

Young Philatelic Leaders Take on Filatelic Fiesta



Jessica Rodriguex and Ian Hunter, members of the YPLF Class of 2017, visit with volunteer Richard Nakles during their visit to the American Philatelic Center.

In 2017, the San Jose Stamp Club took a bold step in naming one of its youngest members, Jessica Rodriguex, to chair its annual World Series of Philately show, Filatelic Fiesta. For APS members, Jessica is the 2017 Lauson H. Stone Fellow of the Young Philatelic Leaders Fellowship program. Her fellowship was sponsored by Harlan F. Stone and Helen M. Galatan-Stone in memory of Harlan's father. Jessica has been a member of the San Jose Stamp Club since age 20 when she inherited her grandfather's stamp collection. She is becoming more active at the national level, including serving as exhibit awards coordinator for the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society. In May 2017, Jessica volunteered to serve as chair of Filatelic Fiesta and San Jose Stamp Club President Brian Jones turned over the reins of the show, making Jessica the youngest WSP show chair in the country. As a fellow member of the club, I received all the updates on organizing the show and Jessica is definitely a leader! Filatelic Fiesta was held November 11-12 and was successful on all fronts. On that success, Jessica recently announced the 2018 organizational committee, which included three more YPLF alum. They are: Ryan Wellmaker, bourse chair, 2011 Author Track Fellow; Ian Hunter, marketing chair, 2017 Central Atlantic Stamp Dealers Association Fellow; and Katie Vasicek, awards chair, 2013 Schuyler Rumsey Fellow. You can see their hard work in action this year at Filatelic Fiesta on October 20-21, 2018. For more information go to: www.filatelicfiesta.com.

In this month's issue, we do a 10-year retrospective of the YPLF program and catch up with several of the alumni and what they're doing now. Some have come to philately professionally, others are actively leading in other meaningful ways. However, Filatelic Fiesta has definitely become home to some of the best and brightest members of the YPLF program. I applaud Jessica and the San Jose Stamp Club for giving our young leaders a home to make a big impact on the hobby. If you're interested in supporting the YPLF program, go to: www.stamps.org/Young-Philatelic-Leaders.