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Holmes Murphy's Brainery Program Invests in the Next Generation of Insurance Talent

Most recent class completed a combined 1,700 hours of hands-on insurance training during the 9-week program

Sept. 10, 2026 – Des Moines, Iowa — Holmes Murphy's Brainery program is equipping the next generation of insurance professionals with the knowledge, experience, and relationships needed to build successful careers in the insurance industry. This year's cohort included 25 full-time employees who participated in nine weeks of structured, hands-on learning across the company's Employee Benefits, Property Casualty, and PLUS family of brands business areas.

Unlike traditional training programs, Brainery participants are hired as full-time employees before beginning the program, allowing them to learn the insurance business through an immersive, on-the-job experience. Over the course of the program, participants engage directly with professionals throughout Holmes Murphy while building technical knowledge, professional skills, and relationships. The program is designed around Holmes Murphy's philosophy of hiring top talent and teaching employees what they need to know to serve clients effectively.

This year's class completed 90 hours of Employee Benefits training, interacting with more than 100 facilitators; 80 hours of Property Casualty training, with exposure to 70 professionals across the business; and 39 hours of PLUS training, engaging with 53 facilitators. Collectively, the 25 class members participated in more than 1,700 hours of learning during the nine-week program.

"Brainery is an investment in people and in the future of our industry," said Julie McAnally, Vice President of Growth and Development. "We believe talented people can come from a variety of backgrounds, and our responsibility is to give them the knowledge, experiences, and relationships they need to succeed. What makes Brainery unique is that our participants are already Holmes Murphy employees. They're not simply learning about insurance in a classroom — they're experiencing our business, learning from our people, and building the foundation for their careers from day one."

The program also demonstrates the long-term impact of investing in early-career talent. Reed McManigal, Senior Vice President, Property Casualty Sales Leader and member of Holmes Murphy's Brokerage Services Executive Committee, and Julie Kotovic, Employee Benefits Assistant Vice President of Client Service and Team Lead, were both members of the inaugural Brainerly class in 2015. Today, both are shareholders at Holmes Murphy.

"When I joined Holmes Murphy and participated in the inaugural Brainerly class, I had made the decision to switch from a career in law to insurance. I had transferrable skills, but they're two different paths. Being part of Brainerly gave me an opportunity to learn the business in a hands-on way from people across Holmes Murphy while also allowing me to build relationships that have continued throughout my career," said McManigal. "More than a decade later, I'm proud to see the program continuing to develop talented professionals and create opportunities for people to grow within the organization. Brainerly is an example of what can happen when a company is willing to make a long-term investment in its people."

"The Brainerly gave me a strong foundation to build my career at Holmes Murphy," said Kotovic. "I benefited from the structured learning combined with hands-on experience to gain technical knowledge, but the biggest impact was getting to know people from across the organization — from colleagues in my shoes to the Executive Leadership team. Those relationships have stayed with me and have been just as valuable as the knowledge I gained through the program."

The Brainerly is designed to simplify the complexities of the insurance industry while preparing employees to contribute to their teams and positively impact clients. Upon completion of the program, participants transition into their respective full-time roles.

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About Holmes Murphy

Independence isn't just our structure — it's our mindset. It gives us the freedom to invest in our people; drive our clients forward with unmatched understanding, insights, and impact; innovate with intention; focus on long-term visioning; humanize insurance; empower others' unique potential; and champion our communities. That's our approach to risk management, benefits consulting, and our people, and it's worked for us since 1932. As an independent brokerage, we serve clients in every industry, and the advantages of our private ownership are more than cultural — they're practical and measurable. We believe in

purpose over pace, relationships over revenue, and strategy over short-term gains. That's the power of our independence. For more information, visit www.holmesmurphy.com. You can also follow us on X (@holmesmurphyins) or on Facebook, LinkedIn, or Instagram.