

**PRESS RELEASE**

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Contact: Julien Gorbach

Phone: (781) 799-8576

gorbach@hawaii.edu

AIMEE EDMONDSON AND ERIKA PRIBANIC-SMITH RECOGNIZED FOR SERVICE WITH PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Vice President Aimee Edmondson and Administrative Secretary Erika Pribanic-Smith earned this year's President's Award for their hard work and seasoned leadership in facing two unprecedented years of pandemic and a burgeoning crisis in media literacy.

President Donna Lampkin Stephens thanked Edmondson for her wise counsel in navigating the challenges of the covid landscape. That included making the crucial call to hold a virtual conference for a second year in a row—a decision that Stephens is now confident was the right one.

"Your thoughtful, insightful input have been invaluable to me as President," Stephens wrote. "I always knew you were simply a phone call or a text away, and your support has made my job easier than it could have been."

Edmondson also joined the President in her initiative to add media literacy resources to the website for AJHA members.

"In these difficult last two years, especially—how can media history be separated from media literacy?" Stephens asked. "I am afraid we have our work cut out for us for years to come."

Edmondson volunteered to organize and prepare the conference program, which the President said was "above and beyond the call of duty."

"I've learned a great deal these past two years working with Donna and learning from her behind the scenes," Edmondson said. "I've so appreciated her mentorship, wisdom and wit. And I am honored to receive one of her President's Awards."

Stephens concluded her award letter by saying that Edmondson will be an incredible President.

A second letter thanked Pribanic-Smith for her essential efforts in sustaining the association through these challenging times.

"Quite simply, I could not have performed my duties as President for the last two years without your help," she wrote. "While your duties as Administrative Secretary (soon to become Executive Director, I hope) are vitally important, I think even more vital to our organization is the quiet, competent direction you provide the President from behind the scenes."

Stephens noted that it has been Pribanic-Smith who has kept the officers on schedule, sending out reminders that it is time to start planning the conference, especially in covid times; time to send out paper, panel and RIP calls; time to solicit officer and committee reports; and time to finalize the program.

Stephens is the first AJHA President to serve for two years. But she said it takes far longer than that to fully grasp the position.

"Your institutional knowledge and memory in support of the President make you the unsung hero of our organization," she wrote of the Administrative Secretary. "I always knew over the last two years I could turn to you for advice, direction and assistance, and for that, I thank you."

Pribanic-Smith acknowledged that the past 18 months have presented some



Founded in 1981, the American Journalism Historians Association seeks to advance education and research in mass communication history. Members work to raise historical standards and ensure that all scholars and students recognize the vast importance of media history and apply this knowledge to the advancement of society. For more information on AJHA, visit <http://www.ajhaonline.org>.

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