

Biographies

❖ **Katherine Johnson**, General Counsel, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Katherine “Katie” Johnson is the general counsel for the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, “The Voice for Real Estate,” and the nation’s largest professional association, representing approximately one million members involved in all aspects of the real estate industry.

Katie joined NAR in 2007 and was appointed as general counsel in 2014. As general counsel, she is responsible for assuring that the programs, policies and activities of NAR are in compliance with the law. She also is responsible for defending the Association against legal challenges and initiating litigation to protect and preserve association assets and policies as necessary. Prior to becoming general counsel, Katie focused on software and data licensing, trademark protection, contract drafting and review, data security and privacy, brokerage risk management, and providing legal advice to NAR’s technology initiatives including RPR and RAMCO. Katie is currently pursuing a master’s degree for Information Technology and Privacy Law.

She resides with her husband, Jeff, and children, Paisley and Andrew, in the Lincoln Square neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois.

❖ **Ralph W. Holmen**, Associate General Counsel, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Ralph Holmen is Associate General Counsel of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, and for over 32 years has advised NAR, state and local associations and members on a wide variety of real estate and association law issues, including antitrust, federal election law, First Amendment issues, not-for-profit taxation, land use and environmental issues and others. He has authored or co-authored numerous amicus curiae briefs filed in the U.S. Supreme Court as well as other courts, addressing land use and environmental law, fair housing, commercial speech restrictions, and other issues of concern to the real estate industry.

Ralph is admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, and the bar of the State of Illinois. Ralph received a Bachelor of Science degree in physics from the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, and a Juris Doctor degree from Loyola University of Chicago.

❖ **Clifford Niersbach**, RCE, Associate General Counsel, Board Policy & Programs, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Cliff Niersbach joined the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® as a Policy Review Coordinator in 1975. Since then he has served the Association and its members in a variety of positions including vice president, Board Policy and Programs.

From 1978 until 2014, Cliff was the staff liaison to the Professional Standards Committee, the Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee, the Multiple Listing Issues and Policies Committee, and the MLS Technology and Emerging Issues Advisory Board. He currently serves as associate general counsel, Board Policy and Programs with responsibility for implementing the Organizational Alignment – Core Standards initiative.

Cliff is a graduate of Northwestern University and the John Marshall Law School. He is admitted to practice in Illinois and is a lifelong resident of Chicago where he lives with his wife Diane.

❖ **Kevin J. Milligan**, RCE, Vice President, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Kevin Milligan joined the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® as a Policy Analyst in 1980. Since then he has served the Association and its members in a variety of positions, currently as Vice President, Board Policy & Programs.

Board Policy & Programs has oversight for the activities of NAR's Professional Standards, MLS, and Membership Policy Committees and assists local and state associations in administering these programs. Kevin is actively involved in the work of these committees, and has worked with various study groups, task forces, and presidential advisory groups.

Kevin is a graduate of Western Illinois University, and has a Master's Degree in Business Administration.

❖ **Finley P. Maxson**, Senior Counsel, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Finley Maxson has been with NAR since 1999. Prior to joining NAR, Finley worked at a Chicago law firm. He received his B.A. degree in English from Kenyon College, and his J.D. degree from the Washington University School of Law. Finley is admitted to the state bar of Illinois.

Finley helps to maintain the risk management materials on Realtor.org, Window to the Law, and The Legal Pulse. He is the main contact person for the professional liability insurance for state and local REALTOR® associations. Finley also assists the Community & Political Affairs division with state campaign finance issues as general in-house responsibilities (drafting risk management articles, reviewing contracts, and miscellaneous projects). In addition, Finley also serves as the liaison between NAR and ARELLO.

❖ **Lesley Walker**, Associate Counsel, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Lesley Walker has been with NAR since May 2010. Lesley focuses her work on matters including the Americans with Disabilities Act, fair housing issues, NAR Constitution and Bylaws, Risk Management Committee, and general contract negotiation matters. Prior to joining NAR, Lesley's experience has focused on general corporate matters and financial services regulation, and includes three years at the North American Securities Administrators Association in Washington, D.C., where her work focused on securities regulation, corporate law, and association legal work. She received her J.D. from the Villanova University School of Law, and

is a graduate of The Pennsylvania State University, where she earned a B.S. and a B.A. Lesley is admitted to the state bars of Pennsylvania.

❖ **Jessica Edgerton**, Associate Counsel, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Prior to joining NAR in 2013, Jessica Edgerton served as general counsel to an appraisal management company, where she was responsible for overseeing company-wide industry and regulatory compliance and general corporate legal matters. She received her B.A. from Oberlin College and her J.D. from the Indiana University Maurer School of Law. Jessica is admitted to the state bar of Illinois.

At NAR, Jessica focuses her practice on contracts, online copyright and intellectual property matters, environmental issues affecting the real estate practitioner, and the creation of member educational resources including the risk management materials on Realtor.org, Window to the Law, and The Legal Pulse. Jessica also serves as the staff executive for the Risk Management Forum.

❖ **Chloe Hecht**, Associate Counsel, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Chloe Hecht joined NAR in May of 2014. Chloe worked as an intellectual property attorney at law firms in Chicago where she focused on U.S. and international trademark prosecution and enforcement, domain name and Internet matters, and branding strategies.

Chloe focuses on NAR's trademark protection program, licensing issues, the .REALTOR top level domain initiative, and reviewing contracts. Chloe received a B.S. degree in molecular biology from the University of Wisconsin – Madison and a J.D. degree from DePaul University College of Law. She is admitted to the state bar of Illinois.