

## *Reginald L. Ollie Biography & Ollie Scholarship History*

The BOMA/Chicago Foundation's [Reginald L. Ollie Inclusion and Outreach Scholarship](#) ("The Ollie") is named after Reggie Ollie, a devoted commercial real estate professional who served as the Chair of BOMA/Chicago's Diversity Committee for over ten years. The Ollie Scholarship was created in 2005 to recognize and develop minority leaders in the CRE industry. The scholarship provides full tuition to achieve the Real Property Administrator (RPA) designation.

Ollie's real estate experience spans over three decades. For 17 years, Ollie worked at The Montauk Company, where he managed the leasing and operations of the historic Monadnock Building. He then went on to serve as the President of Monroe Vintage Management, where he managed a portfolio of historic office buildings. Ollie now serves as the Principal at The Ollie Group, a company that provides personalized real estate consulting services.

Since 2005, the Ollie Scholarship has been awarded to 20 industry professionals. Earning the Ollie Scholarship (1) bolsters CRE knowledge through the completion of the RPA designation program (2) increases the recipients' overall visibility and professional network and (3) pairs recipients with experienced CRE mentors as a way to gain one-on-one assistance with career planning and development.

In the spring of each year, the BOMA/Chicago Foundation hosts the Diversity Celebration as an opportunity for BOMA/Chicago members to raise funds for the Ollie Scholarship program and to recognize that year's scholarship recipient(s). Reginald L. Ollie always attends this Celebration and is known to honor recipients with a special and memorable gift.

In September 2019, both the BOMA/Chicago Foundation and BOMA/Chicago Board of Directors unanimously voted to honor Reggie with lifetime membership. We recognized Reggie at the November 2019 Annual Membership Meeting and gave him the framed resolution that the BOMA/Chicago Board adopted. We are so proud to award Reggie with Lifetime Membership and we thank him for tirelessly advocating for diversity in commercial real estate.



*Reggie Ollie with Karen Le, CBRE. Karen was the 2019 Ollie Scholarship recipient.*

# *Reginald L. Ollie Inclusion and Outreach Scholarship Recipient Testimonials*



**Liliana Leon, CMCP, RPA, LEED Green Associate**, was awarded the Ollie Scholarship in 2017. Liliana began her career as a Property Assistant at Harper Court in 2014 and was promoted to Assistant Property Manager for the University of Chicago retail portfolio in 2015. She earned her Illinois Real Estate Broker License in 2016 and later took a position with NAI at 909 Davis in Evanston. In early 2018, Liliana joined Jones Lang LaSalle as an Assistant General Manager at 515 North State Street. Lily is now the General Manager at 1 North Franklin and has earned both her CMCP and RPA.

The Ollie Scholarship not only provided Liliana the means to complete the RPA courses, but also offered the benefit of selecting a seasoned industry mentor and becoming a member of the BOMA/Chicago Diversity Committee which allowed for her to network with other experienced professionals and help champion the mission and initiatives of the Committee. The continued support given to her by each member during the RPA program spoke to their dedication to promote professional growth of underrepresented groups within the CRE industry.

Lily states, “At the time of being awarded the scholarship, you do not realize the magnitude it will have on your career and personal development. It is truly an incomparable experience because you gain a family within the industry – it is as if you have known them your entire career.

I encourage all to take advantage of the opportunity and speak with your manager about applying for the Ollie Scholarship. As Ollie Scholars, we are given a unique platform to educate and inspire other existing and future underrepresented professionals and it starts with this scholarship. Representation matters.”

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**Yordanos Ghdey, RPA**, was one of two recipients of the Reginald L. Ollie Outreach and Inclusion Scholarship in 2014. She began her career in commercial real estate in 2012 at AMA Plaza with Riverview Realty Partners as a Property Management Assistant and quickly realized the potential for growth and uncapped educational opportunities which prompted her to apply for the Ollie Scholarship. Upon receiving the scholarship, she was promoted to Tenant Services Coordinator and upon completing her RPA, was promoted to Assistant Property Manager. Yordanos’ General Manager and Property Manager have always provided her with a prodigious amount of support and continue to provide words of encouragement, mentorship and guidance for her career development.

The opportunity to be awarded the Ollie Scholarship strengthened Yordanos’ career as she applied her work experiences to the materials discussed within her course textbooks and vice versa. Additional benefits of the scholarship include her one-on-one mentorship as well as a position within the Diversity and Social Corporate Responsibility Committee which has increased her visibility with other CRE professionals and bolstered her involvement with BOMA/Chicago and other industry related organizations.

Yordanos made a commitment to share information on the Ollie Scholarship as well as Chicago’s CRE industry’s limitless opportunities to other young professionals that fall into the underrepresented categories and

continues to uphold this commitment both within and outside of CRE events. She encourages anyone who meets the scholarship requirements to take advantage of this great opportunity – not only to excel in their career, but to also build relationships and mentoring, which are not as easily accessible without the scholarship.

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**Angela Oh, RPA**, was one of the 2014 recipients of the Ollie Scholarship. Angela began her career in the commercial real estate industry in 2010 with JLL. She provides a wide range of property and administrative



support functions as the Property Administrator at 71 South Wacker, 1.7 million square foot, Class A+, LEED Platinum, International TOBY Award Winning office property. Since her employment with JLL, she has transitioned from accounting/leasing support to managing operations, giving her a chance to experience full scope of property management. She has become a LEED Green Associate in her early years at the firm and earned the Illinois Real Estate Broker License while completing her RPA in little over 2 years.

Through this scholarship, Angela was provided an opportunity to serve as a member at the Diversity & Corporate Social Responsibility Committee. The committee supports a number of important initiatives including but not limited to blood drives, Greater Chicago Food Depository food drives and organizing and planning the annual Diversity Celebration. In this committee Angela has built a great network among the commercial real estate professionals in the Chicago area. Earning the Ollie Scholarship was also a factor behind Angela being awarded the 2014 JLL Special Achievement Award.

Angela states, “The Ollie Scholarship has granted me so many wonderful opportunities to enhance my career in the Chicago commercial real estate industry. The biggest prize for me was not only the full scholarship to earn my RPA, but the relationships I have built within the committee and through networking at various BOMA/Chicago events. I realized that so many professionals in this industry encompass such great knowledge and experiences that I can both benefit and learn from. Not only did I learn and enhance my understanding of property management through taking the RPA courses, the real-life encounters I was fortunate to experience are priceless. This scholarship has allowed me much more visibility in the industry and I am forever grateful for this opportunity. I would recommend anyone and everyone to take a chance at this wonderful scholarship and see and experience how much it broadens your knowledge and help advancing in your career.”

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**Kristine Sorenson, RPA**, was the 2013 Ollie Scholarship Recipient. Kristine began her career in property management with Means-Knaus Partners in 2011 as 300 S. Riverside’s Tenant Services Coordinator and then took a position with CBRE as the Property Administrator at 100 N. Riverside Plaza – “The Boeing Building” – where she completed her RPA within 1.5 years. At the end of 2014, Kristine decided to explore other options within the real estate industry with Newmark Grubb Knight Frank’s Global Corporate Services - Transactions Department as an Account Specialist.

After receiving the scholarship, Kristine gained visibility within the industry and quickly established herself as a true up-and-comer. Kristine also joined the Diversity & Social Responsibility Committee, becoming part of the Blood Drive Initiative, annual GCFD Food Drive and the Diversity Celebration Task Force.

Kristine states, “The Ollie Scholarship and RPA coursework strengthened my professional experience and gave me the confidence to take on more responsibility as a Real Estate Services Administrator at 100 N Riverside. In combination with receiving the scholarship, my contributions to the Diversity & Social Responsibility Committee and my increased visibility within CBRE, I was recognized as the 2014 Emerging Leader of the Year. Since earning the RPA, I have been given greater career opportunities within the CRE industry and have gained

mentors that I will be able to count on throughout my career. If you are considering this scholarship - don't hesitate. Work with your manager to submit the application. Don't miss out on a chance to enhance your career!"

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**Jennifer V. Majerus, RPA**, was the 2008 recipient of the Ollie Scholarship. She began her career in property management at JLL back in 2006 while completing her Bachelor's degree. Shortly after earning her RPA through the Ollie Scholarship, Jennifer was promoted to Assistant General Manager in 2013, to General Manager in 2014 and to Vice President in 2015.

Jennifer attributes much of her career growth and success to JLL and its culture of promoting from within and cultivating the careers of employees. Jennifer also believes that pursuing her RPA with the Ollie Scholarship propelled her career even further by educating her on all facets of property management. While completing her RPA courses, Jennifer stood out among her peers because she was able to immediately apply her RPA knowledge on the job and master the day-to-day aspects of her position. Another motivating factor behind Jennifer's success story is that she was the first Ollie Scholarship recipient at JLL. The scholarship increased her visibility at her company, within the commercial real estate industry and also made her stand out amongst the senior leadership at JLL.

Jennifer states, "I am very grateful for earning the Ollie Scholarship back in 2008. It may have been possible to piece classes together over several years without the scholarship, but the ability to take all the courses back to back really helped me stay focused and motivated. I am also very thankful for the work the Diversity Committee and the Ollie Scholarship program have done to empower underrepresented real estate professionals."

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**Angel Brown, RPA**, was the 2007 recipient of the Ollie Scholarship. In 2005, Angel began her career in property management with CB Richard Ellis as a Property Administrator at Willis Tower. While still taking the RPA courses, Angel was promoted and moved on from Willis Tower to contribute to US Equity's team at River East Plaza.

Since earning her RPA in 2010, Angel has worked on the property management teams for Vanguard Health Systems, 150 N. Wacker, Harper Court and as the Assistant Property Manager at 33 North LaSalle. She worked as the APM at McCaffery Interests before joining Piedmont Office Realty Trust as the APM in 2017.

Angel states, "Becoming a recipient of the Ollie Scholarship greatly increased my visibility among upper level management within my prior firm. One of the Senior VPs became my mentor back in 2007 and remains so to this very day. The scholarship also included a seat on the Diversity Committee, which afforded me the opportunity to effectively build my professional network while contributing to the promotion of diversity within the CRE industry. Earning the scholarship and designation definitely catapulted my career and gave me an edge over the competition."





**Vivian Orozco, RPA**, was the 2020 recipient of the Reginald L. Ollie Scholarship. In 2017, Vivian began her career in property management with Sterling Bay as a Property Administrator at 111 N. Canal, an 800,000 sq ft, Class A building, where she received her Illinois Broker License. She then took on a similar role at 600 West Chicago, a 1.6 million sq ft, Class A building, in February of 2020, quickly having to navigate learning a new building in the middle of a pandemic. In January 2022, Vivian was promoted to Senior Property Associate applying her knowledge base having completed all her RPA classes and earning her Real Property Administrator designation in December of 2021.

Having applied three times for the Ollie Scholarship, perseverance was one of the qualities that taught her the most to succeed and never give up. The Ollie Scholarship has propelled her knowledge in the commercial Property Management field and provided networking opportunities which have lasted through today. Because of these opportunities, she was able to join the Diversity Committee as a Diversity Ambassador, and most recently participating in the Chicago Returns organization, where she helped coordinate a promo code for Divvy bike riders, allowing Chicago commuters the advantage to bike to work over the summer.

Vivian has been hard at work to grow professionally and bring diversity to her career field. She is part of Hispanics in Commercial Real Estate, a group newly formed to help bring more opportunities to underrepresented individuals. She sees herself expanding her role soon and bringing diversity to the property management industry. She credits education from the RPA classes which have allowed her to gain a better understanding of each area of the industry and the limitless networking opportunities.

Vivian states, "I am grateful for all the wonderful people that have encouraged me and guided me to first, apply to the Ollie Scholarship, and second, to those who have provided me with advice as I earned my RPA. I feel extremely honored to have made it this far and look forward to the next chapter in my career. I would like to encourage my peers to also apply for the scholarship and be a part of this amazing group of people who have so much to offer. I hope to make the same impact on others, as my peers have done for me!"



**Karen Schee Le, RPA**, was the 2019 recipient of the Reginald L. Ollie Scholarship.

Karen states, "The Reginald L. Ollie Inclusion and Outreach Scholarship has provided the foundation for my career in real estate. Since I received the award in 2019, I have used the wisdom to foster my career and my development. Through persistence, passion and hard work, the RPA designation program has strengthened my CRE industry knowledge while providing an environment to expand my network. As a result, my career has expanded along with my confidence. The RPA designation has provided many opportunities to implement what I have learned from the classes and provide first class service to ownership, CBRE and the tenants. The networking has provided opportunities to learn from my peers and share experiences. I am forever grateful for the opportunity the BOMA/Chicago Foundation has awarded me and appreciate the opportunities that have been presented. I strongly encourage those who are interested in the scholarship to apply. It will provide great opportunities for learning, network and growth. I am a testament that if you do not receive the scholarship on the first try, be tenacious and do not give up. For me, third time was the charm!"