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ncura
newsletter

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INSIDE:

Building NCURA's Neighborhoods

by Nancy Wilkinson

NCURA has finished its initial strategic plan and the commensurate governance changes are quickly being implemented. With that design strategy and governance flexibility in mind, we are now ready to embark on our construction program for 2000 and beyond.

As I outlined in an earlier article, this year we will focus on "Strengthening Community." I alluded then to the concept that community may have many different meanings to each of us. However, based on your input, the creativity and talent of the NCURA Board of Directors and the NCURA Staff, we have now identified some of those meanings, and are now ready to build within our community to provide additional strength to the research administration profession and to NCURA.

In considering the "community" metaphor, we should acknowledge that a community is only as strong as the various neighborhoods within that community. The neighborhoods attract and draw support from the people who take up residence there. As a result, the entire community takes on the strength and character of its neighborhoods.

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Call for nominations for Catherine Core Minority Travel Awards... see www.ncura.edu

ERAV IN CHICAGO AUGUST 3-6, 2000!

See page 10!

42nd Annual Meeting Update

by JoAnn Moretti

Greetings to all members on behalf of the Annual Program Committee! There have been quite a number of developments over the last two months.

First, I am pleased to announce the theme for the 42nd Annual Meeting – *New Skills, New Strengths, New Connections.* The theme emphasizes the current challenge we all face as we struggle to respond to the highly dynamic environment that is currently present in our profession, particularly in the areas of technology, policy/compliance and relationships. Whether we like it or not we are all being

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Leaders Wanted:
Call for Nominations for NCURA National Elections

The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee invites all members of NCURA to participate in the process of selecting key members of the National leadership team— by nominating (or self nominating) individuals with the skills, abilities and willingness to serve the organization. This year's annual election will select 2 at-large members of the Board each of whom will serve a two year term, and a Vice President/President Elect. Terms of these three positions will begin on January 1, 2001. Please email nominations to: nominating@ncura.edu. All nominations and supporting materials from the nominees must be received electronically on or before May 19. Specific information on the positions and nomination process follows:

At Large Board Member: Eligibility includes all current NCURA members who are willing and able to serve and are: creative, enthusiastic, effective communicators and facilitators. They must be able to share their ideas along with balancing the viewpoints of other board members for the betterment of NCURA and the research profession. At-Large Board Members will be expected to be available to attend all meetings of the Board (2 to 3 times per year). Self-nomination is encouraged. Interested members are asked to submit their vitae (no more than 3 pages) and a statement (100 words or less) on why they wish to serve on NCURA's Board.

Vice President/President Elect: Eligibility includes all current regular NCURA members who are creative, determined and enthusiastic, and possess demonstrable leadership, communication and facilitation skills. Providing vision and direction while actively listening to other views and opinions is essential. The Vice President/President Elect serves a total of three years: the first as the Vice President/President Elect, the second as President, and a final year as the Immediate Past President. Self-nomination is also encouraged. All nominees must submit their vitae (no more than 3 pages) and a statement (150 words or less) including 1) why they wish to serve as NCURA's Vice President/President Elect and 2) their goals and objectives for the organization.

Big News in Human Subjects Protection

by Robert P Lowman

Robert Lowman

When most research administrators think of human subjects protection these days, they probably think of university research programs shut down by the federal Office of Protection from Research Risks (OPRR) or the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Certainly, regulatory compliance activity has been front and center for the past eighteen months. But, there is some good news mixed in with the threat of compliance action, and some new topics are heating up as the subject of debate.

Simplified Assurance Process. First, the good news. OPRR intends to scrap its current system of lengthy and cumbersome assurances of compliance in favor of a simple, single page assurance. Gone from the lexicon of research administration will be the terms "Multiple Project Assurance," "Single Project Assurance," and "Cooperative Project Assurance." In their stead will be two forms—one for US institutions and the other for foreign institutions—each scarcely more than a page in length. The new forms will certify in simple language that the institution will obey federal regulations. OPRR intends renewals to be painless and expects them to be handled electronically in the future. One new wrinkle in all this is a requirement that the person signing the assurance for each institution certify that he or she has undergone training in human subject protection. Exactly how this requirement can be met has yet to be determined. If your institution has an assurance about to expire, OPRR has expressed a willingness to extend your current assurance for a few months until the new system is in place so that you can renew under the new, simplified procedures.

Just-in-Time at NIH. This one is big. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has announced the implementation of Just-in-Time proposal review, generally effective for the June/July round of proposal submissions. NIH proposals will be submitted for possible funding without human subject review. Only if a proposal receives a good enough priority score potentially to receive funding will the investigator will be required to obtain the approval of an IRB, and no award will be made until IRB approval has been received. For institutions with medical schools or a high percentage of their portfolio in NIH grants, this change has far-reaching implications. Clearly, this policy will reduce the number of protocol reviews, but it raises procedural questions as well. Who receives the notification that a proposal is competitive, and how long will institutions have to complete IRB review? Will pressure be applied to IRBs by faculty members or deans to approve large awards, even those that raise human subjects protection issues?

Conference Call IRB Meetings. OPRR has recently announced that IRB meetings held via conference call will be recognized as legally convened meetings. This policy change brings OPRR into line with FDA and provides welcome flexibility to human subject committees. There are some limitations and procedures to be followed, but they seem reasonable and appropriate. This is a change likely to catch on quickly, since it potentially saves a lot of committee time when dealing with "emergency" issues that might otherwise have required a special IRB meeting.

Review of Complete Grant Applications. Not all the news is good. For some months the IRB community has been seeking guidance from OPRR regarding a relatively new interpretation of regulations that require IRBs to review complete grant applications, not just human subjects protocols. A draft of a new OPRR guidance document suggests that complete grant applications need not be reviewed by the entire IRB. A primary reviewer can serve this function for the Board. OPRR argues that review of the entire grant application is necessary to ensure that all investigators, all research sites, and all human subject activities have been properly identified. In fact, OPRR took action to shut down some institutions, in part, because inconsistencies existed between the contents of complete grant applications and the contents of human subjects protocols received by the IRB. This adds a great deal of work to the members of IRBs but appears to be a new fixture of the review process.

Prisoners in Research. Another thorny issue being much debated is the involvement of prisoners in research. Two topics seem most important. First, OPRR has never clearly defined the "certification" process required by the regulations before research involving greater than minimal risk can be conducted using prisoners. That requirement is misunderstood at best, and OPRR has done little to clarify it for universities. A current concern is that OPRR will attempt to extend the requirement to include all research involving prisoners, which would appear to venture beyond the authority contained in current regulations. A second issue is the case of human subjects who become incarcerated during the conduct of studies that had not been approved as research involving prisoners. OPRR has been arguing that virtually all such research has to be re-reviewed by an IRB as prisoner research. The research community takes issue with this interpretation, arguing that the consent process was accomplished outside the coercive environment of a prison and, therefore, should be valid. A compromise may be to re-review any research where a subject has become incarcerated and where interventions or data collection are not complete.

Importance of Communication with OPRR. Since OPRR stepped up its compliance activities, a lot of universities have taken the approach that the best way to deal with OPRR is to keep your head low and hope no one notices you. That is probably not the best strategy. OPRR staff have noted recently that none of the compliance activities we have all read about in the newspapers resulted from the self-report of a human subjects problem. In fact, OPRR argues that self-report of problems and a good faith effort to resolve issues on your campus may be the best way to stay out of the newspaper. Federal regulations require reporting to OPRR of a variety of serious problems, including serious non-compliance with the regulations. OPRR will work with institutions that both recognize shortcomings and take positive steps to correct them in a timely manner. That does not mean you can report your problems to OPRR, do nothing to correct them, and expect to stay out of trouble. It means that reporting your own problems will be viewed as a positive step by OPRR if reporting is part of a plan to correct the situation.

As with so much of research administration in recent years, the only constant in human subjects protection seems to be change. As if all the topics mentioned in this article are not enough, OPRR is moving out of NIH and will shortly become part of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health within the structure of the Department of Health and Human Services. The search is on for a director, with rumors widely circulating about whether the current director will be retained. A new director will doubtless bring a new agenda to the office, which of course implies even more change. About the only advice that makes any sense is to stay tuned and pay attention. We may be in for a wild ride.

Robert P. Lowman is the Associate Vice Provost for Research, Director of Research Services at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Capital View

by Tony DeCrappeo

Compliance—that is the watchword of the moment. Federal agencies, particularly in the Department of Health and Human Services, are engaged in what they call compliance activities in a number of areas—human subjects protection, misconduct in science, disposition of intellectual property, and conflict of interest. These are not audits. At least so far, the compliance reviews are being carried out by agency program and grant administration officials. I looked up compliance in our office copy of Webster's Third New International Dictionary and there are some interesting definitions. The first definition is "friendly or happy agreement". Hmmm—that may be a stretch for our current situation. The second refers to "the act or action of yielding to pressure, demand, or coercion", and further that it is the "inclination or readiness to yield to the demands of others in a servile or spineless fashion". That sounds a bit harsh—we like to think of ourselves as reasonable and accommodating rather than spineless. The final definition gets closer to the truth, I think. It is "conformity in fulfilling formal or official requirements; cooperation promoted by official or legal authority or conforming to official or legal norms." Experiences so far with federal compliance actions have seen parts of all these definitions come into play.

By now we have been made painfully aware of the more assertive compliance efforts of the Office for Protection from Research Risks (OPRR). Some of the universities and medical centers that had their human subjects research suspended might say that OPRR's view of compliance fits the second definition above. It is hoped that the upcoming reorganization of OPRR, which is to include an external advisory board with influence on the interpretation and establishment of human subjects protection policies, will result in a more cooperative and less coercive spirit. We have already seen progress recently in an increased willingness by OPRR to discuss alternative policies and guidance on human subjects issues with COGR and others. A much greater effort will also be made by OPRR in developing education and training materials on human subjects research. Institutions, of course, will be expected to be more diligent in providing appropriate training for all parties involved in the process.

The Office of Research Integrity (ORI) is also undergoing reorganization. When further fact finding into a scientific misconduct case is required by the federal government after the university completes its investigation, it will be carried out by the Office of Inspector General rather than ORI. The role and structure of ORI is being changed to focus on preventing misconduct in science and promoting research integrity through expanded education programs. Thus, ORI's future compliance efforts seem to fit the last definition above, engaging the research community in a cooperative spirit to satisfy official or legal requirements.

Cutting across several areas of research compliance is the recently announced NIH proactive grants compliance program. The stated goals are increased educational outreach, enhanced administrative oversight of sponsored research at universities, and renewed institutional commitment to compliance. NIH has planned site visits at ten universities this year to assess the level of understanding of NIH rules. Initial reports from the first of the site visits are that they were conducted in a spirit of collegiality and mutual searching for best practices, rather than an audit mode. Emphasis was placed on initial training for all parties involved and how clearly the institution has defined roles and responsibilities for the various aspects of research compliance.

Complimentary to federal compliance actions, the Association of American Universities (AAU) has formed a Task Force on Research Accountability. This group of university presidents, scientists, administrators, and other association representatives will examine changes in the environment within which research universities operate and develop recommendations for providing appropriate accountability and oversight of university research and regulatory compliance. The task force will focus on what the university presidents see currently as the most sensitive issues—practices and policies in human subjects research and the commercialization of research. An important part of this effort from the university perspective is that the Task Force will consider how compliance activities are financed. In addition, COGR has begun a process of establishing an inventory of training materials already developed at universities on research accountability that can be shared. The intention here is to share resources and best practices to avoid "reinventing the wheel".

The common thread weaving through all these activities is that education and training are seen as leading the way in achieving compliance. As institutions of higher education, we ought to embrace that concept. Prevention, rather than enforcement or punishment, is clearly preferable to all of us. More importantly, preserving public trust and continuing to produce high quality research demands that we reach for that "friendly or happy agreement".

Tony DeCrappeo is a Staff Associate at the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR).

> *...education and training are seen as leading the way in achieving compliance. As institutions of higher education, we ought to embrace that concept.*

Community CORNER

Governance Restructuring
NCURA's New Financial Management Committee

by Patrick Fitzgerald

The new Financial Management Committee (FMC) has been appointed and is ready to begin the important work of managing NCURA's finances. The Committee, which is chaired by the incumbent Treasurer and includes the incoming Treasurer, immediate past Treasurer, NCURA Manager of Financial Services (as a non-voting ex-officio member) and three at-large members, will be responsible for assisting and advising the Treasurer in oversight of all NCURA fiscal matters. An important aspect of the Committee's composition is the opportunity to include a non-NCURA member on the FMC to provide expertise in a particular area - investment strategies, for example.

Why do we need a Financial Management Committee and how will the FMC change NCURA's financial governance structure? Under the old structure, the regional treasurers made up the Finance and Budget Committee. While they were diligent, conscientious and expert in research administration, sometimes these individuals had limited financial expertise and were not experienced in dealing with substantiative financial issues such as managing investments or setting long-term financial strategies. Furthermore, requiring regional treasurers to deal with issues at the national level, in addition to serving the needs of their respective regions, involved a substantial commitment of time and detracted from their ability to focus their attention on local goals and objectives.

NCURA's new governance structure has created more opportunities for involvement in the management of the Council, including the realm of finances. The FMC is a Standing Committee made up of individuals who have financial expertise, specific skills or competencies and are experienced in dealing with complex fiscal issues. The purpose of the FMC is to provide sound financial advice to the Officers and the Board of NCURA and relieve some of the burden on the Treasurer.

The Committee will focus primarily, but not exclusively, on national issues such as setting fiscal policy, managing investments, developing long-term financial strategies, and the identification and assessment of potential new sources of income. For certain issues, such as sponsorships, gifts, dues structure, etc., the FMC may use focus groups to broaden the base of knowledge used in the decision making process to produce better informed and, hopefully, better quality decisions. This new structure should also have a positive impact at the regional level. With the FMC focusing on national interests, regional treasurers can concentrate on the issues facing their regions and minimize the burden that was been placed on these individuals in the past. Of course the FMC will also be available as a resource for the regions to tap for financial advice as needed.

An important role of the FMC is to communicate with the NCURA membership on financial issues of importance. The Financial Community Corner of the NCURA newsletter will include an article on a timely topic in forthcoming issues. For example, in the July/August issue the FMC plans to include an article on OMB's new Standard Format for Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Proposals. If there are specific topics that you would like discussed in future issues please contact FMC Chair John Case at john_case@unc.edu.

(For a listing of the FMC members please refer to Pamela Webb's article on the NCURA committee appointment process).

Patrick W. Fitzgerald is the Director of Cost Analysis at Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Recent Changes in the U.S. Patent Law

by Ann Hammersla

The American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) was signed into law on November 29, 1999. AIPA's provisions modify the U.S. Patent Law in 4 major areas, including the addition of the First Inventor Defense Act. These changes impact universities' technology transfer and licensing programs and provide additional strategies to research administrators when negotiating industry research agreements.

The "First Inventor Defense Act" (FIDA) as part of the AIPA may have little impact on universities, however, it has been hailed as a significant change in U.S. Patent Law. FIDA provides a "prior use" defense against infringement actions brought against a business by a third party when the business uses an unpatented business method within their corporation. In 1998, the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit in State Street Bank and Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group, 149, F3d 1368, decided that business methods, while never before considered patentable subject matter, are patentable. Prior to State Street, business methods were generally considered trade secrets and unpatentable. Based on the State Street decision and the many concerns that have been raised since this decision, the FIDA provides protection to those companies that have used an unpatented business method at least one year before a patent application for the business method was filed. This prior use defense is available only against business methods and does not apply to any other patentable subject matter. The provisions of the FIDA took effect on November 29, 1999.

The second change in the U.S. Patent Law is the "Domestic Publication of Foreign Filed Patent Applications Act." Previously, U.S. patent applications were considered confidential because they were not published until the patent issued. Under the new law, U.S. patent applications must be published 18 months after filing the application. This change moves one step closer in harmonizing U.S. Patent Law with that of almost every other country in the world that requires publication of a patent application prior to its issuance. The publication will occur unless (1) a request for non-publication is made by the patent application; (2) the application is subject to a secrecy order; (3) it is a provisional patent application or a design patent application; or (4) the patent application has been abandoned. By filing a certification that the patent application will not be filed in a foreign jurisdiction that requires early publication, the U.S. patent application will not be published prior to issuance. If after deciding not to file a U.S. patent application and your university decides to file a foreign patent application in a jurisdiction that requires publication, the U.S. Patent Office must be notified within 45 days of the foreign filing. On April 5, 2000 at Federal Register, pages 17946-17971 the Patent and Trademark Office announced proposed rules to implement the publication changes. The deadline for submitting comments is May 22, 2000.

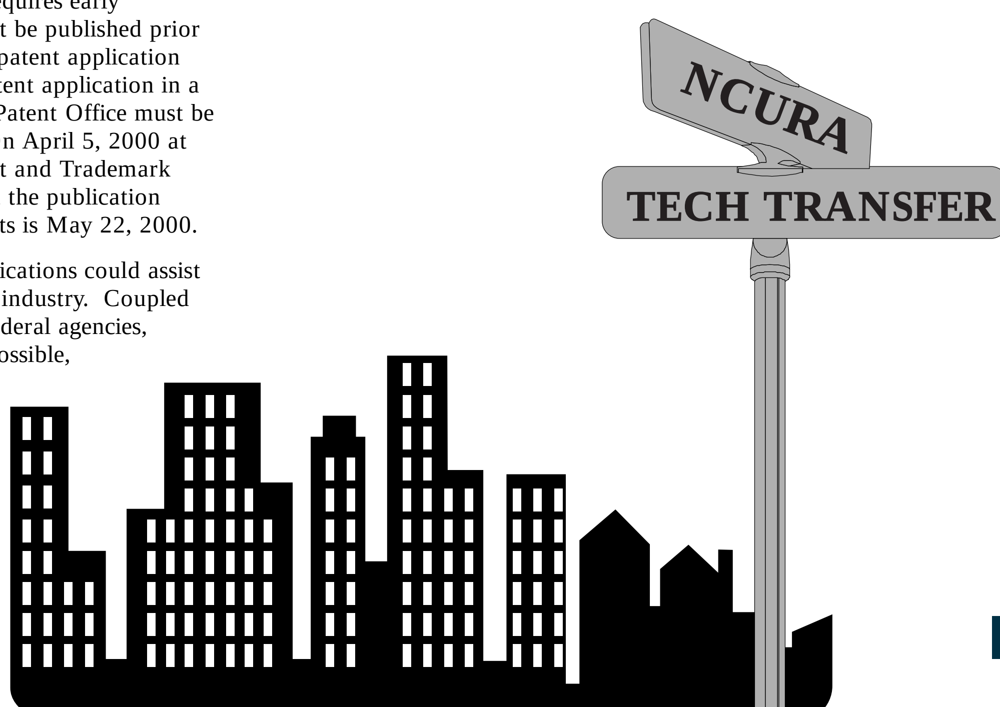
Requiring early publication of U.S. patent applications could assist research administrators when negotiating with industry. Coupled with universities' policies, guidance from the federal agencies, and the creator's desire to publish as soon as possible, this new patent law change will offer another opportunity to explain to industries, who would prefer to keep the technology from public disclosure, why it can't be done. It will also be important to inform the inventor of the18 month publication date so the inventor can publish the technology prior to the U.S. Patent Office's publication. Another potential benefit to universities in negotiating licenses is that the early publication requirement also provides a patent applicant a right to claim royalties on products sold prior to the issuance of a patent if the issued patent claims are substantially identical to the filed claims. It is not unusual to have lengthy conversations during negotiations with licensees as to why or why not royalties should be paid prior to the issuance of the patent. This revision in the patent law should help put closure on this discussion.

Effective May 29, 2000, the patent term of 20 years from the date of filing the U.S. patent application may be extended due to delays within the U.S. Patent Office. When the duration of a patent changed in 1995 from 17 years after issuance of the patent to 20 years from the filing date of the U.S. patent application, patent applicants in some cases have not had the full 17 year benefit of an issued patent because in many cases the patent is pending for more than 3 years in the patent office. The third change in the U.S. Patent Law provides a remedy to the patent applicant for the Patent Office's delay in the issuance of a patent. If the Patent Office fails to issue a first Office Action within 14 months or fails to respond within 4 months to other submissions by the applicant then a day is added to the duration of the patent. If the delays are due to the applicants failure to use reasonable efforts to prosecute the patent application then for each day of delay the patent term adjustment will be decreased. On March 31, 2000 in the Federal Register at pages 17215-17229 the Patent and Trademark Office published the notice of proposed rule making for the changes to the patent term. The deadline for comments is May 30, 2000.

The fourth change in the U.S. Patent Law has added optional reexamination procedures which were effective November 29, 1999. Under the old law, when a party requested the Patent Office to reexamine an issued patent, the party requesting such reexamination did not participate in the reexamination process. The new law permits the requestor to participate in the reexamination process. Unlike under the old law, the new law also permits the requestor to appeal any adverse decision of the reexamination to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences. It is unknown how many universities either request a reexamination or have its own issued patents reexamined. This change, however, makes it much easier to file a reexamination and universities may experience an increase in such actions.

In the next several months the U.S. Patent Office will finalize and publish its final rules implementing these changes. While nothing is anticipated to come as a surprise for universities, stay tuned.....

Ann Hammersla is the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



REGION I
New England

The calendar indicates that Spring is officially here, but the recent weather here in New England says something quite different. It's the middle of April and parts of New England received over a foot of snow this past week. Our Spring meeting from May 21st –24th on Cape Cod has come together and the program and registration information is posted to our Region I website. We are hoping for warm, sunny weather especially the golfers in the group. The program has been designed to offer a variety of interesting topics for all of our Region I attendees. There will be two workshops offered on Sunday afternoon followed by an opening reception. There will be two and one half days of concurrent sessions with special activities at the end of each day. It's the place to be in May.

Sally Tremaine did yeoman's work reorganizing and reworking our Region I By-Laws. The revised By-Laws were recently posted to the Region I website for review and approval. The voting was done electronically for the first time and went extremely well thanks to the group at the National Office. The By-Laws were approved and are now officially posted to the Region I website. Thanks to Sally for her work on this.

One final note of recognition is to acknowledge Steve Bernstein, UNH as a member of the national Nominating and Leadership Development Committee.

Hope to see you all on the Cape.

William M. Corbett, Jr. is the Region I Chair and Director of Research Administration, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

REGION III
Southeastern

The results are in. After a very close election, the Region III membership has elected a new Chairperson-Elect and Secretary/Treasurer for one-year terms during 2000-01. Phil Myers (Western Kentucky University), an NCURA member for six years, has been selected to serve as Chairperson-Elect for the region. Phil is Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs and Executive Director of the University Research Foundation Inc. at his institution. He has most recently served Region III as Chairperson of the Professional Development Committee.

The new Region III Secretary/Treasurer is Stephen Williams. An NCURA member since 1998, Stephen is Coordinator of the Office of Research Services at Wake Forest University. He is currently functioning as Chairperson of the region's Membership Committee. He is also serving at the national level as a member of the Program Committee for ERA V.

This year's election also included a ballot for the regional meeting site selection. As a result, the 2002 Region III spring meeting will be a joint meeting with Region V in San Antonio, Texas. The dates for the meeting are yet to be determined. Region V invited us to join them for a meeting in their region to reciprocate the offer we extended to them when we held a joint meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1997. The 2001 spring meeting will be held at the Lago Mar Resort in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, May 5-9.

Douglas Backman (Florida International University), Nominations and Elections Chairperson commented on the election's success. "The nomination and election process went well this year for Region III. We had a large number of nominees and a terrific final election response from the Region III members. I feel the elected candidates will represent and serve Region III outstandingly."

Dawn B. Stein is the Assistant Director in the Division of Sponsored Research and Training at the University of North Florida

REGION IV
Mid-America

This year NCURA Region IV and the Midwest Section of SRA have scheduled a joint spring meeting May 6-9 in Omaha, Nebraska. The meeting begins with a National Workshop titled "Scared Straight" on May 6 which will provide discussions of first hand experience with federal agency violation and how they acted to correct their situations. The workshop will also cover how to promote research ethics on your campus and provide insight in the role of the media when a violation occurs. Program co-chairs, Kathy Taggart, Creighton University and Tom Kormas, Children's Memorial Hospital have pulled together some of the best expertise from NCURA IV and the Midwest SRA for this year's program. Topics range from ERA and the FDP, to the OMB circulars, from mergers to communication and innovation, and from contracts and clinical trials to intellectual property. There will also be update sessions presented by NIH, NSF and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. And amazingly enough, Omaha has provided an aquatic site for the reception on Sunday night at the Omaha Zoo and Aquarium. Newcomers, please note that 5-6 Saturday night has been scheduled as a time for you to meet for dinner groups. We invite you to attend and meet other NCURA members.

Registration for the meeting is available on line at http://www.osp.uc.edu/ncura

Nominations have been made and we have full ballots for a number of regional positions this year. Ballots for Chair-Elect, Secretary and Member-at-Large were due for return by April 2, 2000. Candidates represent a wide variety of backgrounds and interests and we will all be interested to see who you select to represent Region IV.

Ann McGuigan is the University Research Administrator in the University Research Office at Illinois State University

REGION V
Southwestern

At the Region V meeting, Laura Wade (University of Texas, Arlington) will step down from her position as Chair. Laura was previously the chair of Region V in 1997 and 1998, and graciously agreed to take on this role again when Scott Smith resigned in December 1999 to accept a new position in Atlanta. Susan Krause (Baylor College of Medicine/Texas Children's Cancer Center) will replace Laura as Chair. Debbie Jennings (University of Oklahoma, Norman) is also completing her term as Secretary/Treasurer. Region V is very grateful for all of the hard work and dedication of both Laura and Debbie! A new Vice Chair and Secretary/Treasurer will be announced next week.

Region V is always looking for more volunteers! If you are not already an active member of NCURA—this is your chance! The new Vice Chair will want (and need!) a great deal of assistance in planning next year's regional meeting. Volunteer opportunities for next year's meeting include: presenting or moderating a session, participating on the program committee, assisting with registration, planning meals, organizing audio visual equipment and usage, designing the program, brochure or website and planning dinner groups and other logistics for the meeting. Please contact me if you would like to volunteer. We need your help!

Susan Krause is Chair, Region V and Director, Program Development Texas Children's Cancer Center and Hematology Service/Baylor College of Medicine

REGION VI
Western

The election results are in! Hal Gollos, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology, has been elected Chair of Region VI and takes office at the end of the Seattle Spring meeting. Terry Manns, CSU-Sacramento, is the Regional Secretary/Treasurer and Pat Hawk, U. Oregon and Susan Tank Lesser Loyola-Marymont U. are the new members of the Regional Advisory Committee. Congratulations! These members will do a terrific job for our region.They take office at the end of the Seattle Spring meeting. In addition, Linda Patton , U. of San Diego, has been appointed to the National Nominating and Leadership Development Committee.

Since this is my last regional column as Chair, I want to thank all of you for a great two years. I've learned a lot from all of you and it's been an exciting time for all NCURA members as we have moved to a new governance structure. We've also seen a tremendous growth in programs which enrich all of our professional lives. Thanks for all your time and effort on behalf of our regional organization.

Thank you.

Carol Zuiches is Chair of Region VI and Director, Office of Grant and Research Development, Washington State University

REGION VII
Rocky Mountain

By now we've all attended our Regional Meetings, (or wish we had for those who couldn't attend) and renewed our excitement about NCURA. I hope you all had a good time, and learned something along with it!

Region VII is now preparing for our election of officers. Time to bring in new faces to handle the administration of our little region. As always, we have a good pool of very qualified and dedicated people ready to step up and take charge!

For all of you have haven't gotten involved with the administration of NCURA, remember that your region needs your help. This is a great place to get involved in NCURA with very little risk.

Take the chance, step up and volunteer to help. The rewards from participating are immeasurable. The more you take part, the more you will get back. Friendships, professional relationships, contacts, advice, and of course that intangible of being a part of something special!

It's also time to start thinking of the annual meeting. We all have limits on where we can go during the year to get our professional development. Examine the preliminary program, and mark the dates in your planner!!! This will be an exceptional meeting, and you would be hard pressed to obtain the quality programming being offered in any other venue!

Remember too, that this is another chance to "connect" with others from the profession. You can meet with regional neighbors, those from across the country that you don't see any other time, and find new friends and colleagues. We are connected not only by our profession, but by many of our personal interests. If you truly participate in the annual meeting, I know you will find as I have, that our president's vision of "community" is alive and well in many ways we've never considered.

Look for more offerings from NCURA, from enhanced and expanded professional development opportunities to new ways to connect and converse. Interest-related bulletin boards, list serves, and other methods we've yet to envision. Join with us as we expand the connections to the NCURA community.

Brian Farmer is Chair, Region VII, and Manager, Grants & Contracts Finance Administration at the University of Idaho

...from the cover

42nd Annual Meeting Update

(*continued from page 1*)

forced to change at an unprecedented pace and this meeting will focus on the tools needed to support us in this process.

The second exciting piece of news is that Eleanor Clift and Tony Blankley, both regulars of the McLaughlin Group, have accepted our invitation to be our keynote speakers. Ms. Clift and Mr. Blankley, both accomplished political writers and speakers, will go "one on one" for NCURA. You can be sure the election will be a highlight, as well as matters directly pertaining to research administration. To learn more about this interesting and talented duo see the separate article on Eleanor Clift and Tony Blankley in this issue.

But back to the meat and potatoes - namely, the Program Committee's busy work of finalizing concurrent session and workshop topics, moderators, speakers and descriptions. The emerging Program is turning out to be quite balanced in offering sessions and workshops that address the core topics of research administration – what has always been the NCURA hallmark– and also those that are innovative and controversial.

Overall, the Committee will be offering an exceptional Program that will respond to the diverse interests of the meeting attendees. Program information currently is being entered into the Meeting Planner and soon will be made available for all members to view. Members then will be able to witness the finetuning that takes place in creating the final Program.

In addition to agonizing over the programmatic details, the Committee has also been working on selecting the banquet entertainment and the graphic design for the written Program. More on those details later.

Before I end let me introduce you to the 42nd Annual Program Committee.

Mary Husemoller, University of Nevada, Reno, *Co-chair*
Carol Alderson, NIH
Mike Anthony, Arizona State University
Cary Conover, Northern Arizona University
Sondra Ferstl, Texas Woman's University
Midge Gardner, Vanderbilt University
Hal Gollos, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology
Pat Hawk, University of Oregon
Norm Hebert, Brown University
Jean Humphries, Arizona State University East
Gail Mitchell, Northern Illinois University
Janie Morales-Castro, Arizona State University
Victor Peguero, University of Maryland
Joanna Rom, NSF
Garry Sanders, University at Albany, SUNY
Dick Seligman, California Institute of Technology
Mareda Weiss, University of Wisconsin - Madison
Samantha Westcott, UCLA
Regina White, University of Vermont

and the staff of the NCURA Office, with significant guidance and support from Kathy Larmett, Tara Bishop and George Breeden

JoAnn Moretti is Co-chair of the 42nd Annual Meeting and Director, Sponsored Programs Admin, Harvard Medical School Harvard University

Two More Good Reasons to Attend...

Eleanor Clift

Tony Blankley

If you're still trying to decide about whether or not to head to Washington, D.C. for this year's Annual Meeting, here's two more good reasons to attend: Eleanor Clift and Tony Blankley. Clift and Blankley have signed on to deliver NCURA's 42nd Annual Meeting Keynote Address. When you consider that this address will be presented on the day before our national election by two of our country's leading political analysts, your decision should be an easy one to make.

Eleanor Clift, is a contributing editor of Newsweek magazine. She reports on the White House, Washington, women in politics, and other issues. Formerly Newsweek's White House correspondent, Clift also served as Congressional and Political Correspondent for six years. She was a key member of the magazine's 1992 election team and followed Bill Clinton's campaign from the start. In June 1992, she was named Deputy Washington Bureau Chief.

Tony Blankley, is a weekly political columnist for The Washington Times. After serving for seven years as Press Secretary to Newt Gingrich, Blankley joined the staff of John F. Kennedy's George magazine. As a contributing editor, Blankley's "Between the Lines" features his inside-the-beltway insights. He appears regularly on CNN's Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer, as well as CNBC's Hardball with Chris Matthews. In addition, both Blankley and Eleanor Clift are regular panelists on the weekly McLaughlin Group.

This special keynote address is certain to be lively. In addition to hearing the predictions of these two veteran political analysts and how the election might affect the research community, we'll undoubtedly be treated to a "point - counter point" between them throughout their talk. And don't forget to bring along some questions, as you'll have the opportunity to submit them throughout this special presentation.

So, add these two good reasons to the stack you've already got and join us on Election Eve in Washington, DC!

Building NCURA's Neighborhoods

(*continued from page 1*)

Well, does NCURA have neighborhoods? Of course, the answer is yes but perhaps not in the most traditional perspective we might imagine. However, at our regional and national meetings, members do tend to cluster into groups, with which they identify and share commonality. With that in mind, we will begin adding support mechanisms to foster growth of NCURA's Neighborhoods.

Your enthusiasm and hard work will be vital in providing support for the NCURA Neighborhoods. I would envision that each neighborhood will determine just how much they want to grow and in what direction. In some cases we may not have all the expertise we might desire to truly grow the neighborhood to its most desirable state. In recognition of such, NCURA has secured relationships with a number of organizations that are extremely excited about participating in the NCURA Neighborhoods and the long term benefits for the profession. As we begin to craft our community vis-á-vis the neighborhood, a number of organizations such as AUTM, NACUA, and EDUCAUSE will provide assistance in this effort.

At the Financial Research Administration Conference in May, the first prototype of the NCURA Neighborhoods, targeted for that audience of attendees, will be unveiled. I look forward to your reaction as we transform the abstract notion of a neighborhood into something tangible.

I hope that you'll keep abreast of the construction progress in the NCURA Neighborhoods in the months ahead. You will be encouraged to join in as many of these neighborhoods as you desire. Please take this opportunity to contribute for your own personal benefit as well as your office, campus, NCURA and the entire research administration profession.

Nancy Wilkinson is NCURA's President and the Assistant Vice President for Research/Director, Sponsored Prgms at Emory University

"Oprah" Leaves OPERA

by Geoff Grant

Diana Jaeger

Diana Jaeger, Director, Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration (OPERA), NIH is leaving government service and research administration for even greater adventures. Diana, who has been known fondly by many as "Oprah of the OPERA" has decided to spend more time with family, church, music, and golf and not necessarily all in that order!

Diana has worked at NIH for 15 years, initially in what is now the National Center for Research Resources providing grants management support of the biomedical research support grants, instrumentation programs, and minority biomedical institutional support. In 1995 she became the Director, Division of Grants Policy and worked closely with the biomedical research community in formulating a variety of policies and procedures that helped enhance research while providing appropriate stewardship of public funds. Diana is known for her availability to help with anything from the most basic questions to some of the most complex and intractable problems of the day.

In June 1998 Diana became the Director, OPERA (after the "Maestro" left) and continued to demonstrate her understanding of the unique culture of university research administration while also representing NIH and its research programs. She is known for her wisdom, fairness, and ability to listen while negotiating an appropriate middle ground. As Director, OPERA, she chairs the Grants Management Advisory Committee and it has been during her tenure that NIH has produced the first NIH Grants Policy Statement in approximately 30 years. This document provides "on-line", expert guidance to thousands of research administrators around the country. Diana also implemented a certification program of NIH grants management staff that spells out requirements for academic and professional training as well as successful job performance through five levels of certification. This program has been extremely successful in providing even more consistent and professional grants administration throughout NIH. Diana also continued the tradition of excellent seminars in program and grants management at hosted locations around the country.

She has received many awards during her career, including the NIH Director's Award in 1994 and 1999 and being appointed to the Senior Executive Service in 1999.

Diana now joins her husband in "semi-retirement" where she looks forward to spending more time with their two daughters, one in college and one in high school. Both Diana and John are very active in their church, where they play the guitar and keyboards in a musical program that would rival the "Sole Source and the No Cost Extensions", dare we say that they play for the real "Soul Source!" They will continue to be active in a variety of church-related charities, including a "habitat for humanity" like activity with a sister church in rural Alabama. She hopes to keep working on her golf game and getting her score below 100 so it no longer looks like a NIH priority score!

We all wish she and her family well in their new adventures and extend our heartfelt thanks to Diana for all of her many contributions to university research administration!!

Geoff Grant is the Associate Vice President for Research Administration at Stanford University.

Carol Tippery, formerly Chief Grants Management Officer of the National Institutes of General Medical Sciences, has been appointed Deputy Director of OPERA.

ERA-Chicago: A Sneak Preview

by David Wright and Barbara Gray

Planning is in high gear for this summer's special interest conference in Electronic Research Administration, ERA V, scheduled for August 3-6, 2000, at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place and Convention Center in Chicago. With the trip to the Windy City fast approaching, session leaders and presenters, as well as program committee members, are busy putting the final touches on program offerings.

As this newsletter goes to press, suggestions for the "official" theme are flying between committee members across the Internet. Although we have not yet settled on the exact wording, the common denominator that emerged as we selected session topics is "bridging"—bridging the knowledge and communication gaps between research administrators and technical staff, between sponsored programs and central information technology offices, and between universities and sponsors, and bridging from the past to the future. Although we do not yet have the final theme words, we can offer you a sneak preview of some of the meeting offerings.

For Starters...

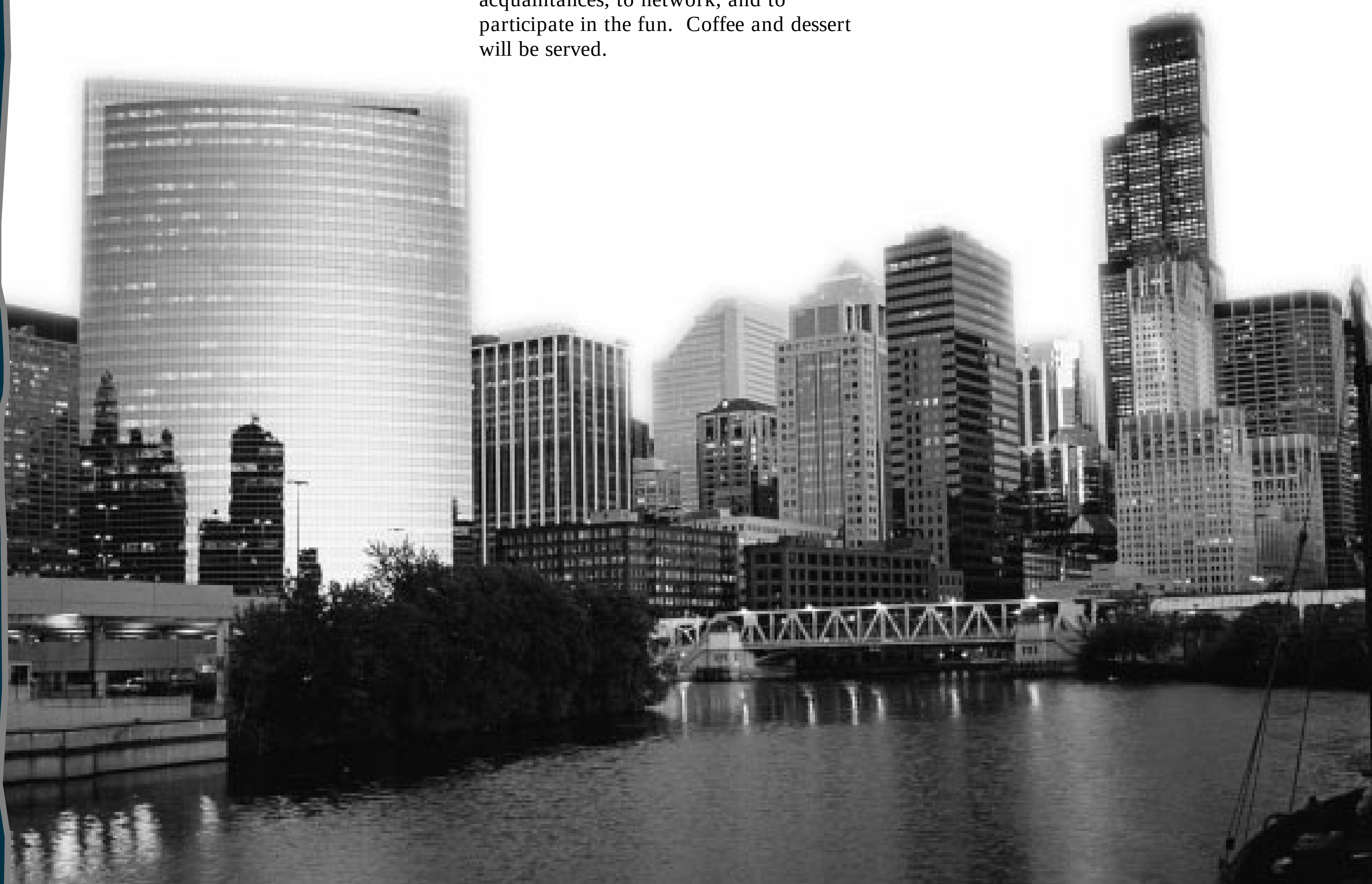
Observing tradition, we will once again offer a variety of high-quality, half-day workshops on Thursday afternoon, to be delivered by some of NCURA's best and brightest. Two of the workshops are the introductory sessions to ERA's new "threaded" topics and deal with planning for ERA and databases. Other workshops of interest to research administrators address building an ERA roadmap and building an ERA website. Finally, given our new venue and the rapid turnover of personnel, particularly on the technical side of research administration, we are also resurrecting and refreshing the "Research Administration Fundamentals for Techies" workshop.

A new and fun offering this year will be the "Sunset Starter Session" on Thursday evening. Here, first time ERA attendees can meet in an informal setting. A short introduction to ERA and suggestions on how to make the best of the meeting will be presented. Program committee members will be on hand to greet newcomers and answer any questions. ERA veterans are welcome to stop in, too, to meet newcomers, to renew old acquaintances, to network, and to participate in the fun. Coffee and dessert will be served.

Poster Presentations

ERA V will be a time to bridge—which includes sharing information and resources. Many institutions have developed ERA solutions, from the elementary to the complex, to deal with research administration problems on their campuses. If you have developed some type of ERA tool, no matter how simple you think it may be, chances are some other university could use your idea to solve the same or a similar problem.

We invite all NCURA members and all ERA attendees to bring information (on bits and pieces of paper suitable for mounting on a poster board) about ERA tools developed at their institutions. Concurrent with the Sunset Starter Session on Thursday evening will be a poster assembly session. You provide the information and artistic talent and NCURA will provide the poster board, construction paper, scissors, and glue. Posters will be prominently displayed during the meeting and then will be collected so that the information can be included in the ERA Cookbook. Poster artists are welcome to join in the festivities of the Sunset Starter Session.



A New Twist to ERA: The "Thread"

This year, the program committee is experimenting with "threaded" sessions. The intent is to offer sequenced sessions of varying types through which participants will move, beginning with general presentations and progressing to more specific and focused activities, some of which will involve hands-on application of the concepts and techniques learned. The two "threaded" topics for ERA V are planning for ERA and databases.

The ERA planning sequence begins with an introductory four-hour workshop on Thursday afternoon, which concentrates on the whys and hows of process and organizational reengineering. Attendees may then elect to participate in a case study of either a large or a small institution. Other sequenced topics include hands-on process mapping, making the case for ERA implementation on your campus, and integrating systems. The thread concludes with an open forum on Sunday morning where ERA planning and implementation veterans will address any yet-unanswered questions.

Despite sounding like a technical offering, the database thread is actually designed for the research administrator who has data collection, manipulation, and reporting needs and must know how to express those needs to technical staff. The thread begins with a "database primer" workshop in which participants will learn to define the dataspace, consider database design issues, and the like. Sequenced sessions dealing with identifying user requirements, communicating data needs to technical staff, and creating ERD diagrams and field definitions will follow. A special two-part laboratory on creating a Microsoft Access database is also included. For those participants who are dually skilled in research administration and computer technology (e.g., have a relatively high level of database and programming expertise), a second two-part technical laboratory on connecting databases to the Web is an option. (Note that the "connecting databases" lab is also appropriate for techies independent of the database thread.) The database thread will conclude on Sunday morning with a look at "the many faces of reporting."

The Solutions Showcase

Not up to building your own ERA solution? Then the Solutions Showcase is where you need to go to find out what products and services can be purchased or licensed to meet your ERA needs. To give you the opportunity to comparison shop, vendor products and systems will be showcased on Friday and Saturday in fifty-minute time slots. The Solutions Showcase is intended for both those in the market for a particular type of product and those who are just curious about the latest technological advancements being made in the for-profit sector. Of course, vendors will still have booths in the central exhibit hall, and attendees will have plenty of opportunity during breaks and networking time to speak individually with vendor representatives.

And Still More...

In addition to the threaded sessions, ERA V includes a potpourri of other offerings—some general and some technical—for conferees. General sessions will deal with such topics as ERA training programs, audit issues related to ERA, technical staffing, telecommuting, system security for the layperson, infrastructure issues, and small institution issues. We will also hear about the latest ERA activities of the Federal Demonstration Partnership and will see demonstrations of NSF's FastLane system, the NIH and Federal Commons, and the Foundation Commons. Hands-on laboratories will be offered on NSF proposal preparation, introduction to the NIH Commons, introduction to Adobe 4.0, advanced Adobe, and, as mentioned above, creating an Access database and connecting databases to the Web. Technical personnel will find a new two-part lab this year on Javascript, as well as technical sessions on system security and EDI, HTML, and XML.

With a new look and a new venue—and no increase in registration fee—ERA V is a meeting not to be missed. So check out full program details at http://www.ncura.edu, register and make your travel reservations early, and get ready for a fact- and fun-filled conference in the great City of Chicago!

ERA Program Committee members are Barbara Gray (College of Charleston) and David Wright (The University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston), Co-Chairs, and Bruce Derr (Emory University), Mary Bet Dobson (Turner Consulting Group), Rojielynn Fay (University of California, San Diego), Ken Forstmeier (Pennsylvania State University), Jon Peterson, Technical Coordinator (Colorado State University), Samantha Westcott (University of California, Los Angeles), Pamela Webb (Northwestern University), Cindy White (Washington University, St. Louis) and Stephen Williams (Wake Forest University).

Barbara H. Gray Director of Research and Grants Administration College of Charleston and David Wright Director of Research Information Systems University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston are Co-Chairs of ERAV.

ERA V is scheduled for August 3-6, 2000, at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place and Convention Center in *Chicago.*

F&A Video Conference Lights Up the Screen

Interesting, entertaining, thought provoking – these may not be words that you would normally use to describe indirect (F&A) costs. But when this topic is taught by the team of Jane Youngers, Mary Ellen Sheridan and Jerry Fife, these descriptors are right on.

The "cast" of Indirect Costs for the Lay Audience (l to r) Mary Ellen Sheridan, Jerry Fife and Jane Youngers.

In the third of NCURA's series of videoconferences for this year, the presenters tackled the broad, and often confusing, area of indirect costs. The videoconference, held on March 7, was geared primarily for those that wanted a comprehensive overview – or perhaps, didn't want to know much about indirect costs at all, but conceded that this understanding is critical for any research administrator. The presenters' logical, informative "indirect costs for dummies" approach worked extremely well, even for someone like myself who was a little apprehensive about sitting through four hours of this stuff. There was plenty for the novice, but even the more experienced research administration professional walked away with new knowledge and insight.

Jane Youngers, Director of Grants and Contracts at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and host of the videoconference, started off the program with an introduction to indirect costs, including a brief history, the basic regulatory framework and current hot spots. Jane also discussed the important concept of allowability. Mary Ellen Sheridan, Assistant Vice President for Research at the University of Chicago, addressed "where does the rate come from?" Later in the conference, Mary Ellen discussed the timely topic of the impact of cost sharing on the rate, as well as space surveys and equipment inventory. Jerry Fife, Director, Office of Contract and Grant Accounting, at Vanderbilt University, presented the nuts and bolts of calculating the rate and gave an overview of effort reporting. The conference concluded with a group discussion of other interesting topics, including the negotiation phase of the rate agreement, effects of waivers and recharge centers. Many schools called in with questions and comments and were not disappointed. This cast of experts was able to assist and offer valuable advice to the many callers. The presenters should be acknowledged for providing an interesting and dynamic conference.

Over 80 universities signed up to downlink this program. Several thousand attendees participated in the broadcast and reviews have been very positive.

Hot Topics Video Conference
May 18, 2000

You can still register for this exciting offering!

The panel for the broadcast includes:

- **Kim Moreland, Moderator**
  Director, Contract Negotiations and Research Compliance, University of Kansas
- **Milton Thomas Cole**
  Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs For Research and Sponsored Programs, Villanova University
- **John Fini**
  Financial Director, Massachusetts General Hospital
- **Cheryl-Lee Howard**
  Assistant Dean for Research Administration, Homewood Division, The Johns Hopkins University
- **Diana Jaeger**
  Director, Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration, National Institutes of Health
- **Charles Paoletti**
  Executive Director, Acquisition Management, Office of Naval Research
- **Joanna Rom**
  Director, Division of Grants and Agreements, National Science Foundation

Topics included in this program are:

Topics: *The Best of the Best*	*Presenter*
1. Electronic Research Administration: A Look at Some Broad Issues	*Chuck Paoletti*
2. NSF Fastlane: A Status Report and Plans for the Future	*Joanna Rom*
3. NIH Modular Grants: What We've Learned the First Year	*Diana Jaeger*
4. Public Law 106-107: Its Impact on Federal Agencies and Universities	*Chuck Paoletti*
5. Research Compliance: A Growth Area	*Cheryl Howard*
6. Freedom of Information Act: Implementation and Impact	*Kim Moreland*
7. Conflict of Interest: Plans for the NIH/NSF Common Policy	*Diana Jaeger*
8. Cost-Sharing: Where is it Going Now?	*Joanna Rom*
9. Smaller Institutions: Issues in the Development of Research Programs	*Milton Cole*
10. Academic Medical Centers: The Financial Investment in Research	*John Fini*

We are still accepting questions at hot_topics@ncura.edu

As always, there will be a toll-free 800 telephone number for participants to phone in additional questions throughout the broadcast. For this last broadcast in the series, we intend to have the phone lines open for longer periods of time to allow for as many questions as possible.

Join us for Hot Topics: The Best of the Best
Register today at www.ncura.edu

Simplifying Federal Grant Management: A High Priority

By Joseph Kull

In the past two years, the Administration has tackled the Government's biggest management challenges, designated Priority Management Objectives (PMO's), through a concentrated effort with agencies to achieve significant improvements in these areas. The President's 2001 Budget identified 24 such PMO's, half in the general management category (applicable to all Federal agencies) and half agency specific. PMO number 11 relates to streamlining and simplifying Federal grants management.

PMO 11 stems from the requirements of Public Law (P.L.) 106-107, affectionately known as the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999, and commits the Administration to making it easier for universities and other organizations to apply for and report progress on Federal grants. The Act requires the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to lead agencies in: 1) streamlining application and reporting forms used in the administration of grants; 2) providing uniform administrative requirements for use in all Federal grant programs; and 3) providing an electronic option for the administration grants. As part of the Administration's first step in this initiative, OMB and the agencies recently completed and sent to Congress an inventory of the application and reporting forms used in approximately 1000 Federal grant programs across the government. In the next phase, inter-agency working groups are expected to review these forms and move toward more consolidation and streamlining of forms. During this phase, agencies will be encouraged to also seek input from their grantees about which programs are in most need of our attention, and to suggest particular aspects of the grant-making process that should receive immediate attention. OMB will report to Congress in May 2001 on the progress of this initiative, as well as any required statutory changes to further streamline grant administration.

Comments made at a recent meeting with all grant-making agencies discussing P.L. 106-107 highlighted the different agency requirements and indicated not all grants should use the same application form. This is due to both the variety of recipients served, and the vast differences in the purposes of the grants. For example, the amount of information necessary to assure accountability from a State may be quite different than the amount necessary to get the same assurance of performance from a small non-profit organization. Along the same lines, we don't believe an application for highway funds should be forced to have the same characteristics as an application for biomedical research funding.

OMB has also asked the agencies to review any terms and conditions they attach to their awards that are not already covered by A-102 and A-110. These "extra" terms and conditions will be reevaluated to ascertain their requirements by specific program statutes. In instances where terms and conditions are applicable government-wide, they may be added to A-102 or A-110. In addition, OMB, along with the A-110 inter-agency task force, will review and evaluate the single terms and conditions applicable to research programs (drafted by the Federal Demonstration Partnership) for potential improvements.

OMB continues to support the efforts of the Inter-Agency Electronic Grants Committee and its Federal Commons project. We believe their concept to provide a single point of entry for grantees appears central to a government-wide effort to use electronic processing in the administration of agencies' grant programs. OMB currently is looking at management alternatives that ensure participation by all grant-making agencies and that provide necessary funding. Input from the research administration community will be useful in shaping a productive and cost effective grants system. We encourage your continued participation.

Joseph Kull is the Deputy Controller, Office of Federal Financial Management, Office of Management and Budget

Federal Folks on the Move

On behalf of the NCURA membership, the editors express congratulations to Joseph Kull on his recent move from the National Science Foundation to the Office of Management and Budget. During his 15 years of service at NSF, the last eight as the Foundation's Chief Financial Officer and Director of its Office of Budget, Finance and Award Management (BFA), Joe has made countless highly informative presentations at national and regional NCURA meetings. Joe now directs OMB's Office of Federal Financial Management and Budget, which is responsible for developing and implementing government-wide strategies, policies and requirements for federal financial management. Many of the requirements for federal grants management fall under the auspices of this office.

Given Joe's departure from NSF, we also wish to recognize other notable shifts within the National Science Foundation. Mr. Thomas Cooley, Executive Officer, Office of Budget, Finance and Award Management is serving as Acting BFA Director and Chief Financial Officer. Effective April 3, 2000 Joanna Rom, Director, Division of Grants and Agreements, has agreed to assume the duties of the BFA Executive Officer. This position assists in coordinating BFA activities related to award systems and management, GPRA, document clearance, strategic planning and liaison with NSF customers, directorates and staff offices on BFA related matters. Joanna is also a long-standing member of NCURA and actively participates at national and regional meetings. We wish her well in her newly appointed responsibilities. During this period, Brian Mannion will be Acting Director, Division of Grants and Agreements.

Finally within NSF, Donald McCrory has been appointed Deputy Chief Financial Officer in the Directorate for Budget, Finance and Award Management and Director, Division of Financial Management. Donald McCrory replaces Albert Muhlbauer who retired from federal service this past October.

SPIRIT OF OPENNESS MARKS NCURA COMMITTEES

New Governance Put Into Action

By Pamela Webb, Secretary, NCURA

Following passage of the By-laws revisions in December 1999, transition to the revised governance structure has been proceeding smoothly and rapidly.

Key to implementation of the revised governance structure has been the population of NCURA's three Standing Committees: Nominating and Leadership Development, the Professional Development Committee, and the Financial Management Committee.

The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee is responsible for the development of leaders within NCURA, overseeing the selection of candidates for national officer positions, and management of NCURA's awards and recognition programs.

The Professional Development Committee is the lead entity responsible for setting the agenda for professional development programming and publications of the organization.

The purpose of the Financial Management Committee is to provide financial advice to the Officers and Board of NCURA. The committee will focus primarily, but not exclusively, on national issues such as reviewing the budget and yearly financial statements, setting fiscal policy, managing investments, developing long-term financial strategies, and the identification and assessment of potential new sources of income.

Membership of the FY 2000 Committees was designed to facilitate a smooth transition between the past governance structure and the new; the committees have now all been populated with a combination of members returning for a second year of national committee service and a host of newly selected individuals. The novel approach deployed in the recruitment and selection of the new individuals for these committees represents one of the first major embodiments of the newly revised governance structure and marks a milestone in NCURA's evolution. So, what was this novel approach?

In February 2000, every member of NCURA was offered an opportunity to respond to a national electronic "Call for Volunteers." Any member who wanted to be considered for appointment to either the Professional Development Committee or the Financial Management Committee was asked to express their interest via email self-nomination. Interested members were also asked to provide a brief statement describing any special ways that their skills, talents, background or expertise would be of particular value to the committee in which they were interested. If desired, they could also submit their resume. The response to this initial "Call for Volunteers" was immediate and gratifying. Volunteers emerged from all types of institutions, with various backgrounds and skills, and with diverse levels of experience in the profession and with NCURA. A number of members volunteered using this mechanism who had not been previously identified under traditional nomination processes.

Following receipt of self-nomination materials, a subset of the respective committees reviewed the applicants and selected a pool of finalists for consideration by the Board. The Committees were asked to bring before the Board at least twice the number of finalists as there were slots available. In advance of the Board Meeting, the statements and resumes of the finalists were made available to the Board for review on a private web site. After having an opportunity at the meeting to discuss qualifications and committee needs, the Board then voted to select the new Committee members. A master list of individuals who volunteered but were not selected has also been created to facilitate taking advantage of the skills and interests of these members on upcoming Committees and Task Forces.

Under the revised By-laws the membership of the third standing committee, Nominating and Leadership Development, is selected using a different mechanism. This committee is chaired by the Immediate Past President of NCURA and is slated to include a member from each region of NCURA.

Beginning this year, each Region was asked to recommend two names to be considered when the Board decides the membership of this important committee. As was the case for the other committees, the Board voted to select the new members following an opportunity at the Board meeting to discuss qualifications of nominees and the overall needs of the committee. Continuity is important on this Committee as well, so some of the members selected this year were individuals who began service on the Nominating Committee last year and had been originally appointed for a two year term. In these cases, their Regions will begin recommending names for consideration next year. Although every region is represented on this Committee, its members serve the nominating and leadership development needs of the organization as a whole.

Congratulations are due to the following members of NCURA, each of whom has been selected to serve on a Standing Committee this year:

NOMINATING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Cheryl Lee Howard, (Chair)
The Johns Hopkins University

Steven Bernstein, University of New Hampshire

Garrett R. Sanders, University at Albany, SUNY

S. Kent Walker, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Cordell Overby, Michigan State University

Linda Patton, University of San Diego

Judy L. Fredenberg, University of Montana

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Regina H. White, (*Chair*)
University of Vermont

John Carfora, (*Vice-Chair*)
Dartmouth

Paula Burkhart, University of Oregon

Jim Dahl, City University of NY

Jan Fox, Texas Christian University

Ernest Johnson, Penn State

Bob Killoren, Penn State (ex-officio)

Erin Lindsay, Cal Tech
(Evaluation Coordinator)

Ann Powell, University of New Mexico

Catherine Thurman,
Florida International University

Pam Whitlock, University of North Carolina

Carol Willeke, Miami University, Ohio

Rose Yates, Oakwood College

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

F. John Case, (*Chair*)
University of North Carolina

Bonny Seward, SUNY Research Fdn.

Mareda Weiss, University of Wisconsin, Madison

Pat Fitzgerald, MIT

Ed Herran, Indiana University

Jim Bookout, Florida State U

Charles Ells, NCURA National Office

Pamela A. Webb is NCURA's Secretary and Director, Office of Research & Sponsored Programs, Chicago Campus Northwestern University

NCURA 2000 Calendar of Education and Events

May 9-11
Financial Research Administration (FRA) Conference
Nashville, TN

May 18
Live Video Satellite Conference, Part IV of the 1999-2000 Subscription Series
Hot Topics: The Best of the Best
Broadcast live from Atlantic Studio in Washington, D.C.

May 21-24
Region I Spring Meeting
Hyannis, MA

June 14-16
Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration
FULL
Madison, WI

August 3-6
ERA V
Chicago, IL

August 21-23
Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration
San Diego, CA

November 5
Workshop 2000
Hilton Washington, Washington, DC

November 6-8
42nd Annual Meeting
Hilton Washington, Washington, DC

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES:

July/August 2000 Issue

Submission of Articles: July 7, 2000
Space Reservation for Ads: July 7, 2000
Submission of Display Ads: July 14, 2000

NCURA Announces Publication of Three New Micrographs

Three new publications join NCURA's long list of highly useful micrographs and monographs. Two focus on financial concerns. The first, Elizabeth Mora's "Basics of Cost Accounting Standards", is an 8 page micrograph addressing the broad range of topics from "What Are the Cost Accounting Standards?" to "What Happens If Your Institution Changes Its Practices?" Harvard's Mora also provides an update on the status of her institution's DS-2. The publication, therefore, serves both as a primer for those less familiar with the basic issues of CAS and a reference for individuals grappling with the Standards on a daily basis. Mora has been very active in NCURA, serving as workshop faculty during the 1999 Annual Meeting and addressing the many research administrators participating in NCURA's recent live telecast on cost sharing issues.

NCURA's Treasurer, F. John Case, is author of "Facilities and Administrative Costs in Higher Education". This much anticipated publication covers all aspects of F&A, including how to develop a rate, types of federal facilities and administrative rates, why different institutions have different rates, and much more. In addition to his role as Treasurer, John serves as team leader for NCURA's well-known "Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration", is a member of NCURA's Board of Directors, and is the new Executive Director of the Office of Contracts and Grants at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

In contrast, in NCURA's third new micrograph, "The Role of Research Administration" is aimed chiefly at the lay audience. Beginning with the historical roots of our profession, this comprehensive publication moves on to explain the diverse functional components of research administration. The publication benefits from the contributions of eight authors: Kenneth L. Beasley, Butler University; Julie B. Cole, Wake Forest University; Anne D. Dick, Case Western Reserve University; Steve Erickson, Boston College; Cheryl-Lee Howard, The Johns Hopkins University; Julie T. Norris, MIT and Tom Wilson of Baylor College of Medicine. Make sure you have several copies readily available to hand out to those asking "What does your office do?"

Writing quality publications such as these requires considerable time and effort - more than many of us realize. We are deeply indebted to the contributions of these talented colleagues. An order form for any or, even better, all of these new publications is printed on page 22 of this Newsletter and on the NCURA web site at www.ncura.edu.

The National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA), founded in 1959, is an organization of individuals with professional interest in problems and policies relating to the administration of research, education and training activities at colleges and universities.

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Writing Successful Science Proposals: A Review

by Mike (Spanky) McCallister

Writing Successful Science Proposals. Andrew J. Friedland and Carol L. Folt. New Haven & New York: Yale University Press, 2000. 171 pages. $12.95.

Friedland and Folt refer to their book as a primer - and that is exactly what it is. They explain that this book grew from graduate courses in proposal development they have taught at Dartmouth over the last several years; its organization and writing style clearly come from the classroom. This isn't a criticism. Research administrators will be able to tutor themselves easily from this book, as well as adapting much of its content for training sessions. Plus, this book can be a valuable "conceptual review" before leading a workshop for investigators who are planning proposals to NSF, NIH, EPA, and other science agencies.

Most chapters include suggested exercises that investigators and research administrators can use as resources to build training skills. Although presented as something the reader can use for self-paced teaching, these exercises would be more useful in a group or class setting. In fact, this reviewer suggests that this book would be best used as intended— one of several texts supporting a course for graduate students or novice faculty. But it is also a powerful resource for the research administrator who might not have experience with science proposals and it belongs on the bookshelf with the other standard proposal guides.

The proposal format discussed is based on the National Science Foundation Grant Proposal Guide (GPG 1994), although differences in format for other agencies are mentioned. The first three chapters are similar to most proposal writing guides, discussing writing style, audience, and related topics. Starting with Chapter 4, however, the book focuses on science proposals designed for submission to the major federal sponsors. Beginning with Chapter 7, "Objectives and Hypotheses: An Exhaustive List is Exhausting," the book treats science proposal components step by step. There are helpful outlines for subsections of the proposal and considerable discussion of how the research plan can be organized to present different types of studies. As topics are introduced and discussed the authors frequently cross-reference other chapters in the book, which will help the proposal writer understand the often-repetitive nature of proposal writing. Excellent examples taken from actual research proposals are used to illustrate many proposal subsections.

At several places in the book, the authors discuss issues of professionalism. They provide a very clear discussion of who is a collaborator, who might be considered a co-investigator, and who might be a co-author. For a young writer, understanding when a person is making suggestions and when one is making a material contribution to the research project is often unclear. This discussion is very well presented, short and to the point, and will help many young investigators as they learn how to establish professional relationships with other investigators. The final chapter is devoted to ethics in research — the ethics of accepting funds and the attendant responsibilities of doing quality research, spending grant funds responsibly, and obtaining and reporting honest findings. This topic is rarely discussed in proposal development guides and it's a welcome and important feature.

There are some areas in which this book could be improved, particularly for those likely to use it in developing proposals to NSF. There are only two vague references to FASTLANE and no mention of the planned mandatory use of FASTLANE for all NSF proposals this coming fall. While there are many very good suggested exercises, most would benefit by being led by a knowledgeable instructor.

Many of the exercises also would benefit from a supply of recent previously submitted science proposals for learners to use as they work through the training activities. Finally, there are only one or two vague references to institutional services, such as those that would come from a research administration office. While this doesn't affect the usefulness of this book, it is an indication that the writers are among those who don't know who we are or what we do.

Despite these few shortcomings, this is a very useful book to use for teaching graduate classes, designing proposal writing workshops and as a resource for preaward research administrators who work with faculty to develop science proposals. And it's a bargain compared to many other proposal writing primers. What a deal!

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