2017 Tarnai Award Winner - Matthew Strawn of the Washington State University Social and Economic Sciences Research Center (SESRC), Washington State University

Matthew Strawn of the Washington State University Social and Economic Sciences Research Center (SESRC) has been awarded the 2017 John Tarnai Memorial Scholarship by the Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations (AASRO). The award provides a scholarship in memory of John Tarnai, former AASRO president, and recognizes an outstanding but relatively new Survey Center employee with great promise for pursuing a long-term career in survey research. The scholarship defrays the cost of attending the annual meetings of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), the umbrella professional organization for academic, government, private sector and non-profit survey researchers) or the International Field Directors and Technology Conference (IFD&TC).

In nominating Strawn for the scholarship, Dr. Rose Krebill-Prather, Assistant Director of SESRC, wrote: "Matt aspires to diversify his skills in applied survey research and he wants to innovate new approaches to data collection as the environment for surveys continues to change in the future."

Matt first came onboard at the SESRC in 2014 as both a study director and data manager. Matt brought with him a skill set, interests, and an openness to becoming familiar with the organization, such that he adapted seamlessly to the SESRC style of conducting surveys and data procedures. In addition, Matt brought to SESRC new ways of managing surveys and working with survey data. He continues to enhance survey protocols in ways that help SESRC maintain high quality standards for survey research.

In addition, Matt is also instrumental in adopting new ways to improve current SESRC's data collection system. He has developed innovative research tools that are being used to help SESRC become more efficient and expand capabilities. He has also improved visual design of SESRCs web based survey and has incorporated GIS mapping survey design.