



Doug Golden Scholarship Helps Desiree Miller Expand her Role at Atlantic Railways

Atlantic Railways Executive Assistant Desiree Miller might call herself a “rookie when it comes to the railroad,” but she is experienced enough to know that working at a short line means taking on many different responsibilities. To become more familiar with these tasks, Miller recently completed a Railroad Track Inspection and Safety Standards course through the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, training that was funded in large part by a scholarship from ASLRRRA and former board member Doug Golden.

“We are a short line, so everyone has multiple tasks and I want to be the best asset I can be for our company. Receiving this training is going to allow me to inspect our rails to make sure they are safe and up to code. It was a lot to take in but I cannot wait to put it to good use,” said Miller.



Photo Courtesy of Desiree Miller

Desiree Miller of Atlantic Railways uses a track gauge to take measurements during a University of Tennessee rail inspection and safety course. Miller received a Doug Golden Scholarship through the ASLRRRA Short Line Education Fund to help pay for her training.

In addition to being a full-time executive assistant to Atlantic Railways President John Elkin, Miller is a part-time special agent for the railroad, which requires her to conduct inspections of rail cars and property. Taking the University of Tennessee’s track inspection course allows her to expand her special-agent role and do more to assist the one other inspector at Atlantic Railways.

Miller is one of four short line railroad employees who have received a scholarship for industry-specific training in track, bridge and signal inspection and maintenance and/or locomotive and freight car inspection and maintenance through ASLRRRA’s program. Each scholarship winner received up to \$1,200 to pay for course registration fees and travel, lodging and other related expenses.

“The scholarship was useful because it almost covered the entire cost of the trip. I would have still taken the class, but having the majority paid for was a perk for my boss and the financials of our company,” said Miller.

Golden, who retired as president of ASLRRRA member Carolina Coastal Railway and has served on ASLRRRA’s Board of Directors and on the Small Railroad Committee, expressed a desire to support the education and training needs of small railroads. An initial \$12,000 donation from the Douglas Golden-Mary Cullen Charitable Fund to ASLRRRA’s Short Line Education Fund made these first scholarships possible.