

July 19, 2018



For Immediate Release

Contact:

Mark Ladd
PRIA President
mark.ladd@simplifile.com
800.460.5657 x1066

Stevie Kernick
Chief Staff Officer
stevie@pria.us
919.459.2081

PRIA Announces Ernst Scholarship Award Recipients for 2018-19

RALEIGH, N.C. - The Property Records Industry Association (PRIA) has announced the Ernst Scholarship Award recipients for the 2018-19 membership year which begins on August 1, 2018. This award was established by Ernst Publishing Co., in conjunction with PRIA, in recognition of the late Carl R. Ernst, for his contributions to PRIA and the extended property records industry.

This year marks the fifth year the award has been bestowed. The recipients for 2018-19 are both from the government sector.

Erin Niemi, lead recording deputy, Okanogan Co., Wash., graduated from the University of Dallas with honors while working as an escrow assistant for a title company. Following graduation, she and her family moved to Portland, Ore., where she eventually became an escrow officer remaining in that position through the lucrative real estate boom.

In 2017, after relocating to Okanogan Co., population 41,500, she became the recorder for the county auditor's office. She is responsible for recording, indexing, searching and customer service.

According to Niemi, one of her biggest challenges is finding answers to her recording-related questions. In her effort to seek the most effective ways in which to do her job, she found PRIA through a web search and has utilized many of publications offered through the website Resource Library. Her goal is to streamline the recording process and make information available for those businesses that rely upon the accuracy of data from the recorder's office.

The second scholarship recipient for 2018-19 is Tyson Fettes, register of deeds, Racine Co., Wisc., since 2011. He is dedicated to making the register's office more efficient not only for staff but for the public and business partners.

- More -

A proponent of technology, Fettes is always looking at new ways that technology can benefit his office, the public and the private sectors. He is a leader in testing and implementing technology to improve the recording process and has won national awards for his integration of recorded documents utilizing GIS applications.

Fettes has been instrumental in passing legislation that benefits the registers' offices and the citizens of Wisconsin. He serves on his local town board, is president of the Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association and has served as the organization's legislative chair. His efforts to integrate the recorder's information with the county GIS application have been recognized nationally and in June 2018 he was asked to testify in Washington, D.C., in front of the House Ways and Means Committee to explain the value of GIS and land records.

The Ernst Scholarship Award includes a one-year PRIA membership for recipients, along with conference registration and travel to one of the two PRIA conferences during the membership year. The awards are valued at \$2,000, plus a complimentary membership in PRIA.

According to PRIA President Mark Ladd, "The late Carl Ernst was one of the original members of the Property Records Industry Joint Task Force, the predecessor to PRIA, and a tireless advocate for the development of both eRecording and basic standards for the property records industry. We could not be more pleased to partner with Ernst Publishing Co. in sponsoring this scholarship."

The award criteria, established in 2013, require that eligible applicants have not previously been members of PRIA and have demonstrated exceptional accomplishments in their chosen fields, been active in their communities and proven service consistent with the mission and values of PRIA.

"I'm sure Carl would be pleased to see that PRIA continues to be the preeminent advocate for the collaboration of business and government throughout the public records industry," states Gregory E. Teal, president & CEO of Ernst Publishing Co. "Increased membership and participation will only stand to further strengthen the association. We are proud to sponsor these scholarships. Congratulations to this year's recipients and, as Carl would say, 'keep plugging.'"

This year's beneficiaries were selected by a committee that includes the PRIA officers and representative of Ernst Publishing Co. Scholarships are awarded annually assuming valid application submissions by qualified candidates.

#

PRIA develops and promotes national standards and best practices for the property recording industry by identifying appropriate opportunities for collaboration among industry stakeholders; developing recommendations for standards and best practices; encouraging and supporting the adoption of such standards and practices; providing a clearinghouse for property-records-related information; and educating members, stakeholders and the public about the property records industry.

For more information, visit www.pria.us.