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Education:

Bachelor of Music - Baldwin-Wallace College
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1. Give us a brief overview of your professional career and how you ended up in your current position.

I was introduced to research administration, beginning with a temporary job that turned into a career spanning three decades and three universities. I worked at the University of Cincinnati, the University of Miami and currently the University of Maryland Baltimore. I started out typing grant applications and moved into proposal and budget development, and post-award management. Once I joined UMB in 1991, I moved into central administration and gained a whole new perspective. Three years ago, I became the Director of Research Policy in the Research and Global Health Initiatives Section of the Office of Research and Development.

2. What are your current responsibilities and what are the most challenging aspect(s) of your current position?

I have recently been creating new policies to support the University of Maryland Baltimore's in-country operations which cover many continents and countries. It is an exciting challenge to address the issues of field office operation management and create specific policies for such things as establishing foreign bank accounts, petty cash management and procurement. We are working to develop policies that are robust

enough to meet sponsor compliance requirements and yet flexible enough to address many different kinds of programs.

As Director of Research Policy at UMB I focus on three major areas: training and communication; export control and review; and policy development for global health initiatives. I manage the UMB International Collaborations' website which is always evolving. My goal is a user-friendly site for international in-country programs and partners, as well as our visiting scientists and UMB faculty.

http://www.ord.umaryland.edu/international_collaborations/index.html

3. What are the key qualities required in your position?

In my opinion you need a broad understanding of research administration – including the department and central administration levels. You need to be able to work with all kinds of people, both domestic and abroad – faculty, staff, and attorneys. You also need to know and understand key regulations and policies and be able to pare them down to their essence and core. I believe you need to be a facilitator to make things work.

4. You recently developed a training program that you generously shared with NCURA. How has that program been used?

The training program was developed at the request of one of our PEPFAR programs. The first trainings that we presented were directed to the financial administrators who are managing the field offices. These addressed the Federal circulars in general and some specific issues such as property management and record retention. The training that I shared was developed for our junior faculty who are primarily working in overseas operations and who wanted guidance on proposal budget development. In addition, our Baltimore grant managers wanted us to address the proposal timeline and approval process, interpreting proposal instructions and so forth. We presented to just one of a number of UMB's international programs, and I expect that we will offer this session to other groups of faculty and grant managers, and eventually develop an on-line version. The powerpoint can be found at

http://www.ncura.edu/content/regions_and_neighborhoods/neighborhoods/international/international_resources.php

5. What are the similarities and dissimilarities of administering domestic and international programs?

There are a lot of similarities because we are all abiding by the same US regulations and policies. But with international programs you need to understand such things as international ethics reviews, currency conversions and fluctuations, local laws and customs that could impact your program. There are other things to consider such as different expenses you might not have domestically, and you need to learn to plan ahead.

It is very important to plan for program closures and sustainability – most international programs plan to transfer program services and education delivery to a local partner organization so you do not leave behind a gap.

6. What do you see are the upcoming challenges in international research administration over the next 5 years?

I think an ongoing challenge for international research administration is communication. The challenge as a research administrator is to provide faculty with critical information to avoid unwelcome surprises -- for example, incorrectly establishing a bank account; resolving export control issues; budgeting expenses appropriately. This type of advice and assistance helps make their programs efficient. I believe that as research administrators we need to think proactively and involve the right people up front. This will continue to be future challenge as more people engage in international projects.