultivating “a culture of professional engagement and intellectual curiosity” that continues to shape future leaders.

The Apra Distinguished Service Award recognizes individuals who anticipate trends, demonstrate exceptional leadership, advance lifelong learning, promote the value of prospect development, uphold the highest ethical standards, and exemplify a deep commitment to philanthropy. Jill Meister embodies each of these qualities and has left an enduring mark on the profession.

Apra congratulates Jill on this well-deserved honor and thanks her for her exceptional service, leadership, and lasting contributions to the prospect development community.