Are you making the best use of your time?

ALSO INSIDE:
50th Annual Meeting Photo Review
With 2009 upon us, it is only natural to reflect upon the passage of time, both in a general sense and within our profession. To that end, it is entirely appropriate that “Time” is the special theme of this issue.

Time is a precious commodity, one research administrators are keenly aware of. This issue contains several articles looking at time from practical and philosophical angles. Jennifer Shambrook’s article discusses the critical connection between time management and stress management, and how a healthy lifestyle is an important additional factor in increasing productivity and reducing stress. Shelley Hesselton-Mangan’s article on time management for the biomedical research administrator talks about best practices at the department level to increase productivity and reduce stress and frustration. Beth Seaton provides a thoughtful discourse on managing time at a predominantly undergraduate institution (PUI). Another important issue connected with Time, effort reporting, is addressed by John Caruso and Naomi Schrag in their article.

While this issue focuses on Time, it is important to remember that other issues matter. One such issue is American innovation in an international economy. Robert Atkinson and Howard Wial argue for the creation of a federal National Innovation Foundation (NIF) to spur and focus greater American innovation. Another issue related to innovation, University-Industry partnerships, is discussed by Tyler Thompson and I. Lastly, the Government-University-Industry Research Roundtable (GUIRR, part of the National Academies) recently approved a new working group studying international research collaborations; Bob Killoren, John Carfora, and I provide an update on that project. Innovation, U/I partnerships, and international research collaborations are intimately connected topics.

As 2009 is the 50th anniversary year of NCURA, upcoming issues will occasionally contain articles written by pioneers in our field. The first one, by Ann (Nancy) Greenberg, is part history lesson and part reflection. A wonderful read, all research administrators should take time to read what she has to say. Technical proficiency is important, but having historical understanding is equally important. In a way, her article is the perfect complement to the Time-specific articles in this issue.

As this is Bob Lowman’s last issue as a co-Editor, it is only appropriate to publicly acknowledge the hard work and thought he put into the Magazine over the last three years. The Magazine is much better as a result of his leadership and vision. Thank you, Bob.

With best wishes for a happy and prosperous 2009,

James Casey
Co-Editor
Dear Colleagues:

Wow! As I look back on 2008, I can’t help but think “what an amazing year!”. We have accomplished so much—new programming, new publications, record breaking attendance at meetings, and increasing membership. The year seems to have flown by!

Let me start by congratulating the volunteers who put in so much time and effort to make the 50th Annual Meeting, “Celebrating the Science: Supporting the Scientist”, the amazing event that it was. New and innovative sessions and workshops, science presentations, making new friends and meeting up with old ones, and a retrospective of NCURA’s 50 years of support to the profession of research administration make this truly a landmark event.

For me the year started with the winter Board of Directors meeting. This is the initial brainstorm meeting for the year where the incoming president sets forth their plans for the coming year. A lot was accomplished—we reviewed and fine-tuned NCURA’s long range plans and set some new activities in motion. One key determination of the Board was the need to survey the membership to find out if NCURA’s programming (e.g., topics, methods of delivery, timing, etc.) is still current and relevant to the members. The survey was conducted in the fall and has been forwarded to the Professional Development Committee for review and recommendation to the Board for further action.

As a means to grow the skills of our already talented trainers, NCURA solicited the services of an external consulting firm to customize two workshops for NCURA. Both workshops revolve around the concept of advancing the skills of existing trainers in advanced presentation and adult learning techniques. The programs were unveiled at the 50th Annual Meeting—one targeted for NCURA traveling workshop faculty, and the other available to the general membership as a full-day workshop. The workshops were a great success and we look forward to offering them again in 2009.

Under past President Laura Wade’s leadership, NCURA began planning a new type of conference—one that would bring together chief campus research administrators and their vice presidents for research. The NCURA Senior Leadership Summit was held the Saturday before the 50th Annual Meeting; 60 participants representing 30 different institutions had a one day opportunity to discuss with their peers the overarching and long-range issues facing our institutions. It was a great success and kudos go out to Bob Kiloren and his program committee, who were the chief architects of the summit.

As I mentioned in the previous issue of NCURA Magazine, I had the privilege of attending several conferences this year: FRA IX (Financial Research Administration) and PRA III (Pre-Award Research Administration) were very well received. Attending the regional spring meetings was a great pleasure, and it gave me a chance to experience each region’s own “personality”.

Of particular interest to me is the strengthening of our international relationships, given that so many of our institutions enter into collaborations with foreign entities. Toward this end I was fortunate to be able to attend the annual meeting of the European Association of Research Managers and Administrators, as well as the biennial meeting of the International Network of Research Management Societies. Attendance at each allowed me to build upon the work of previous NCURA leaders in strengthening our ties abroad for the purpose of facilitating exchanges of information and programming.

NCURA’s Leadership Convention was very well attended this last September and brought together NCURA’s national and regional leadership to discuss the challenges we are currently facing and to find solutions. Several new ideas were developed and are in the process of implementation as we move into 2009.

NCURA put out a second survey this year—one targeted at finding out how many of our colleagues are intending to retire in the next five years, including whether there are succession plans in place to replace the skills and knowledge that would be lost to the profession once those individuals retire. The results were surprising and in some ways disturbing. NCURA will be making the result of this survey available to the membership in the near future. I believe the survey’s results will be very useful to our institutions as we make short and long term plans.

One of the things that constantly amazes me about NCURA members is their dedication to the organization and to their fellow members. Think about it—none of the volunteers are paid by NCURA for the training and other services they provide on NCURA’s behalf. And yet, on the face of it, the reward for doing a good job is “thank you”, and likely a request to volunteer on another project. However, there’s so much more to it than that! I have made long-lasting friendships with other NCURA members who I may see only once or twice a year. These are people for whom I would help out in whatever way I could without a second thought, and I know they would do the same for me. NCURA members have the unique ability to build a sense of community and this is what I believe makes the organization and its members, so special. My time with NCURA has been an incredible experience.

There are some challenging times ahead, both for NCURA and our institutions, and the NCURA leadership is already hard at work on new programming and ways to modify current programming to meet those challenges. I know that NCURA President Denise Clark, and Vice President/President-elect Dave Richardson are up to this task, and I look forward to working with them and the rest of the NCURA national and regional leadership in the coming year.

Wishing you a successful and productive year;

David Mayo
NCURA Immediate Past President

David Mayo is the Director of Sponsored Research at the California Institute of Technology.
NCURA Hosts First Senior Leadership Summit

NCURA HAD A DREAM! BRING TOGETHER CHIEF RESEARCH OFFICERS AND SENIOR RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS FOR A DAY OF THOUGHT AND DISCUSSION ON A TOPIC OF CRITICAL NATIONAL IMPORTANCE TO SEE IF NEW IDEAS AND ACTION PLANS EMERGE.

But that wasn’t all: NCURA wanted the CROs and SRAs to come together as teams from the same institutions. Bring together an institution’s vice president/vice chancellor of research and the head of the sponsored programs office and give them a chance to spend quality time together networking with similar teams from across the county.

Well, it happened and by all measures with great success!

On Saturday, November 1, 2008, senior research leadership teams from 30 institutions across the country came together at the Washington Hilton, just prior to NCURA’s 50th anniversary meeting, for a Summit on “aligning services, resources, and institutional mission to enhance faculty research productivity and competitiveness.”

The keynote address was delivered by President Robert Shelton of the University of Arizona. His remarks set the tone for the day’s discussions, highlighting the fiscal and programmatic complexities of keeping a university research engine running at peak performance and efficiency. It came as no surprise that the current economic crisis held a top spot in Dr. Shelton’s list of challenges. When the program committee started its work back in January of 2008, little did it know that by summer’s end we would experience an economic meltdown and a $700-billion bailout plan.

Next a panel moderated by Bob Killoren of Ohio State mapped out the parameters that would guide the discussions of the breakout groups. Tim Mulcahy, Vice President for Research at the University of Minnesota, guided us through what he called “the perfect storm” that was hitting university research programs across the country. The three low pressure systems that are colliding in his weather model are Compliance-Funding-Accountability. The feds are over-regulating, funding is dropping, and sponsors are looking for a quicker path to solutions, while paying less overhead. Dr. Mulcahy presented a very interesting mathematical model that considers the interactions of these three fronts, the way universities react to them, and the confidence faculty have in university leadership to lead the institution through rough waters. His slides are available here. http://www.ncura.edu/content/educational_programs/conferences/summitindex.php

Sara Rockwell, Associate Dean for Scientific Affairs at the Yale University School of Medicine, presented the major findings of a national survey conducted by the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) on the administrative burden on faculty that results from their research support. The survey showed faculty spent an astounding 42% of their research time doing administrative tasks. With shrinking federal budgets for research, increasing demands for compliance paperwork and timekeeping are beginning to overtake the actual conduct of research. Dr. Rockwell’s slides are also available at the same link, above.

The rest of the day was devoted to conversations directed toward three areas of concern for university research programs:

1) The increasing burdens of unfunded mandates in areas of compliance
2) External pressures that dictate the direction of university research programs
3) The increasing financial load on universities to maintain their administrative infrastructures.

The charge to each group was to identify factors contributing to these major concerns, define their parameters, and develop specific action plans to help mediate the negative effects they have on faculty productivity and competitiveness.

At the end of the day, discussion leaders summarized the results of the groups’ deliberations. These will be gathered together and made available to all through NCURA’s scholarly journal, Research Management Review.

The NCURA Board will review evaluations of the Summit and determine if and how they will be organized in the future.

Thanks is given to Bob Killoren for chairing the Summit and to the program committee that included: Robert Lowman, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Denise McCartney, Washington University in St. Louis; Jerry Pogatshnik, Eastern Kentucky University; Susan Wyatt Sedwick, University of Texas - Austin; and, Marc Schiffman, NCURA.
A new presidential administration is a testimony to the passage of time and a reminder that nothing in Washington is permanent. Every new administration brings the promise of change, whatever the president-elect’s particular political persuasion and regardless of whether The White House is changing from one political party to the other. The various pundits and observers have been especially interested in the current transition, and they seem to agree that change is needed in government to give some of the Federal agencies and departments freedom to address critical questions and problems facing the nation. One thinks immediately of climate change and health care, but issues of national security and the leadership of our nation on the world stage also come to mind.

President-elect Obama faces special challenges. Change tends to cost money, and money is in short supply. The United States is facing severe financial challenges that may limit his options. Universities hope for Federal increases to the “science” budgets, including a doubling for NSF and at least a cost-of-biomedical science recovery for NIH. It may be some time before that happens as the nation addresses the effects of the current recession. The costs of bailouts, rescues, or emergency support will limit the amount of money available to implement any new initiatives. Pledges to reform and enhance health care coverage, assistance for home mortgage holders, building the economy by building the infrastructure, or expanding unemployment coverage with the ongoing costs of two wars will require research institutions to rethink their funding goals and realign their research foci.

It’s not just a problem for Federal budgets. Non-profit organizations and foundations are concerned about declining contributions and declining endowments, both of which will directly affect funds available to support research and other sponsored programs. Thus, we need to temper the expectation of our institutions and investigators that significant new levels of funding will be forthcoming for research.

But that doesn’t mean things will be the same. President-elect Obama has throughout his campaign and in the transition outlined the prominent role that science and research will play under his administration. In speeches and in documents available online, President-elect Obama asserts a critical role for science and technology in education, economic development and addressing problems like energy security, HIV/AIDS, and climate change. Hints of the realignment of funding or focus on research are apparent in the Department of Defense’s announced $400 million, five year investment in academic research. Initially targeted to address basic science in technical areas of concern for Defense — including counter weapons of mass destruction (WMD), energy and power management, quantum information sciences, human sciences, biosensors and bio-inspired systems, information fusion and decision science — these awards can draw on a range of disciplines including physics, ocean science, chemistry and chemical engineering, all the engineering disciplines, as well as information sciences, mathematics, and the geosciences. In a similar vein, President-elect Obama has proposed greater investments (or a redirection of funding) to “climate-friendly” energy research including an investment of $150 billion over the next ten years to advance, in part, biofuels and fuel infrastructure and development of commercial-scale renewable energy.

Not all change requires new money. The recent debates over bailouts or rescues have raised the discussion about absent or failed regulation. With little money to spend, Congress will likely consider those questions that don’t have a direct cost to the Federal government but can address concerns with transparency, accountability, and integrity. Sen. Charles Grassley’s continuing interest in financial conflicts of interest comes to mind as a good example.

Some likely candidates for regulatory change as described in the Obama campaign/transition agenda are allowing federal funding to be used in research on a wider array of stem cell lines; making the research and development tax credit permanent; reforms in the patent system; and greater efforts to protect US intellectual property at home and abroad. All of these items do not need new money to achieve.

President-elect Obama has been a strong advocate of transparency and accountability, and his transition agenda demonstrates those areas of interest. You may recall that the President-elect was one of the key co-sponsors of the Federal Funding Transparency and Accountability Act (FFATA). The implementation of the FFATA

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work in a profession that is deadline-driven, where we often have little control over our workloads (such as those last minute proposals). We thrive on playing our role in the advancement of human understanding of the mechanics of our bodies, our planet, or our universe. We must remember; however, we have chosen to devote years of our professional lives to this activity, not to forfeit years from our lives because we didn’t manage our stress properly. Stress in this profession is a given. It’s there, it’s not going away. However, by incorporating some time management activities into our individual lifestyles, we can reduce some unnecessary stress through prioritizing, planning and organization.

Prioritize
This needs to be done at both a micro and a macro level. Prioritization of your own big picture takes some quiet time and soul searching. What do you want? Do you love your job and want to be the best you can possibly be? Do you see this as a stepping stone to something bigger and better? Do you hate it and feel trapped or resentful? Once you set your priorities at the macro-level, it is important to set your daily and weekly priorities in tune with your own big picture.

Electronic Tools
We have some great electronic tools available to us that are surprisingly not often used. Two absolutely essential tools are task lists and calendars. An electronic task list can help you set daily and weekly priorities. For each task, I make a quick little list for everything that needs to be done concerning the task. (i.e. find a policy; draft an email; compile mail list; send for approval; disseminate information.) This organizes my thoughts, breaks down the task into manageable parts, and helps me to jump back into something when I am interrupted. Using the task list is also an aid for fighting procrastination. For example, if a meeting ends 20 minutes early, I have a few unplanned minutes that can be used for something productive. By scanning the task list, I can quickly identify a task that I can either complete, or make some progress upon. Finally, when it comes time for a meeting with your supervisor, you can show them exactly what you’ve done and what progress has been made on your open tasks.

One last thing on the task list: For it to truly be an accurate reflection of how you spent your time, you do need to put unexpected tasks on it. Someone from campus royalty asks you for a report. You drop everything and work on that for the next three hours. This means that the items you had originally planned to work on are not done when expected. Put it on your task list.

There is a growing mountain of evidence which lists the associations between high levels of stress and chronic disease. By chronic disease, I’m not just talking about persistent dull headaches, or even throbbing migraines. However, there is a link there. Nor am I talking about recurring redness, swelling and itching of hives. Again, the link exists. Or neck and shoulder pain, or acne, or diarrhea or hair loss… although all fall into the category of being potentially stress-induced. No, what I’m talking about are the things that can cut our lives short by decades. Stroke, coronary heart disease, hypertension, some forms of cancer, and severe depression, that’s what I’m talking about. The leading causes of mortality in the U.S. today. I’m serious as a heart attack here (sorry, couldn’t resist.)
Good Stress Management

by Jennifer Shambrook

Do the breakdown in the notes section, so you can organize your thoughts in how to attack the task, or explain to anyone else what was entailed in preparing the report. (“What, do you mean you can’t just press a button?”)

The electronic calendar can be Nirvana in a work environment when everyone uses it consistently. Years ago, I kept my calendar posted on my door. Now, I just make my calendar available to the people that need to see it. They can see where I am and when I will return. Of course the calendar is used for scheduling meetings, but I also block out time to work on my task list items. Without that, you may find others can rapidly gobble up every unscheduled moment of your day. It also helps you give better estimates when guessing turn-around time for projects you must give back to others.

Look at your task list and calendar as the last item of business each day. Review what you have accomplished, or left undone for the day. Set or revise your priorities for the following day. Denote top priorities on the task list. Schedule time for completion on your calendar. This will both help you realize the accomplishments of the day and prepare you to begin the following day at a high level of productivity. These activities can assist in lowering your stress. You can see what you have done, can do, and where you may need to ask for help.

The Task List and Calendar are extremely valuable tools for both organization and prioritization. If you are not using them now, I encourage you to try for six weeks and see if you have forgotten small tasks less frequently, kept a better record of how your day was spent, increased your productivity, given better customer service and lowered your overall stress.

Avoid time bombs

Here’s a cosmic truth: Almost EVERYTHING takes longer than you think it will. If it didn’t, you probably left out a step or forgot to get someone’s permission. And of course, getting with that person, explaining it to them, getting their buy-in after you think the task is near completion can be significantly stress producing. Being aware that things usually take longer than anticipated is worth bearing in mind when you contemplate volunteering for anything.

If you have considered the time bombs and still want to volunteer to head up the fundraising drive party planning committee, or writing the department newsletter, there are a few things you might want to consider. Can the task be divided between people where you lead a task force, rather than doing it all on your own? Does your immediate supervisor see this as a valued activity?

Does this activity align well with your personal and professional priorities? Is volunteering for this particular activity a strategic decision, or just an impulse? Have you broken down the task into parts as it would appear on the notes section of your task list? Can you see where you would schedule the activities involved in completing the task on your calendar? If you review these things and the answers are looking pretty unfavorable, then perhaps you should decline the “opportunity.”

Keep a time and stress journal

It is hard to modify what has not been identified. For just a few days, try to jot down things that make you feel either stressed out or waste your time. For example, if someone keeps you on the phone too long repeating themselves over and over, note that. If someone drops by your office to tell you about their vacation for 20 minutes, log that. How many “touching moments” or “thought you’d find this funny” emails are you getting in a day? (And if you get one that’s supposed to be forwarded for good luck, PLEASE don’t forward it to me! I feel lucky when I don’t get those things!!) In just a few days, you will see where the time wasters might be lurking. Each person’s journal will be slightly different. There will likely be a pattern of repetitive occurrences that suck productivity out of your time… and ultimately, add to your stress. By identifying these productivity parasites, you can develop a plan for minimizing or eliminating them.

Plan for a healthy lifestyle

A healthy lifestyle is another factor that can increase your productivity and reduce your stress. Substitute a half hour of television or reading for a half hour of exercise. Get an MP3 player if you have to be constantly entertained. It makes the exercise more fun. Keep healthy food at your desk. For those days when you don’t get to take lunch, a can of soup, or some dried fruit can be a lifesaver and keep you away from the vending machine. Obtain or maintain a healthy body weight. Finally, get enough sleep.

To do these things, you are going to have to extend the prioritizing, organizing and planning to your personal life as well. But we don’t live compartmentalized lives. To live a holistic healthy lifestyle, we must set priorities for health above convenience. In our profession, where we might be sedentary for eight hours a day, it is essential. A healthy lifestyle is a major contributor to stress reduction. And contrary to what seems logical, scheduling a half hour of physical activity gives us more energy. It also gives us sharper minds and a more positive attitude.

So, prioritize, organize and plan your way to a longer healthy life through stress and time management.

Jennifer Shambrook serves as Director, Grant and Contract Management Office, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.
INTRODUCTION
The field of research administration has long been characterized by seemingly never-ending crises and deadlines, mountains of paperwork, bureaucratic red tape, and the overwhelming pressure to constantly do more with less. This is especially present in biomedical research and medical schools, in which we have to handle a great deal more than in scientific research. This includes IRBs, IACUCs, clinical trials, FDA filings, HIPAA regulations, stem cell research restrictions, patient care, practicing physician researchers, myriads of institutional medical assurances, to name a few.

As a group, research administrators work well over the normal 40 hours per week, take work home too often, and sometimes find ourselves in our offices on the weekends and holidays. As our field spends more time looking to manage these stresses and frustrations on the job, we should also be looking more into better time management. It doesn’t take long to realize that learning and adopting time management practices is necessary, not only to be successful in this career, but just to avoid total burnout and maintain home, family, and personal lives.

One of the best and most trusted time management practices is organization. Biomedical research administrators are responsible for such an extensive amount of paperwork and electronic documentation that proper organization and comprehensive filing systems are a must. Never mind the signs that say, “A clean desk is the sign of a sick mind.” There should be “A place for everything and everything in its place,” and a little bit of obsessive-compulsiveness can be a good thing. Studies have shown that people with messy desks or work areas can waste an average of 1-1/2 hours a day looking for important paperwork.

ORGANIZATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

The Office
The layout of an office is the foundation of being organized. The type and placement of the desk, file cabinets, shelves, tables, chairs, and computer equipment is the starting point for good organization and essential to efficiency. Two factors should be considered when arranging an office: functionality and basic feng shui principles.

Above all, the office should be functional, easy to move around in and comfortable to work in. The arrangement of everything should create positive workflow and avoid any feelings of being cramped or not being able to maneuver. The office should also be kept clean and uncluttered. Clutter is bad feng shui, and leads to negative workflow, wasted space, disorganization, feelings of being overwhelmed, and reduced efficiency.

As a rule, things that are used most often should be kept within reach and those that are least used should be kept out of the way. Keep small binders with often-used resource information on the desk or on a shelf above the desk within arm’s reach for quick access. Other less used reference manuals or books should be placed on a higher shelf above the desk or on the other side of the office. Do the same with files, keeping current files within easy reach and less pulled files out of the way. Have tiered in and out boxes for papers and mail that come into and out of the office, and sort them depending on what action is required, i.e. copies for filing, invoices to pay, memos to distribute, or forms to fill out and return.

Try to avoid starting piles of papers around the edges of the desk or on the floor; unless it is a project (or projects) that are continuing work for a short time period. Have a section of the desk outlined as “workspace,” with pens, stapler, paperclips, etc. arranged around it, and every night, make sure that space is cleared of papers and objects. If possible, insist on having a dedicated printer to avoid having to run back and forth to a shared network one.

Filing Systems (for hardcopy)
A good filing system is a research administrator’s best friend. Paperwork is always coming back to haunt us, and being able to find anything in a snap is truly a blessing in time (and sanity) savings. There are many ways to file all the documentation we are responsible for, and regardless of how it is set up, the most important rule to follow is that anyone else looking for anything should be able to find it easily.

The most difficult decision to make is how to set up the filing system, and that starts with what needs to be kept on file. In biomedical research administration, this is usually copies of grant submissions, grant awards, IRB and IACUC submissions, clinical trial documentation, budget and financial reports, purchase orders, invoices, contracts, personnel files, payroll records, various institutional forms, etc.

It is usually best to group similar types of files in drawers together and then arrange them by alphabetical or numerical order. For example, grant files can be grouped by PI, with the PI sections sorted alphabetically and the individual grants sorted numerically by grant or account number. Each major category of files should be color coded, i.e. grants can be yellow, submissions red, payroll green; there are quite a variety of different color files now available. Color coding helps with quick identification of what’s in the file when it is out of the drawer.

With today’s concerns about being “green,” it is important to avoid duplication. Each document should only have one copy in one place in the files. This saves paper; which helps the environment, and thus saves valuable storage space. Equally as important is to stay away from cluttering the files. Old, inactive files should be removed and either shredded or warehoused. Every institution and sponsor has policies regarding record retention, and these policies should be referenced before destroying any files.

Filing Systems (for electronic copies)
With the transition to eRA, research administrators now have more electronic files to deal with, and having a comprehensive filing system on computer drives has become equally important as paper files. Most of our institutions have a central IT department which provides shared drives on the network system and takes care of maintenance and nightly back-ups. There are also personal network drives that each employee receives, as well as hard drives on each personal computer.
Whether it is a personal or shared drive, the same rule as paper files should be followed. It is essential to have a clearly understandable directory so that anyone is able to easily navigate through it and find the files they are looking for. As with hardcopies, files should be grouped and placed in folders with a clearly identifiable title of the contents of the folder. File names should also be instantly recognizable, and when possible, the name of the file with its location should be added as a footer when it is printed so it can be located again without difficulty (as we often forget where we filed things).

Since there are usually limits on storage capacity on drives, it is important not to clutter the folders with unnecessary files. For example, duplication often happens when we are working on a grant submission, when throughout the process, numerous revisions of the budget and the science and other pages are done. Once the grant is submitted, those previous versions should be deleted and only the final versions that were sent be kept.

Another tip for shared drives is keeping accessible folders for standard forms and other documents, such as reimbursement forms and faculty biosketches, which are used for multiple applications. Keeping the forms in one place allows for convenient updating when needed, and the forms can be prefilled with institutional or other relevant information. This will help save time in reviewing and processing, as everyone will use the correct forms with the most current information.

Email

With email now the preferred method of communication, keeping on top of all the correspondence can sometimes be a daunting task. The amount of email we get in a day can be overwhelming, especially if there is staff or faculty that find the “cc” and “reply all” functions irresistible. Again, good organization of your mailbox and a healthy affection for the delete button can be a lifesaver.

Emails should be considered the same as electronic files. Folders in your email program can be created to sort and store messages. The names of the folders should readily identify the subject matter of the emails they contain, and if needed, subfolders can be created to further sort them. For example, a folder can be created for notices of grant awards, and under that folder; subfolders for each PI can be created. Moving emails to categorized folders helps keep the inbox from becoming overly chaotic.

Another function to use, if the email program provides it, is color coding. Colors can be assigned names and used to tag and categorize emails. For example, yellow can be named “pending” or “waiting for more info,” and red can be named “urgent,” then emails that fall into those categories can be assigned those colors. Colored emails are easier to find and have less chance of getting lost amid new emails in the inbox. Also, emails can be sorted by color so that they can be ordered according to importance or urgency, and as the status of the email changes, the color can be changed and it can be resorted.

Back-and-forth email chains are probably the biggest nuisance (next to spam, of course) to deal with when trying to keep your inbox organized. They can cause a massive amount of clutter in a matter of minutes, and can cause wasted time going through them all. The best trick to combat this is to quickly scroll through the latest email in the chain and check to see if it contains the same messages as the previous ones. If the previous messages were carried into later messages, then delete the previous messages without reading them and just read through the chain in the latest email.

Most email programs contain other features that can help with managing your time. The most popular is Microsoft Outlook, which contains a journal feature, a calendar and a task function, all valuable tools that should be taken advantage of. The journal feature can be used to make quick notes of or record dates and times of significant events, such as discussions with faculty or staff. For example, when dealing with problem employees, entries can be made in the journal to record specific incidences of unacceptable behavior. And likewise, records can be kept detailing exemplary actions and deeds of employees to be included in their performance reviews.

The calendar and the task function are great tools for organizing your time. The calendar can be used to plan each day and to block out times to work on specific projects. The task function can be used as a reminder list of things that will need to be done sometime in the future, such as due dates for progress or financial reports, expiration dates of grants or IRB’s, and key submission dates for proposals. An important time management rule is to remember that time blocked off to work on specific tasks should not be misspent by doing something else, unless that something else is urgent and unavoidably necessary. The scheduled time and task should be treated no differently than if it were a mandatory meeting.

CONCLUSION

The key to being organized is, once you are organized, to stay organized. The maintenance of filing systems is a critical and ongoing task. Time and effort should be dedicated to keeping files current and uncluttered, and the office and workspaces clean and clear. The benefits of the time spent on this far outweighs the time that would be wasted and the stress and frustration caused from working in a disorderly mess.

The role of the biomedical research administrator will not become any easier over time as the field becomes more regulated, and there will always be the hectic days, the impossible deadlines, and the occasional feeling of being overwhelmed. Being well organized, practicing other time management techniques, and the search for and sharing of new techniques and practices, can help reduce some of this feeling. These techniques can help restore some control to the workday. Remember, when that feeling of being overwhelmed hits, why we are biomedical research administrators. The underlying mission of our work is our role in helping to better the lives and health of our community, our society, and our world. It can be a wonderful motivator to get through the most stressful of days.

Shelley Hesselton-Mangan has been an active member of NCURA, Region I since 1999. She is an alumni of NCURA’s Leadership Development Institute, Class of 2005, and received her MBA from Assumption College in 2008. Her entire career has been spent in Biomedical Research Administration at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.
In July 2008, the Government-University-Industry Research Roundtable (GUIRR) initiated and in October formally launched a Working Group on International Research Collaborations (called the I-Group for short). The founding member of I-Group is University of Maryland President and GUIRR co-chair, Dr. C.D. (Dan) Mote, Jr., and the authors of this article are the working group co-chairs. Additional I-Group members come from other universities, U.S. government agencies, and private companies.

Initially comprised of seven individuals, I-Group has been designing a work plan to conduct a systematic, practical study of international research collaborations. As new areas of study are identified, it is enlisting additional stakeholders and representatives. Several conference calls have been held and one meeting has been convened at the National Academies in Washington.

I-Group was brought together out of common concern for strengthening international research collaboration and addressing the major issues integral to such collaboration. There are also obvious implications for enhancing America’s competitiveness in a global economy as well as a continued desire for American universities and companies to connect with international counterparts.

Common issues in international collaboration need to be addressed by all parties. The I-Group, in conjunction with other stakeholders, wants to help facilitate a more structured approach to international research collaborations and build a solid infrastructure to help companies and universities deal with a range of administrative and legal complexities.

Issues and Concerns in International Research Collaborations

These are some of the issues and concerns that have been initially identified in international research collaborations:

1. Cultural Differences. In many instances, differences in culture are a root cause of significant challenges to forming international research collaborations.
2. Differences in Ethical Standards. These may stem from both cultural and economic differences. For instance, standards for the protection of research participants and the proper care and use of animals must address both internationally accepted ethical concerns as well as local customs.
3. Responsible Conduct of Research. Public confidence in academic research is essential regardless of where it is conducted. When research is perceived to be biased or influenced by financial, political, or other pressures, public confidence in research is eroded. The necessity to train and teach the broader concepts of objectivity in research is also crucial.
4. Intellectual Property (patents, copyrights, etc.). This is of particular concern in parts of the world, such as southeast Asia and China, where respect for the traditional Western system of IP protection is questioned or ignored for the sake of economic gain.
5. Liability and Insurance. Working between states in the U.S. can be challenging on this front; that said, global concerns can expand exponentially.
6. Research Integrity. Meant in a general sense, but also in connection with data manipulation and fabrication. There is a recognized international challenge of universally defining, investigating, and prosecuting cases of scientific misconduct.
Safety and Security. Conducting international research in locations that are subject to a certain level of social and political instability or natural disasters immediately raise issues of safety and security.

Currency and other financial issues. Especially as they impact international research projects, particularly in times such as today when the world financial system is not stable.

Export Controls. Need we say more about this topic other than it is timely and important?

I-Group’s Vision
The vision of the G UI RR project team is to make a permanent contribution to intellectual discourse on international research collaborations, including but not limited to the publication of a Primer on International Research Collaborations and other practical-oriented publications that are of use to professionals in the areas of higher education, industry, and government. The work product of the group should be available in hard copy and online formats.

Next Steps
I-Group will be meeting soon via a conference call to discuss continued evolution of the project, including expanding the White Paper recently initiated by the co-chairs. Additional stakeholders will be brought into the project, representing higher education, industry, and the U.S. government. Finding dedicated funding sources to maintain the viability of the project is also a priority. Another in-person meeting of the Working Group at the National Academies is expected early in 2009.

This project represents another exciting dimension to NCURA’s interests in international research collaborations. NCURA members of I-Group fully expect to see concrete results from the project and will keep NCURA up-to-date.

John Carfora is Executive Director, Office of Research and Sponsored Projects, at Loyola Marymount University. James Casey is Director, Office of Contracts and Industrial Agreements, at The University of Texas at San Antonio. Bob Killoren is Associate Vice President for Research Administration at The Ohio State University. Any opinions present within this article are solely their own and do not represent the positions of I-Group or G U I RR.
by Tyler Thompson and James Casey

As all research administrators are well aware, university-industry partnerships are important to sponsored programs portfolios of most colleges and universities. Given the fluid and dynamic nature of the national and international economies today, these partnerships are subject to stress on a variety of levels. Companies complain that universities are too greedy in demanding royalties from research that the companies initially funded. Universities complain that companies do not understand that their missions are fundamentally different, thus requiring more flexibility from companies.

Most research administrators in NCURA are also probably aware that NCURA has increased its focus on university-industry partnerships since 2002. The University-Industry Demonstration Partnership (www.uidp.org) is another reflection of university-industry interest in building stronger collaborations between these important pillars of the American economy. International dimensions are also patently important in this area.

In an effort to stimulate further reflection on university-industry partnerships, consider the following parable (created by the primary author):

The University IP Deal: A Parable

A bright young woman went to visit Prestigious University with her parents. She was met by the amiable Admissions Officer, who offered to answer any questions she might have. Being of a practical mind, and expecting to pay much of the cost of her college education herself, she asked, “How much is this going to cost me, and what can I expect job-wise after I graduate?”

The helpful Admissions Officer replied, “Well, it depends. You’ll pay tuition, of course, for four years (or five, or six, depending on how it goes), and that part will go up by 10% each year. Then when you graduate you can try to find a job. But if you get a promising job offer, you can’t actually start to work and get a paycheck until you come back to the university and negotiate a license to use your degree for commercial purposes. But don’t worry - - trust me, we’re very reasonable and easy to deal with. We typically only ask for 3 - 5% of your gross pay for the first 20 years. Unless, of course, you go on to Med School, in which case we expect more like 7 – 10%.”

“I don’t quite understand,” replied the startled student as her parents started backing toward the door. “That doesn’t sound fair to me. I pay all that money for tuition, and then I can’t use the results to make a living, without continuing to pay year after year?”

“Well, my dear,” answered the condescending Admissions Officer, “you just don’t understand all of the other considerations. Your tuition only covers a fraction of the true cost of your university education. Look around at all the infrastructure on this campus. And remember that we’ve nurtured each of your professors for several years while they developed their expert knowledge and their superb teaching skills. Besides, we can’t allow public facilities paid for by the taxpayers to be used for private benefit. So when we negotiate the cost of your license, we have to base it on fair market value. That means we have to offer you the same percentage we would offer anyone else, whether they paid tuition or not.”

And with that, the prospective student and her parents left Prestigious University to find a better alternative.

Musings from the University Side (Casey):

This parable should give everyone—universities and companies included—something to think about. The parable speaks of public benefits, private benefits, and the fungible nature of public and private funds (despite our best efforts to segregate them). The parable itself is the perfect microcosm of the differences between companies and educational institutions. While the parable comes off less than complimentary towards the staff member from Prestigious University, a closer reading—several closer readings—should indicate to the reader that serious questions are raised, that mission differences do matter. Furthermore, this question must be raised:

When does prior investment in infrastructure (such as educational and research facilities) cease to matter?

Prior investment in infrastructure (such as educational and research facilities) continues to matter. This is a point that universities and companies must remember.

Companies invest their earnings in corporate facilities, both domestic and abroad, and in universities for specific research projects.
Universities invest their funds on their campuses, domestically and internationally. Universities and companies invest in their communities, often in ways that only tangentially benefit their core activities. If universities and companies were truly honest and fair with each other; they would acknowledge that in the area of infrastructure support they have much in common.

These infrastructure investments are used by these two sectors but other sectors of the economy benefit: different levels of government, local communities, regional economic organizations, and the general public. Investments by universities and companies are for the public good, no matter how vague some people may characterize them. The concept of the “public good” is something that is sorely missing in discussing university-industry partnerships today.

In a very real sense, then, these infrastructure investments are part of a fungible pool of the entire investment made domestically and internationally. As such, it is intellectually unfair and unrealistic for companies and universities to insist that their infrastructure investments only benefit themselves, or the other, without consideration for the broad pool of investment that benefits the entire U.S. and international economies.

As the late former mayor of Milwaukee, Frank P. Zeidler (1948–1960) wrote in 2004 to the secondary author: “This leads to the question of what is the purpose of the university. Is it to advance knowledge for knowledge’s sake, or is it to advance knowledge for specific purposes, including that of getting income for the personnel of the university?”

Points in the parable are quite valid and deserve further analysis. What to do with the points raised is another matter.

Musings and Amplification from the Industry Side (Thompson):

- Expectations and practices of US universities regarding the IP rights of industry sponsors are almost unique in the world.
- Industry and academia come at this from polar opposites. At the extremes, the company views the university as merely one vendor of services among many alternatives. The university views itself as an independent engine of creativity and innovation, and any single industry sponsor as a minor contributor of a small fraction of the cash that drives the engine.
- Industry does, in fact, have many alternative ways to acquire and develop innovative technology. The value proposition usually offered by U.S. universities is viewed as one of the most risky and least attractive available because of the open-ended potential liability for royalty payments.
- Universities believe that the potential to harvest royalty revenue by licensing technology back to the very company that sponsored the research in the first place is an opportunity. It is not. It is a barrier to productive collaboration. It unavoidably places the university in competition with its customer, the sponsoring company. Faced with this paradigm, a company will be less willing to take its most important and commercially promising projects to the university, and it will carefully manage the sponsored research program so that it focuses on fundamentals and stays away from invention. If, on the other hand, the university is willing to grant very favorable IP rights to the sponsor and take the issue of royalties off the table, it opens the door to much closer collaboration, open sharing of important information, and opportunities for the university to make key contributions to the company’s most exciting projects.
- When a company makes an investment in research, it is one of the most risky investments it can make, even under the best of circumstances. The project may fail technically, or it may fail commercially. If the research investment is made internally to support its own R&D staff, the company knows what the cost is, and it retains essentially complete control of the program. If the research investment is made by sponsoring university research under the usual US paradigm, the cost is very uncertain, open-ended, and out of their control. A university project may cost $100,000 per year for three to five years, plus an unstated, unbounded, yet-to-be-negotiated amount in the future if it is successful. And this future amount may be millions of dollars. At worst, most university sponsored research contracts leave open at least the theoretical possibility that the university could walk away from the original sponsor and license the technology to a competitor.
- The university gets all of its benefits up front. The professor gets his publications. The graduate student gets her PhD and a job. The administration gets its overhead. But the company doesn’t get paid until it makes a profit on sale of a product, usually seven to ten years later.
- Large companies like Dow Chemical want to offer a different value proposition to US universities. The company offers a multi-faceted long-term relationship, which may include a steady stream of sponsored project funding, joint publications, hiring students, consulting and even sabbatical opportunities for faculty, and occasional philanthropic gifts and unrestricted aid to education. The university concentrates on educating students; doing great research, and contributing to public knowledge. The university should derive whatever royalty income the market will bear from the results of GOVERNMENT SPONSORED research. They should leave the commercial value (or losses) of company-sponsored research entirely to the sponsor; which is the only entity that actually accepts any risk in the commercialization process.
- Universities predictably recite several arguments in support of the current paradigm to explain why sponsoring university research should be different from paying a vendor for routine services. The parable maps those arguments pretty accurately in a way that puts the paradigm in a rather different light.

Conclusion

This parable and discussion illustrates that much remains to be done in strengthening university-industry partnerships. While there are meritorious efforts underway to strengthen these partnerships, perhaps it is increasingly difficult to achieve success. The national and international economies, American companies, and U.S. higher education are facing significant challenges at the present time. Perhaps it can only be expected that the rough spots will continue to exist while successful collaborations constantly occur. Only time will tell.

Tyler Thompson is a Research Partnership Leader at Dow Chemical Company. James Casey is Director of Contracts and Industrial Agreements at The University of Texas at San Antonio. The parable in this article was composed by Dr. Thompson for a session at the 235th National Meeting of the American Chemical Society, April 6–10, 2008 (“Partnership: Innovation and Competitive: Opportunities for the Chemical Enterprise in Energy and Environment”). Contributions from the industry and academic perspectives are provided by Dr. Thompson and Dr. Casey, respectively.
AH, EFFORT REPORTING! It’s been a fact of life in research administration since the days when we did everything on paper (before computers!), and no matter how automated we become effort is not going away any time soon. But the current question facing many research administrators as they drag their feet reluctantly into the 21st century is this: Will the transition to an electronic system for effort reporting and certification make things any easier or will it just compound our headaches?

Well, we’re glad you asked. We might not have all the answers for you, but we have a number of handy suggestions that can help you navigate a few roadblocks and avoid some common pitfalls as you begin your journey down the road to electronic effort reporting.

However, if your institution is still clinging to the ancient comforts of paper effort certifications, you’re well aware of the challenges already presented by the creation, distribution and collection of said documents. Sadly, we can’t tell you that you’ll experience complete relief on this front. Yes, there will be fewer stacks of paper and the birds in the forest will have a few more trees to perch on while they sing their songs. But you’ll still be back in your office dealing with many of the same issues.

As we see it, here are the core issues you’ll need to consider long and hard before deciding which electronic option is best for you:

**DATA** Where do you get the information used to populate your effort statements? Where does data go in and how does it come out? Does it come from multiple sources and maybe even from multiple systems? Who has access to this information apart from what is shown in the effort statements? What if changes in allocations need to be made before the statement is certified? While you’re revisiting this topic, it may also be worthwhile to reconsider some of the things you’ve been taking for granted for a while, like why you’ve chosen the effort period you have (monthly, quarterly, etc).

**COLLECTION** How are effort statements collected? And once collected, how are they reviewed, logged, and stored? How are returned (and outstanding) effort statements tracked? What is the procedure if statements are not returned in a timely manner? How many times do you remind folks and who do you escalate to when you face compliance challenges? And do you have the reporting capability you need in your electronic system to track compliance across your institution?

**COMMUNICATION** Like any new initiative, implementing an electronic effort reporting system may require a communication campaign to let people know that change is coming and to explain what’s in it for them. Of course, at many of our de-centralized institutions making sure you reach the right audience can be a challenge in and of itself, especially since in all likelihood you have to reach many different audiences. The key questions here are: who do you need to reach? Departmental administrators? PIs? All researchers? Deans? Chairs? Which channels of communication best reach these audiences? Who do they listen to? What do they need to know? When do they need to know it? How often should you communicate? And when you really need to get their attention, what’s the best way? No single way will reach everyone, so you may need to think about putting together some sort of communication variety pack. For a large implementation plan, developing a communications calendar early in the process, and drafting communications up front, will save a lot of time and headache when you are under the gun.

Yes, many of the questions in these categories may be the same basic questions you (or the someone who came before you) have always wrestled with in implementing your paper solution, but they’re especially important to revisit now. And you shouldn’t revisit them alone. It’s time to load up the research administration station wagon and take everybody along for the ride. Or, to skip the snappy metaphor, it’s time to form yet another committee. Oh, joy of joys!

But before you book standing meetings in the conference room and round up the usual suspects, remember that the key to putting together a successful work group around this topic is to make sure you’ve got all your key players represented. Yes, you’ll need a central administrative manager or two and some department administrators, including the folks who are actually working where the rubber hits the road. Being the department effort coordinator tends not to be a glory job, so make sure the poor admin assistants who get tasked with pestering the faculty and really rounding up the statements are in the room when you’re talking process. You’ll also need some tech people there, and probably one from every system that’s likely to be involved. You might as well start with them involved in the conversation, since they’ll need to be involved later anyway. If you can swing it, it’s also a good idea to have a couple faculty members there to provide a reality check. These are the folks being asked to do the certification—they ought to know what’s heading down the
pike. And for faculty representation it’s always nice to balance things out by having some fresh faced junior faculty members to go with your curmudgeonly old school researchers. And finally, make sure you’ve got executive sponsorship. Even if the VP isn’t going to sit through the nuts and bolts conversations, having that level of the institution dialed into what you’re undertaking will pay dividends later on when you’re trying to roll the thing out to campus. Besides, you’re probably going to need some capital and that means higher level buy-in anyway.

Once you have your group together and work your way through the key issues you’ll be considering for what you need (see the sidebar “Ye Olde Effort Checklist”), you’ll need to decide what your best solution will be for satisfying your system requirements. In its simplest form, this decision boils down to either building your own system or buying one off the shelf. Given adequate institutional resources, a customized system can be a good alternative, though this road-less-traveled is not without its own challenges. The more common approach is to buy a system from one of the vendors offering such things and then either compromising where the system doesn’t meet your initial specs or working in-house (with or without the aid of the vendor) to customize the system. A number of vendors offer electronic effort reporting systems, and for your convenience, we’ve provided a sidebar listing most of the more popular ones (see the sidebar “Electronic Effort Reporting Solutions”).

Fast forward now to that day when you’ve picked your system and started getting it installed. You’ve already thought about how to roll it out to your audience. And you’re beginning to send some of those canned communications your carefully prepared. Maybe you’re even archiving communications onto a dedicated webpage. Now is the time to start turning all those random questions you keep fielding into campus resource gold—a Frequently Asked Questions document. FAQ’s help by providing one-stop shopping for those struggling with the new system, but they also cut down on one-off phone calls and make sure the answers people are getting are more consistent than they might otherwise be. But don’t forget to run a draft of the FAQ document by your implementation committee, so you can make sure the answers make sense to all manner of potential readers.

Converting to an electronic system for effort reporting has many advantages, and careful planning can help you avoid most pitfalls and many migraines along the way to implementation.

John Caruso serves as SPA Administrator/Manager, Oregon Health & Science University and Naomi Schrag is Associate Vice President for Research Compliance and Training, Columbia University in the City of New York.
Managing Time by Building Relationships at a Predominantly Undergraduate Institution

by Beth Seaton

As the director of sponsored projects at a predominantly undergraduate institution I find myself constantly evaluating how I can most effectively manage my, oftentimes conflicting, priorities. Is it more important for me to spend time sitting down with a junior faculty member and walking her through the NSF GPG or should I attend the meeting with the internal auditor who is trying to convince the provost that all payments to faculty from grant funds should be disallowed immediately? Should I read through the second draft of a faculty member’s Fulbright-Hays grant application or should I meet with the vice president to explain what an allegation of scholarly misconduct really means to the institution?

I was at a meeting recently with sponsored programs staff from other institutions—the majority from research or medical schools. Someone in the audience asked what role a sponsored research office plays in faculty development and development of proposals. Most of people agreed that they play a minor or insignificant role in that area. Nothing could be further from the truth at a PUI. Our faculty members have chosen to work at our institutions by Beth Seaton is Director of Sponsored Projects at Western Illinois University.
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A National Innovation Foundation: typed by Robert Atkinson and Howard Wial

Introduction

Public policymakers are increasingly looking to university research and education as engines of economic growth. As the largest single funder of research and a major funder of undergraduate and graduate education, the federal government plays a critical role in making these engines run. But federal funding of research and education, even at greatly increased levels, aren’t enough to ensure that universities are contributing as much as they can to improve the American standard of living. A new federally funded organization, which we call a National Innovation Foundation (NIF), is needed to supplement existing federal funding of basic research with substantially more support of commercial innovation and, above all, to create a national strategy to spur innovation.

Innovation—the introduction of new products and services, new ways of making those products and services, and new ways of organizing work and business processes—is the main source of economic growth. Basic scientific research and the education of scientists and engineers are important inputs to innovation and should receive more government support than they do now. But they are not themselves innovation. Nor do businesses automatically translate them into innovation. Businesses are increasingly relying on partnerships with universities to help them innovate, but—as university research and technology transfer administrators are well aware—these crucial partnerships don’t always run smoothly because the partners have conflicting as well as common interests. In addition, many small and medium-sized firms need assistance, often from university-based centers, to help them keep up with best practices in their industries, but the centers can’t afford to provide all the help they need.

Despite the importance of innovation and the obstacles that now prevent university-industry relationships from contributing as much as they could to the nation’s innovation needs, the federal government doesn’t have an innovation policy. It doesn’t treat innovation as a key component of economic policy. Federal funding related to innovation goes almost entirely to basic scientific research and science and engineering education. There are only a few small programs (notably the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program, the Technology Innovation Program, and the National Science Foundation’s Partnerships for Innovation, Industry-University Cooperative Research Center, and Engineering Research Center programs) whose main purpose is to promote nonagricultural commercial innovation. Other federal programs may generate innovation as an incidental benefit but their main purpose is to contribute to some other national priority (such as national defense), not to spur innovation.

Existing federal attempts to promote innovation have a number of shortcomings. Programs are scattered throughout the federal government and, therefore, can’t easily coordinate their efforts. They are underfunded compared to similar programs in other economically advanced countries. They generally don’t coordinate or collaborate with the many good state and regional efforts to promote innovation through technology-based economic development. They provide the most support to a few major research universities and large companies, ignoring the important contributions that small firms and less research-intensive colleges and universities can make to innovation. Finally, they provide a small amount of assistance to small and medium-sized manufacturers but devote virtually no attention to innovation in the service sector, which makes up about 80 percent of the U.S. economy.

Creation of a National Innovation Foundation (NIF)

To address these problems—and in the process of doing so, improve the university-industry relationship—the federal government should create a National Innovation Foundation (NIF). NIF is needed because no existing federal agency or program, even if adequately funded, is capable of creating and carrying out a national innovation policy. It should incorporate and build upon the good work that the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program, the Technology Innovation Program, and the National Science Foundation’s three commercialization-oriented programs now do, but it should be the federal government’s central innovation policymaker and funder, not simply a combined version of those programs. It should be federally funded (either as a federal agency or as a federally supported nonprofit organization) because innovation benefits the entire nation. NIF should be nimble, able to understand best practices in business and technology and able to change as they change. It should be lean, with a staff of about 250 professionals and a budget of $2 billion per year. Because the existing federal programs that NIF would incorporate and build upon now have a combined annual budget of about $400 million, NIF would more than double the amount that the federal government spends on promoting innovation directly. Finally, NIF should collaborate with universities and industry to promote industry-university collaboration.
A Proposal to Spur Economic Growth and Improve the University-Industry Relationship

Benefits of a NIF

NIF would promote innovation in several ways that would directly aid collaboration between universities and industry. To begin with, it would award competitive Industry Research Alliance Challenge Grants to national consortia of firms within particular industries to conduct research at one or more universities or national labs. Firms would be required to contribute one dollar to this effort for every dollar they receive from NIF. In collaboration with universities or national labs, each consortium would create and carry out research on a three- to 10-year technology roadmap that charts out generic science and technology needs that the firms share.

NIF would also support research into automation, technology-enabled remote service delivery, quality improvement, and other methods of improving productivity. NIF would support early-stage research into processes with broad applications to a range of industries, not late-stage research focused on particular companies. NIF would also fund a service science initiative to conduct research into productivity and innovation in the service sector.

NIF would direct additional support of innovation through state governments and local partnerships of organizations concerned with innovation. It would offer state Innovation-Based Economic Development (IBED) Partnership Grants to help states expand their innovation-promotion activities. To be eligible for NIF funding, states would need to provide at least two dollars in actual funding for every NIF dollar they receive. Rotating panels of IBED experts would review proposals from states. Those proposals could include state support for university-industry partnerships that were of special importance to a particular state or region. NIF would also work in close partnership with states to help ensure that their efforts were effective and in the national as well as state interest. To support more localized, targeted efforts to spur innovation in specific industries within particular metropolitan or rural areas, NIF would offer smaller competitive grants to self-organized partnerships of businesses, educational institutions, and other partners such as Workforce Investment Boards, economic development organizations, Chambers of Commerce, and labor unions and professional associations.

To assist small and medium-sized firms in improving their technologies and business processes, NIF would conduct a technology diffusion effort. This effort would incorporate and build on the existing Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program (MEP) but would assist service firms as well as manufacturers, with substantially more federal funding than MEP now receives. One or more technology diffusion centers would be located in each state and supported through a combination of federal, state, and private funds. States, universities, or other organizations could operate the centers.

NIF would also perform a number of other activities needed to support the efforts described above. It would analyze opportunities for and challenges to technological, service delivery, and organizational innovation in service industries such as health care, construction, residential real estate, financial services, and transportation services. It would recommend steps that federal and state governments could take to help spur innovation in those industries. To guide its own work and provide businesses and government agencies with the information they need to promote innovation, NIF would create methods of measuring innovative activity, work with federal statistical agencies to implement those methods, and carry out research on innovation. Finally, NIF would be the federal government’s major champion of innovation and innovation policy.

Improving University-Industry Relationships

NIF could improve the university-industry relationship in several ways. By providing more federal funding for partnerships between universities, industry, and other organizations that promote innovation, it could increase the number of partnerships. It could increase the range of different kinds of partnerships that could be funded, enabling universities and industries to create new types of partnerships. By funding states, self-organized regional partnerships, and technology diffusion centers, it would create opportunities for educational institutions other than established research universities to work with industry to promote innovation. Through its grant award criteria, NIF could also encourage universities and industry to anticipate and solve the problems (such as conflicts over intellectual property) that sometimes hinder their relationship. As the federal government’s central source of knowledge about innovation, it could anticipate and help address the opportunities and challenges that university-industry partnerships face as business practices and technologies change.

NIF would work cooperatively with individual firms, business and business-university consortia, and state governments to foster innovation that would benefit the nation but would not otherwise occur. Without the direct federal spur to innovation that NIF would offer, the U.S. economy will not grow as rapidly. Other nations, including nearly all other economically advanced countries and some less-developed ones, have realized this and established highly effective national innovation-promotion agencies. It is time for the United States to do the same.

Robert Atkinson is President of the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation in Washington, D.C. Howard Wial is an Economist at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C.
MONKEY? WHAT MONKEY?
I DON’T HAVE A MONKEY. DO I?

“Hello! Let me introduce myself. I am your newest monkey – my name is Upper Management Project C. You assigned me to a member of your team last week. You outlined your expectations, detailed the project guidelines, and sent the employee on their way with me in tow. Soon, the employee had a question about me, which you answered and I remained in your subordinate’s care. The next question about me, however, required a more involved explanation and my assigned keeper did not quite get the picture you were trying to paint. “Let me think about it,” you said, and the employee left your office. I, however, stayed with you! Your employee just successfully transferred me, Upper Management Project C, from their back onto yours. Now, it is your responsibility to feed and care for me. By the way, you seem to have a lot of monkeys in here; how are you going to care for us all?”

Too often would-be managers end up taking back responsibility for their subordinate’s projects. This “monkey model” of management is discussed in the classic Harvard Business Review article, “Who’s Got the Monkey?” by William Oncken, Jr. and Donald L. Wass. In this model, delegated projects are symbolized by monkeys that need to be cared for and fed (representing the development and management tasks associated with the delegated projects). Like monkeys, the tasks are on the backs of some person who has the responsibility for managing it (providing care and feeding to the monkey). As the scenario above depicts, these monkeys often wind up on the back of managers, rather than with the subordinates to whom they are assigned.

Essentially, the monkey problem is one of initiative, the state of being responsible for taking the next step forward. Both managers and subordinates allow the initiative to rest on the manager far too often. Indeed, the “monkey model” argues that initiative for a delegated project should never remain with the manager! The manager will need all her discretionary time to develop and manage her own ideas (and to maintain the initiative on projects delegated to her from above). The entire point of delegation, of course, is to place the responsibility for tasks on other personnel so that more can be accomplished than the manager can accomplish alone. If delegation does not fully occur, this goal is not achieved. Whenever the initiative returns to the manager, “wheel spinning and bottlenecking are on their way.”

Some of the problems that arise from all the monkeys living in the manager’s office (when the next step on every project becomes the manager’s responsibility) are readily apparent. Clearly, a manager can rapidly reach overload and become only minimally productive. When this happens, no subordinate can act without input from the manager; but the manager has no time to provide this minimal input because she is doing the work assigned to her by her own boss. For managers who are unable to handle the monkey problem, putative “subordinates” are in reality “supervisors” passing along work for the manager to handle. Less clear, but equally problematic, is the effect on the subordinates themselves – who are unable to make progress on their projects because they are rarely given the initiative. They are likely to find themselves frustrated in their work and unable to develop in their careers. Fortunately, as Oncken and Wass outline, it is possible for both managers and subordinates to take steps to ensure that collaboration occurs appropriately without the monkey leaving the care of its proper owner – the subordinate.

The first part of the solution is the behavior of the manager. Oncken & Wass divide a manager’s work time into three categories. The first is boss-imposed time – projects that we have to accept and process in a timely manner or suffer direct consequences. The second is system-imposed time – the peer–to–peer projects that we acquire that also require timely processing and carry somewhat less direct but definite consequences. The last is self-imposed time – time in which the manager can exercise discretion to supervise, delegate, organize, and create. This discretionary time, for many managers, becomes subordinate-imposed time – a category that really should not exist at all. The key to minimizing this problem lies in insisting that subordinates retain the initiative on their projects – that they take care of their own monkeys. A manager intent on this goal must first get the monkeys out of her office in order to reconvert her subordinate-imposed time into self-imposed time. The manager in Oncken and Wass’ example accomplished this by meeting with each subordinate and working with them to determine how the next move might conceivably be the subordinate’s – even if that next move is merely to consider the question overnight and return with a substantive answer (monkeys, it appears, sleep just as well on the back of the subordinate as they do on the back of the manager). In any case, the monkey leaves the meeting with the subordinate – who now has been given the initiative to work on the issue.

Having returned all the monkeys to the care of their proper owners, the manager must now ensure that his subordinates understand that they are responsible for retaining the initiative (for keeping the monkey on their own backs). This involves training and developing the subordinates – but doing so as part of a deliberate process that the manager chooses to do with his newfound self-imposed time. This might be thought of as teaching people the care of feeding of monkeys – but more on that in a moment.
Subordinates have an important role to play in maintaining their own initiative— one they can perform even without the active participation of their manager. That role, of course, is to keep their monkeys on their own backs by recognizing and avoiding situations in which the initiative for an issue jumps to their manager. A common practice— although perhaps not common enough—is for a subordinate to present the manager with solutions and alternatives at the same time the problem is presented. This allows for a discussion of the merits of the proposals and for the subordinate to leave with the responsibility of either implementing a solution or developing additional alternatives. It also minimizes the chance that the manager will need to “get back” to the subordinate with further guidance—which passes the initiative to the manager.

The authors also list 5 rules for managers to adhere to in the care and feeding of monkeys:

1. All monkeys are either fed or shot. Do not push issues into the “deal with later” pile because they will eat up enormous amounts of your discretionary time.

2. Only spend 15 minutes at any one feeding. Whatever the issue is it can usually be dealt with quickly. That doesn’t mean there won’t be follow up required but tackle the monkey in small pieces.

3. Feed the monkeys by appointment only. You set the schedule, not your monkey!

4. Insist on face to face or phone discussion when feeding the monkey. If you try to feed your monkey via email, it will fall back on your lap almost immediately because you will have to respond to the email.

5. Schedule the next feeding and list out the degree of expectation (recommend for approval, act and advise, routinely report, etc.) at that feeding.

If a manager can get control of these five steps to monkey management, she will have successfully restored the initiative for delegated projects to the appropriate personnel. Going forward, it will take much less time to check in on the health of each monkey in her subordinates’ care than it would to feed and nurture them herself. She can then use the extra time to exercise the vision and talents that earned her the management position in the first place.

Kim Small serves as Sponsored Programs Accounting Manager, Washington State University and Riddick Smiley is Grant & Contract Officer, Sponsored Programs, East Carolina University.
NCURA 50th Annual Meeting Co-chairs
L-R: Tim E. Reuter, Boston University; Denise J. Clark, University of Maryland College Park; Ann M. Holmes, University of Maryland College Park

NCURA 2008 President and Vice President/President Elect
David J. Mayo, California Institute of Technology and Denise J. Clark, University of Maryland, College Park

SNL’s Darrell Hammond entertains at the Sunday evening banquet

50th Keynote speaker, Steve Squyres, Cornell University professor of astronomy and the scientific Principal Investigator for the Mars Rover Mission

Region IV awarded the “Region with the Most Authentic Golden of Age of Hollywood Theme” with The Wizard of Oz
The exhibit hall draws lots of traffic as members meet with exhibitors and enjoy the new NCURA TV lounges.
Tuesday morning saw a historical election day and an address from Mary Matalin and James Carville
Planning for the 51st Annual Meeting is well underway.

“The Program Committee is already hard at work ensuring that the conference will carry on the strong NCURA tradition of offering excellent workshops and engaging sessions. We look forward to the opportunity to educate and entertain while providing a great value to our membership.”

Dave Richardson, Pennsylvania State University, NCURA Vice President and NCURA 51st Annual Meeting Program Chair

“I am honored to be a part of the planning for the 51st Annual Meeting. We hope to make it an exciting event as well as a memorable one. Stay tuned for updates over the next several months as the program committee works hard to bring the 51st Annual Meeting to life. We look forward to seeing you there!”

Michelle Vazin, Vanderbilt University, NCURA 51st Annual Meeting Program Co-chair

“I am looking forward to working with Dave, Michelle, the program committee, and the NCURA National Office to make the 51st Annual Meeting a most memorable event!”

Anthony Ventimiglia, Auburn University, NCURA 51st Annual Meeting Program Co-chair
CALL for ARTICLES

Research Management Review, official journal of the National Council of University Research Administrators, is a scholarly peer-reviewed publication focused on a broad range of issues affecting the administration of academic research. It provides a forum for the dissemination of knowledge about the political, economic, legal, and social aspects of research administration. Research Management Review is published semiannually by the National Council of University Research Administrators, 1225 19th Street, N.W., Suite 850, Washington, D.C. 20036. Previous issues are available on-line: http://www.ncura.edu/content/news/rmr/

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Contact the RMR Editor:
Pamela Plotkin, Ph.D., Deputy Director, Office of Sponsored Programs
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An Historical Perspective

During this fiftieth year of our history, the NCURA Magazine will be running articles from time to time written by some of the pioneers in our field. Some articles will be personal stories, such as this first one by Ann (Nancy) Greenberg. Others may compare the profession today to the way it was when the author first entered the field or offer the perspective of a long-time observer. All of us owe a debt of gratitude to these early leaders. They shaped our field into what it has become, and through their efforts we became recognized as a profession. The editors believe these are voices with important messages and compelling stories for us today. We hope you enjoy this series and that it helps all of us understand and better appreciate that university research administration is a journey, not a destination.

– Robert Lowman

Reflections on a Career in Research Administration

by Ann (Nancy) Greenberg

OVER THE YEARS WHEN ASKED TO EXPLAIN WHAT I DID FOR A LIVING, I CAME TO EXPECT THAT ALMOST NO ONE WOULD UNDERSTAND MY ANSWER. IF I TOLD PEOPLE I WORKED AT A UNIVERSITY, THEY ASSUMED THAT I TAUGHT. WHEN I SAID “NO,” CONFUSION USUALLY REIGNED. IF I TRIED TO EXPLAIN I WAS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH, THEY ASSUMED I WAS A PI. WHEN I SAID “NO,” CONFUSION REIGNED AGAIN. AND SO, WITH YOUR INDULGENCE, I'M GOING TO BEGIN THIS REMINISCENCE WITH A VERY ABBREVIATED HISTORY LESSON.

THE lesson opens with the 1930s, pre-World War II. Among the events of note in the international sphere, rearmament was under way in Germany, with planners and designers drawing upon weapons technology advances which had begun to emerge in World War I through scientific-military partnerships. Contrary to the German tradition in which scientists typically taught in universities but did their research in separate institutes outside the universities, in the US scientists did both their teaching and their research in university facilities.

In this country, groups of scientists concerned with German rearmament, many viewing it as preparatory to a second world war, began communicating to the highest levels of the US government their awareness that in Germany significant scientific advances were being adapted for strategic purposes and incorporated into military equipment and materiel. One outcome was the establishment of a White House-based Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD), its purpose to collaborate with military scientists and to identify and contract with campus-based scientists capable of meeting defense-related technical needs as well as preparing cadres of scientifically and technically competent manpower.

While many US faculties included academics with adaptable skills and knowledge, often universities' business operations were not structured to handle the particular administrative demands of this new funding. New assignments and often a considerable degree of improvisation were called for in order both to provide research faculty with the requisite support services required for contract fulfillment and to address previously “foreign” matters such as handling the direct and indirect costs of these projects, space requirements, and secrecy issues.

Moving into the post-war years, university reputations became increasingly tied to levels of funded research as those institutions identified as research universities gained prominence. The administrative functions which supported their programs of research became known as research administration. It generally encompassed the development on campuses of offices with a business orientation and which reported to the financial side of the house; some others evolved with an academic orientation and reported to an academic officer.

Scientists active in OSRD programs during the war often later became advocates for continuing federal funding of campus research, positing the notion of a special partnership. At the federal level the National Science Foundation was created (in 1950) by Congress to provide campus-based researchers with funding for investigator-initiated research programs.

That era also saw the emergence of funds from such entities as the Office of Naval Research, Air Force Office of Scientific Research, and the Army Research Office, spun off from defense mission agencies with a new orientation to ideas initiated by university scientists.

As we know, though, things rarely stay the same. Events in the late 1960s and 1970s ended a period of rapid post-war economic growth and relative social tranquility. Our involvement in Vietnam, the ensuing student anti-war demonstrations and campus uprisings, along with emotional and political residue from the Cold War gave rise to widespread anti-academic sentiment.

The collaborative university-government relationship increasingly came under attack in Congress, the White House, and by some interest groups. Expensive, mission-driven research and development gained support, most of it not feasible for university campuses.

The use of the university-government relationship as a vehicle for implementation of social change (consent for the use of humans as subjects, oversight of the use of animals in experimentation, maintenance of a drug-free work environment, changes in physical plant to facilitate hiring disabled workers, etc.) gained importance. One perhaps unintended consequence was that these new initiatives required the employment of campus-based compliance officers at almost the same time as the federal Office of Management and Budget imposed new limitations on university expenditures associated with research infrastructure.

The nature of the relationship sometimes became more adversarial than collegial. Tellingly, lobbying for funding, including “earmarks,” a political process, often substituted for the prior selection process based on technical competitiveness and merit review.

This was the world of work I entered in 1961 when I accepted a position as Secretary/Assistant to the Director of Research Administration at New York University (NYU). In one important sense research administration then was hardly unique, since it then was, like the commercial world, pretty much populated by and certainly controlled by men. I had an undergraduate degree in history gained during four years spent in Ann Arbor at the University of Michigan, my Midwestern exposure tempering just a bit my born and bred New Yorker persona. My entrance into research administration followed brief stints in radio time sales, educational radio (at The New York Times), and public relations.
I knew those earlier jobs weren’t for me. What I didn’t yet know was that I had found my career: The office when I arrived at NYU was basically one man and one secretary, reporting directly to the University Chancellor. We worked closely with others on the business side of the house. I did much of what needed to be done, like administrative assistants everywhere. I also did some things I thought should be done, like a good professional staff—and here begins the real difference. What “should be done” included giving advice to faculty looking for research funding and helping them develop budgets for their work, critiquing their proposals, and equipping myself to do that by consulting sponsor personnel.

My job and what I did grew as the industry and NYU’s participation in it expanded, including some very modest staff growth, notably two particular young people, one male, one female, about whom a bit more further along. The director and the HR office (known as Personnel in those days) pretty routinely reviewed and reassessed what I was doing. My title changed from time to time to reflect the increasing variety of tasks I took on, many of which fell to me almost by accident. Often, no one else at the university was paying much attention to the particulars of the evolving university-sponsor relationship, and I was willing to take responsibility for organizing and recommending to other players at the institution what I believed were necessary responses to those particulars.

During some of those years, actually 10 of them, I also attended night school, writing papers mostly between 3 and 6 am... thought about what kind of help we could use, if we could afford it. I asked for more staff and sometimes got a bit more money to create new positions. The office’s mission was—and is—to represent the interests of research faculty and the university acting as the interface between sponsors, the university and the research faculty. I became somewhat of a commuter to Washington, in the earlier days spending much of my time promoting faculty ideas to agency program officers, while also negotiating agreements with agency contract officers. In later years I spent more time on professional association matters, advocating for amendments to the agreements and understandings between the government and the university community as a committee or board member of professional associations.

I retired from that work a bit more than ten years ago, leaving behind those two once-young colleagues. First one and then the other succeeded into the directorship, while I entered upon a second career with a part-time appointment at NYU as an archivist in the University Archives. I am retiring from that work this fall. Among the projects I have worked on over these latter years I am proudest of creating an archival record of research administration at the university, which had not previously existed.

We worked hard, of course, as research administrators still do today, but it wasn’t only work. There were plenty of laughs to be had and friendships with a universe of smart, interesting people. Also on the plus side, our field has matured a great deal. I think today research administrators have a lot less trouble explaining to others what they do. It’s truly a terrific career.

Ann (Nancy) Greenberg worked for more than 35 years in Research Administration at New York University, rising from a secretarial position to be Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs. A long-time member of NCURA, she retired in 1997. This article has been adapted from remarks delivered to Soroptimist International of New York City, October 2008.

This year’s FRA X has over 90 educational offerings that include sessions targeted toward attendees with several years of experience as well as sessions that are more basic and geared toward attendees that are somewhat new to research administration.

In addition to a full day of workshops and 2 days of concurrent sessions, the program will also have 10 roundtable discussions at the end of Tuesday’s schedule for those of you that would like to continue to discuss topics that are of interest to you once the concurrent sessions are done for the day.

This year’s Keynote Session will be presented by the entertaining economist Gene Stanaland. Dr. Stanaland has been called the “Will Rogers of Economics”. He is known for his ability to take a detailed and somewhat confusing topic and explain it in a way anyone can understand. Dr. Stanaland puts a humorous spin on what some may call a dull subject while analyzing current economic conditions and explaining the impact they will have on individuals and businesses.

Dr. Stanaland has decade’s worth of economic experience. For 20 years he worked in the Department of Economics at Auburn University, which he was the head for the last 8 years he was there. Dr. Stanaland is currently the head of GSE, a large economic consulting firm.

To continue on with NCURA’s “green” initiative, the concurrent session handouts for FRA X will be posted on the FRA X website before the conference so attendees can print out the handouts for sessions that are of interest to them. Attendees will also be given a CD onsite that will have session handouts on them so attendees can bring back the information they learned to their offices.

Program and registration information for FRA X can be found at http://www.ncura.edu/content/educational_programs/sites/frax/
Congratulations to the Program Committee and the NCURA National Office for an outstanding 50th Anniversary Annual Meeting. The meeting was a huge success that I am sure was enjoyed by all! Region I was involved in several wonderful events at the Annual meeting:

- A unique rendition of “Singing in the Rain” complete with overcoat, boots, and fedora during the Tuesday night party.
- Monday night performance with Region I’s very own band: “The Grateful Deadlines”
- A fabulous display of Region I’s history by Historical Committee Chair Ben Prince

This year we awarded three Regional Travel Awards for the National meeting. The recipients were:

- Heather Bilotta, Acting Research Accounting Manager, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
- Ellen Church, Associate Administrative Director, Boston Medical Center
- Julianne Deluca, Administrative Specialist I, Dana Farber Cancer Institute

Please join me in congratulating all the awardees!

Reminder: The 2009 Region I Spring Meeting will be held at the Grand Summit Resort Hotel & Conference Center on beautiful Mount Snow in Vermont from Sunday May 3rd through Wednesday May 6th, 2009.

Please visit the Region I Home page under “2009 Regional Meeting, May 3-6, 2009 - Save the Date!” for additional information as it is posted.

Please visit the Region I Home page for the latest on training opportunities such as “Essentials of Sponsored Research Administration” and “Advanced Topics – Sponsored Research Administration” as well as the RADG Sessions.

On behalf of the region, I would like to thank John Harris for his service as Secretary for the past 2 years. Also thanks go to Gary Smith our first Past Chair. We appreciate both for their dedication and commitment to the region over the last few years.

This will be my final newsletter as Chair of Region I, since on January 1st, Franc Lemire took over as Chair of Region I for 2009. It has been my distinct pleasure to serve our region for the past 2 years, as Chair Elect and this year as Chair. My sincere thanks go to all of our wonderful colleagues for all their hard work within the region and to their dedication to the profession of Research Administration. It takes so many people to run the region: The Advisory Committee members, the 2008 Spring Meeting program committee, presenters and attendees, all the Committee Chairs and members, all the RADG panelists, and our many other volunteers. Thanks for your support in making my tenure as Chair so rewarding and, most of all, enjoyable! In addition to working with some incredible folks, I thoroughly enjoyed the ride.

I look forward to seeing you at the next Region I event.

Tom Egan is the Immediate Past Chair of Region I and serves as the Assistant Director, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

What’s happening in YOUR Region?

Speaking of the Spring Meeting Region II is now in full swing on preparations for our 2009 Spring Meeting, to be held at the Loews Annapolis Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland from April 26 through 28. The Program Committee, chaired by Greg Slack, Clarkson University, and co-chaired by Jared Littman, St. John’s University, is planning a meeting that you’ll both benefit by and enjoy. The theme of this year’s meeting is “Navigational Tools for Smooth Sailing in the Seas of Research Administration.” The program will focus on the tools and knowledge we need to get us through the increasingly complex world of research administration in our day-to-day work. As we’ve promised to do at all Regional meetings, we will offer a “core knowledge” workshop. This is certain to be one of our best meetings yet— in a beautiful setting so please plan to join us for excellent professional development programming and networking opportunities and some just plain fun. More information on that will follow shortly.

As part of the Spring Meeting, we will hold our fundraiser for the American Cancer Society, a silent auction. Many of you had a chance to participate in a preview to the silent auction in our
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For more information contact Steven Dowdy, Coeus Program Director at info@coeus.org

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Regional Corner continued

hospitality suite at the Annual Meeting. That mini-auction was a great success and we look forward to a very successful “real thing.” Stay tuned for more information on this and the opportunity to donate items to be auctioned.

Please join me in welcoming our new Chair and Treasurer for 2009. Alexandra (Alex) McKeown is our Chair for 2009. Alex served as Chair-Elect and Chair of the Volunteer Committee in 2008, and has been a frequent NCURA presenter; so many of you have already had an opportunity to meet and work with her. Jeanne Galvin-Clarke becomes our Treasurer in 2009, after having served as Treasurer-Elect for 2008. Jeanne has also previously served the Region as Spring Program Committee Chair and in many other capacities. Alex and Jeanne were elected in 2007. We announced the results of our recent 2008 election at the Region’s Business Meeting held during the 50th Annual Meeting in November; but I did want to take this opportunity to share with you, once again, the election results. Joseph (Joe) Sullivan is our Chair-Elect, Holly Benze is our Treasurer-Elect, and Brenda Kavanaugh is the regionally elected Member of the NCURA Board of Directors. Joe serves as Manager of Pre-Award Systems and Administration at Carnegie Mellon University. Holly is Associate Director, Research Projects Administration at Johns Hopkins University. Brenda serves as Senior Research Administrator in the Office of Research and Project Administration at the University of Rochester. She’s just completed a term as Treasurer for our Region, for which I’d like to express my sincere thanks. The Region’s finances are in good shape thanks in large part to Brenda’s work and diligence, and it’s great that NCURA as a whole will now be able to benefit by her talents. Brenda takes over as regionally elected Member of the NCURA Board of Directors from Erica Kropp, who just completed a two-year term in this position. Our thanks to Erica for the many updates she’s given us on national activities and for all of her service to the Region.

Do join me in welcoming all of the officers to their new positions, as well as in welcoming Diane Shaw back for the second year in her term as Secretary and in thanking her for her service in 2008. All of the 2009 officers have served the Region well in many capacities in the past, including on committees and as presenters. I very much look forward to their leadership during the coming year. And many thanks to all of the officer candidates for their unequivocal willingness to serve the Region. We are very lucky to have so many active members who are so generous with their time. It’s never difficult to ask one of our members to pitch in because they’re all happy to do so.

It has been my true honor to serve as your Chair in 2008. As I finish my term, I just want to take one final opportunity to encourage you to become involved in Regional activities. It really is the best way to maximize the benefits of your NCURA membership. I can tell you from experience that the effort is minimal compared to the benefit – the benefit to the volunteer and to the Region. There are so many opportunities available that there is something just right for everyone. Please contact Alex or any of the officers for information about volunteer opportunities and to join our effort. See you in Annapolis.

Mary Louise Healy is the Immediate Past Chair of Region III and serves as the Assistant Vice President for Research at Towson University.

f you didn’t make it to the NCURA 50th Annual Meeting, we missed you!

The programming was really good, and participants came away from the meeting with new ideas to implement at their own schools, as well as new contacts at other institutions for questions and help.

Tony Ventimiglia, Auburn University, chaired our brief Region III Business Meeting Tuesday morning. Our fearless chair kept us on schedule and on time! The agenda from the business meeting and many of the committee reports are on the Region III website.

Cathy Snyder, Vanderbilt University, gave her last Treasurer’s Report. Thank you for all your hard work, Cathy!

Special congratulations to our NCURA National Travel Award recipient Michael Sebastiani, from the Virginia Military Institute.

Mike is VMI’s Grants, Contracts and Intellectual Property Administrator; He has been in the field of university research administration for 5 years. He is responsible for supporting faculty and students in their efforts to procure extramural funding to support educational and research programs, as well as assisting in their intellectual property pursuits. We’re glad you were there, Mike!

Region III members should be receiving an email about a revision to the Region III Bylaws in early 2009. This revision amends the start date for the term of office for the Secretary so that they are consistent with current practice.

Mark your calendars: the next regional meeting will be held from May 3-6 in Panama City, Florida at the Marriott Bay Point Resort. Expect registration and preliminary program information in early 2009.

Chair-Elect Jill Frazier Tincher, University of Miami, presented the Program Committee for the upcoming Region III Spring Meeting and urged everyone to contact the Program Committee with session ideas. We hope to see you there!

Congratulations to the Region III participants in the 2008 LDI Class: Katherine Bir, The University of Alabama; Maria Valero-Martinez, University of Miami; and, Jeanne Ware, New College of Florida. We’d also like to congratulate the LDI Class of 2009 from Region III: Carolyn Elliott-Farino, Kennesaw State University and Chama Howson, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Membership and Awards Committee Chair Lori Brown (University of Central Florida) would like to remind us that the next Region III travel award nominations (for the Spring meeting) are due by February 2, 2009. Service award nominations are due by March 2, 2009. Please see the Region III website for the nomination applications, and send all applications to Lori at lobrown@mail.ucf.edu.

Region III Volunteer Coordinator Rick Smiley, East Carolina University would like to thank all the volunteers who served at the annual meeting. It is because of their efforts that Region III
Distinguished Service Award
A vote was taken and passed to hold a joint regional meeting in Region V in 2012. Our poll showed that the members were overwhelmingly in favor of this opportunity to join our colleagues with Region IV in St. Louis w ith Region IV in 2012.

For more Region III Annual Meeting photos, please visit Rick’s Flickr photostream: http://tiny.cc/ncuradc08.

Laura Letbetter and Sam Gannon serve as Region III’s Magazine team. Laura is the Director of Proposal Development for the Office of Grants and Contracts, Kennesaw State University. Sam Gannon is the Education and Training Manager for the Office of Grants and Contracts Management, Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

REGION IV
Mid-America
www.ncuraregioniv.com

Thanks to all of the Scarecrows, Evil Witches, Tinmen, Tinwomen, Cowardly Lions, Dorothy, Totos, Glinda, the Wizard of Oz, builders of the Yellow Brick Road, the King of the Lollipop Gang and to everyone who joined the cast of the “Wizard of Oz” for NCURA’s salute to the Golden Years of Hollywood at the annual meeting in November.

Dorothy never spoke any words truer than, “There’s No Place like Region IV!” First Place was never in doubt! Special thanks to Gigi Beaird and Diane Meyer for creative direction and to the Wizard himself (Robert Aull) for managing the logistics! Check the Region IV website (www.ncuraregioniv.com) for pictures of the party courtesy of Sue Kelch and Steve Hansen.

If you did not make it to the November business meeting here are a few updates. The Site Selection Committee (chaired by Christa Johnson, Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville) announced that the 2011 spring meeting will be held in Cleveland. We also took a straw poll to see if there was interest in a joint regional meeting with Region V in 2012. Our poll showed that the members were overwhelmingly in favor of this opportunity to join our colleagues from Oklahoma and Texas.

This winter you will be invited by the Region IV Awards Committee to make nominations for the following regional awards:

- Distinguished Service Award
- Kevin Reed Outstanding New Professional Award
- The Spring Travel Award
- The Special Merit & Distinction Award

Descriptions of these awards will be posted on our website. If you have any questions, please contact David Ngo, University of Wisconsin. These awards will be presented at the spring regional meeting.

Also this winter you will be hearing from our Nominating Committee chaired by Dave Lynch of Mayo Clinic. This year nominations will be accepted for Chair Elect, two Board Members at Large, and one Regionally Elected Member to the National Board of Directors. Descriptions of these elected positions will also be posted on the regional website.

Be sure to clear your schedule for the 2009 spring regional meeting. We will be heading to Minneapolis April 26 – 29. The conference will be held at the Radisson University Hotel. Details about the meeting will be posted on the Region IV website.

Sue Keehn is Chair of Region IV and serves as Director of the Institutional Review Board, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

REGION V
Southwestern
www.ncuraregionv.com

Annual Meeting Notes

What a terrific Annual Meeting! It was a pleasure to see so many Region V members in attendance – all 171 of you! I know many of you volunteered, and thank you for helping to make this meeting a success.

Saturday evening’s “Night of Networking” reception was a big hit. Each region had its history on display, and it was fun to visit with folks from the other regions and admire their displays. On behalf of the entire region, I would like to thank Matt Berry for compiling our history and Joanne Palmer for putting together the Region V scrapbook. The history can be viewed on the Region V website.

On Tuesday, Region V members Al Soltow and Laura Wade, NCURA Distinguished Service Award winners, were recognized during the plenary session. Other award recipients recognized from Region V include Barbara Reyes, who received one of the Catherine Core Minority Travel Awards, and Deborah Herr, who received the Region V National Travel Award.

Not only did we celebrate NCURA’s 50th anniversary, we were in the nation’s capitol to witness an historic election. The political humor of James Carville and Mary Matalin kicked off Election Day. That night we celebrated the Golden Anniversary of NCURA which included a dinner buffet, a costume contest, different musical venues, and watching the election results in Election Central – a truly exciting evening!

Business Meeting Highlights

- Mark your calendars! Vice-Chair Gail Davis discussed the spring 2009 meeting which will be held at the Westin Riverwalk Hotel in San Antonio, April 26-29 (Fiesta). If you are interested in giving a presentation or have an idea for a session, contact Gail at nancy.davis@lamaredu.
- There will be a call for meeting volunteers and session moderators in early spring, or contact Volunteer Coordinator Joanne Palmer at jp57@txstate.edu.
- If you are interested in working on the Publications Committee, contact Scott Davis at Scott-Davis@ohsu.edu.
- A vote was taken and passed to hold a joint regional meeting in St. Louis with Region IV in 2012.
- Door prize recipients were Chris Green, Diana Polendo Luna, and Marianne Woods. Jason Richter’s name was drawn for a free registration to the spring meeting.
- Turquoise boas and bow ties were handed out to wear at the Golden Anniversary party.

Region V toasts their two NCURA Distinguished Service Award recipients, Al Soltow, University of Tulsa, and Laura Wade, University of Houston.
Message from Ty Lane, Chair of the Nominating Committee

“It is a well-known fact that out of all of NCURA Regions, Region V is Number 1 in the Hip and Cool category. Lore is that Region V became this way because we have an infintude of enthusiastic members, plus we have nominated and elected the best and brightest to join our leadership ranks. Did I mention that we also have FUN together? All Region V members are invited to get connected in 2009 by gearing up for change, participating in the process, and becoming a part of the Region V leadership team! In January, 2009 you will be asked to nominate or self-nominate individuals who want to contribute attitude and aptitude by serving the organization in the following roles: Vice-Chair/Chair Elect, Secretary, Region V Member on the National Board of Directors, and 2 Ad Hoc Regional Executive Committee members. Read more about these opportunities at http://www.ncuaregionv.com/administration.htm.” (Marianne Woods and Hollie Schreiber join Ty on the Nominating Committee.)

Travel Awards and Distinguished Services Awards
We will soon be accepting requests for travel awards to the spring meeting (2 awarded at $500 each) and nominations for the Region V Distinguished Service Award. You will receive an e-mail blast when the information is posted on the Region V website.

Thank you and Welcome Aboard
I would like to thank the out-going members of the Executive Committee, Joanne Palmer and Toni Shaklee, for all their contributions. I would also like to welcome Marti Crawford and Sue Rivera who started their term in January.

Promotions and Achievements
Join me in congratulating Ty Lane on her graduation from the LDI program!

If you know of anyone who has been promoted, changed jobs, or has a noteworthy accomplishment, please email me at kayellis@austin.utexas.edu.

I hope you have a great year, and I look forward to seeing you at the meeting in San Antonio. Hotel and meeting registration will be posted soon!

Kay Ellis is the Chair of Region V and serves as Associate Director, Export Control Officer, in the Office of Sponsored Projects, University of Texas at Austin.

Regional Corner continued

2008 marked two important historical firsts for our region, our membership exceeded 1,000 and more than 300 members from Regions VI and VII attended our Spring Meeting. It was also a year of change. We adopted a Strategic Plan and revised our by-laws and administrative procedures to lay the ground work for implementing the plan. We also created two new standing committees, the Membership and Volunteer Committee and the Education and Professional Development Committee. These two committees permanently establish the importance of volunteerism, education and professional development within our region, as well as having created additional volunteer opportunities for our members. With the increase in volunteer opportunities came greater diversity in geographical representation on the committees and in other volunteer positions. We also increased the number of travel awards to a total of eight, four each to the Spring Meeting and 50th Annual Meeting.

While 2008 was a very successful year, the coming of the New Year also reminds us that we must move forward toward the future. In January, a new set of Regional Officers will begin leading our region with the benefit of having our Strategic Plan to guide them. Julie Guggino from Central Washington University will take over as Chair. The Secretary and Treasurer positions will be filled by Anne Hannigan of Stanford University and Sue Abeles of UCLA respectively. Joining them will be Sinh Simmons from University of Washington as Chair-elect, Maggie Griscavage from University of Alaska, Fairbanks as Secretary-elect, and Csilla Csapár from Stanford University as Treasurer-elect. I know that the Regional Officers and the Regional Advisory Committee will work diligently to ensure that we build upon last year’s successes.

We have much to look forward to in 2009, starting with a revamped awards and recognition program thanks to the efforts of the Awards Committee, which spent several months last year reviewing all aspects of our program. Their review resulted in several recommendations that were accepted by the Regional Advisory Committee in November. Most notably, the criteria for our recognition awards eligibility have been revised. Many of the previously used criteria were too narrow and effectively eliminated what would have otherwise been well qualified nominees. The recognition awards now consist of the Helen Carrier Distinguished Service Award, the Meritorious Contribution Award and the Barry Dorfman Outstanding Region VI Member Award. Please visit the Award Recognition Program page on the Region VI website for a complete description of these awards.

The Awards Committee also recommended expanding the travel award program to include the Preaward Research Administration and Financial Research Administration meetings. The Regional Advisory Committee approved this recommendation in concept and requested that the Awards Committee further consider how such an expansion could be implemented without substantially increasing the workload of the committee. In the meantime, Region VI will continue to make travel awards to the Spring Meeting and the Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. This year, the Regional Advisory Committee has again approved four travel awards of up to $500 to the Spring Meeting in Santa Fe, NM.

Our Strategic Plan calls for the establishment of an Educational and Professional Development Committee (EPDC), which occurred late last year. This committee will begin its work in January and will be responsible for ensuring that the Region provides high-quality, comprehensive education and professional development programs to the membership. The EPDC will have primary responsibility for coordinating the Region’s education and development programs and expanding them beyond the offerings at the Spring Meeting. This expansion may include activities such as regional traveling workshops, discussion groups in major metropolitan areas, preparing members to qualify for NCURA’s Leadership Development Institute, and promoting mentoring within the Region.

Kay Ellis is the Chair of Region V and serves as Associate Director, Export Control Officer, in the Office of Sponsored Projects, University of Texas at Austin.
A Web Site Committee will also begin taking up business in the New Year. This ad-hoc committee was formed late last year to address the issues and concerns related to the Region’s web site, including security, document integrity, data management, and disaster/emergency planning. Our web site has traditionally relied on donated resources from our member’s institutions, including hardware, software, and human resources for site maintenance, updating, expansion and content generation. Over the last ten years, we have become increasingly reliant on our web site for our day-to-day operations. As a result, the Regional Advisory Committee determined that it would be prudent to have a committee undertake a comprehensive review of our web site and associated information technology needs.

As this is my last Regional Corner article, I would be remiss if I didn’t close with words of thanks, appreciation and some final thoughts:

To the 2008 Regional Officers and the members of all of the regional committees, thank you for your outstanding service to our region. The successes of the last year are a direct result of your collective efforts and your determination, creativity, and commitment to excellence.

To Sam and Cora (our 2008 Secretary and Treasurer), I am at a loss for how to describe my appreciation for your support, efforts and teamwork… so, I will simply say thanks to both of you for everything.

To every member of Region VI, whether you are new to NCURA or are a long standing member, please consider volunteering to support our region. Volunteerism is the engine that drives our organization, which can only continue to thrive and grow through the efforts of its volunteers.

Finally, this last year was the most personally rewarding of my professional career and I am extremely grateful to the membership for allowing me to have the honor of being chair of our region.

Bruce Morgan is Immediate Past Chair of Region VI and serves as Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research, University of California, Riverside.

REGION VII ▶ Rocky Mountain
ncuregionvii.unm.edu

Dear Region VII Members,

Our Region VII Annual Meeting was a pleasure to see so many old and meet so many new friends at the 50th Annual Meeting. What a great meeting and what an exciting time to be in Washington! Thanks to everyone who helped make the meeting a success, and special thanks to Volunteer Coordinator Jackie Hinton (University of Utah) for organizing the Region VII New Member Reception; and Josie Jimenez (New Mexico State University) for taking the lead on the Region VII history display.

I would like to congratulate Lisa Schulze, Business Manager at Arizona State University Polytechnic Campus; Lisa Cox, Grant Accountant at Boise State; and Barbara Bunge, Subcontracts Manager at Montana State University who received $1,000 travel awards to attend the national meeting. Committee members were impressed with their strong commitments to participation in NCURA, and to research administration as a career. Thanks to Member-at-Large and Travel Awards Committee chair Karen Henry, Boise State, and Denise Wallen, University of New Mexico, for their service. It was great to see so many new members at the Annual Meeting!

Regional election results were presented at the Business Meeting on November 4, 2008. Thank you to all the candidates who accepted nominations for this election, and to everyone who voted.

Please join me in congratulating Debra Murphy, Arizona State University, who was elected as our new Chair Elect and Ralph Brown, Colorado School of Mines, who was elected to a two-year term beginning January 1, 2009 as our second Member at Large. Deb will serve one year as Chair Elect beginning January 1, 2009 and then rise to the Chair’s position in January 2010. It also is my pleasure to congratulate Kathy Delahoy, Colorado State University, on being elected to a two-year term as the regionally elected member to the National Board of Directors beginning on January 1, 2009. To all of our members, thanks for your commitment to volunteerism and participation in our regional meetings and activities! There are many other opportunities to participate in regional and national activities, and if you’d like to get involved, please let me or another officer know of your interest.

I would like to express my thanks to, and great respect for, Regional Executive Committee Chair Elect Dianne Horrocks, Secretary/Treasurer Kate Green, Members-at-Large Karen Henry and Debra Murphy, Immediate Past Chair Josie Jimenez and Volunteer Coordinator Jackie Hinton. It’s been a great pleasure and privilege to serve with you!

I hope you are planning to attend the Region VII/Spring Meeting in Santa Fe, New Mexico April 5-8, 2009! Check our website for Early Bird registration and lock in your meeting and hotel reservations now. Our venue is the historic La Fonda Hotel located on the Plaza across the square from the Palace of the Governors. The special conference rate of $145 per night is available from April 3-10, 2009 if you would like to extend your stay. The Program Committee consists of representatives from both regions, with Region VI Chair Elect Julie Guggino, Central Washington State University; and Chair Elect Dianne Horrocks, Idaho State University; acting as co-chairs; this year Region VI will take the lead in developing the meeting program and Region VII for site arrangements; Region VII co-track leaders include Randy Draper, University of Colorado — Compliance/Legal; Christine Pacheco, University of New Mexico — Departmental Administration; Tim Edwards, University of Montana — Financial; Denise Wallen, University of New Mexico — Government; Brian Christian, University of New Mexico — IT; Ellen Thompson, Lewis & Clark State, College and Jackie Hinton, University of Utah — Pre-Award; and Winnie Enenga, Northern Arizona University and Ralph Brown, Colorado School of Mines — Senior/Professional Development. Thanks to everyone who submitted ideas for sessions, or volunteered to present or otherwise assist at the meeting. Be sure to visit the Region VII website for updated meeting information!

Happy New Year!

Winnie Enenga is Immediate Past Chair of Region VII and serves as Director of Grant and Contract Services, Northern Arizona University.

Jasie Jimenez and Kate Green review the Annual Meeting program.

Friends gather to congratulate Denise Wallen, University of New Mexico, recipient of the NCURA Distinguished Service Award.
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2009

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WHAT THE NEIGHBORHOODS OFFER YOU

Listserv: Access to the collective knowledge of your peers at your fingertips. Recent postings include: NSF Revised Proposal Guide, NIH Policy to fund meritorious science earlier, BIS Email notification service and NIH timeline for Adobe transition.

Research Administration Resources: Each Neighborhood has a plethora of topic-specific resources. In addition, there are links to over 400 urls from colleagues around the country willing to share their policies, practices and agency references as resources.

Online Chats: Free hour-long text only live chats with experts from across the nation. Archived transcripts are an excellent resource for discussion and staff meetings. See the latest transcripts on *International Subcontracting Issues, America COMPETES Update, Training Grants Issues, Grants.gov Adobe Forms Update* and *Export Control Considerations at the Proposal Stage*.

On Campus Member Profiles: Electronic interviews of colleagues designed to give a personal account of the day-to-day activities, issues, and obstacles in research administration. Check out the archives for interviews of colleagues from around the country.

Online Career Center: Access to the latest employment opportunities from around the country.

New or experienced, large or small, academic or medical

Click to open map

*Virtual Communities of Professional Interest*  
Supportive Network of Colleagues  
Up-to-Date Information  
Library of Resources (websites, FAQs)  
Job Opportunities

The neighborhoods are a free NCURA member benefit. Visit them today at: http://www.ncura.edu/members/neighborhoods/
COMPLIANCE

Connecting with Your Colleagues: Compliance Neighborhood Listserv

The compliance neighborhood listserv is an excellent resource for seeking advice or a second opinion on those tricky research compliance questions that we all encounter on a routine basis. If you haven’t yet subscribed, please do so by emailing info@ncura.edu with a message stating that you would like to join the compliance neighborhood listerv.

To encourage greater use of the listserv, please do not hesitate to contact myself or another compliance neighborhood committee member if you would prefer to have someone post your query anonymously. Research compliance issues can be sensitive and we want to try to enable members to seek advice from their fellow compliance colleagues. We have done this on an ad hoc basis in the past with some success, so please avail yourself of this resource.

Upcoming Research Compliance Events
Human Subject Protections: Bridge to the Future
OHRP Research Community Forum
January 30, 2009
Phoenix, AZ
Sponsored by ACRP Phoenix Chapter and Banner Health

Reducing Regulatory Burden: Real Strategies for Real Change
OHRP Research Community Forum
May 14, 2009
Ann Arbor, MI
Sponsored by University of Michigan, Northwestern University, and Ohio State University

Research Conference on Research Integrity
May 15-17, 2009
Niagara Falls, NY
Sponsored by ORI, DHHS, and the Roswell Park Cancer Institute

Carol Pech is Chair of the Compliance Neighborhood Committee and serves as Assistant Director, Health Sciences Institutional Review Board Office, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

FRA

There are several important topics that FRA neighbors should be on the watch for.

The Federal Financial report (FFR) is coming. This FFR will combine both the FSR (SF-269) and FCTR (SF-272) and will simplify federal grant financial reporting. Several Federal sponsors have already implemented the use of the FFR with awards beginning on 10/1/08, and all Federal agencies must have this form fully implemented in all grant awards by 10/1/2009. The NSF has a link detailing more information as well as a chance to provide system feedback at: (https://www.research.gov/anonymous.portal?sessionid=wc59jYpXTnsh2zqN4ITrVHk3Dr8jC2y9fntty7XC0Wh4hkPmlzj-1945839287?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=/page_frr_marketing&_nlls=false)

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) was signed on 9/26/2006, with planned implementation at the time for 10/1/2008. FFATA legislation is intended to collect information on Federal Financial Assistance awards, to provide transparency to the general public to “empower every American with the ability to hold the government accountable for each spending decision.” The largest impact will be realized by institutions that now report subawards (or ensure their subawardees report) to a central repository. More info at: (http://frwebbgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=109_cong_bills&docid=f:s2590enrtxt.pdf)

Visit the FRA neighborhood for the direct links and more information! We hope to see you at FRA X in Palm Springs (La Quinta, CA), Feb 9-11, 2009.

Brian Sevier is a member of the FRA Neighborhood Committee and serves as the Assistant Director Post Award, University of Florida, IFAS Sponsored Programs.

PRE-AWARD

We are looking forward to an exciting year in 2009. Our goal is that you will use the Pre-Award Neighborhood (PAN) as a vehicle for sharing important information on a variety of pre-award topics.

The PAN Committee welcomes two new members Denise Moody (Princeton University) and Kevin Stewart (University of California, Santa Barbara) whose expertise and talent will continue to make the neighborhood a richer resource. Wanda Ford (Florida A&M University) and Rengarajan Balaji (Ohio University) are rotating off the committee. We want to thank Wanda and Rengarajan for their enthusiasm, input and service.

The PAN committee will continue to be chaired by Robyn B. Remotigue (Mississippi State University). The remaining committee members include Aynoka Bender (Emory University), Teresa Carey (Texas State University), Deborah Fisher (University of Pennsylvania), Candece Lindsay (Arizona State University), Rosemary Madnick (Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science) and Deborah Price (Baylor Research Institute).

The PAN list serve is a great resource that allows you to connect with colleagues around the country dealing with similar issues. We are encouraging everyone to sign-up to receive valuable resources for pre-award administrators. In addition, we are encouraging (soliciting) feedback to ensure the PAN will continue to evolve to meet the needs of its members.

Please come check out PAN at the following link: http://www.ncura.edu/content/regions_and_neighborhoods/neighbrhoods/pre_award/index.php

Rosemary Madnick is a member of the Pre-award Neighborhood Committee and serves as Director, Office of Grants, Contracts and Compliance, Charles Drew University of Medicine & Science.
Virtual Communities of Professional Interest

www.ncura.edu/members/Neighborhoods

PUI

As the new Chair of the Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions Neighborhood Committee, I would like to extend an invitation to anyone who serves at a PUI to join our community! Besides the resources that are posted on the neighborhood website, you will gain access to a very active and helpful listserv.

Those of us at smaller institutions usually do not have colleagues on our campuses to whom we can turn for answers to questions that arise when dealing with federal regs, policies and procedures, and so on. Your NCURA PUI friends are always happy to share their knowledge and experience and lend a helping hand!

And speaking of the website, I am looking forward to building on the ideas of my predecessor, Ken Clark, for making it a more “resourceful” tool. If you have policies, procedures, a great grants handbook, ideas for faculty incentives or training, or anything else you think would be of interest to others, please send to me for posting. I am particularly interested in collecting information about agencies and programs that are “PUI-friendly.”

I look forward to hearing from all of you PUI-ers out there – the more feedback the better!

Sally Tremaine is the Chair of the Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions Neighborhood Committee and serves as Director, Academic and Government Grants, Quinnipiac University

2008 Catherine Core Travel Award Recipients

NCURA once again received an impressive pool of applicants for the 2008 Catherine Core Minority Travel Award. The award is available to minority applicants who, because of financial constraints, could not otherwise attend NCURA’s Annual Meeting. The awardees receive up to $1,500 toward travel expenses associated with attending the Annual Meeting. In addition to assisting in the financial aspects of attending the Annual Meeting, this award also offers a wide variety of services and opportunities for the awardees to interact with their peers and colleagues from other educational institutions around the country.

The 2008 Catherine Core Travel Award recipients were:

- Tisha Kawahara, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Katherine Mustea, Northwestern University
- Barbara Reyes, University of Texas at Austin

The NCURA Nominating and Leadership Development Committee (N&LDC) eagerly anticipates the participation and leadership that our awardees will bring to future NCURA activities.

Here’s what this year’s recipients had to say about their experience:

Barbara Reyes
Grants & Contracts Specialist, University of Texas at Austin

“From FAR to Intellectual Property, from Effort Reporting to Climate change the meeting captured our continued role in sponsored research administration within the broader community through which understanding, shared ideas and dreams flow into original research. I was humbled to meet Ms. Core and I am proud to be a part of an organization that continues to honor her past contribution to the organization. Ms. Core’s presence added an additional dimension to the meeting and I will never forget meeting her. The juncture of events at this meeting yielded a very important experience for me. While the educational content of the meeting gave me a stronger logic of my role in sponsored research it gave me a stronger sense of what lies beyond the edges of my comfort zone and knowledge base. There is still much to learn.”

Tisha Kawahara
Research Administrator, University of Wisconsin-Madison

“The conference was very informative, impressive and inspirational, and gave me the opportunity to meet and connect with other research administrators from across the United States. Research administrators are amazing people, and it was so delightful to be surrounded by individuals who understand and deal with the same day-to-day vocational responsibilities. …and the speakers and moderators are professionals who can share their own personal experience and knowledge of the subject matter”

Katherine Mustea
Grant & Contract Financial Administrator, Northwestern University

“Attending the NCURA annual meeting in Washington, DC was a great place to meet others. It was a pleasure to meet Catherine Core in person and to meet many of the faces of NCURA. I built new friendships with colleagues from other universities and hospitals. Many of these individuals had questions and doubts similar to my own and they had developed solutions for some of the daily challenges we all face. Thank you to all who volunteered for this meeting. It was a wonderful benefit to have such talented and experienced people speaking and assisting throughout the meeting.”

The application for the 2009 Catherine Core Minority Travel Award will soon be available – we look forward to many outstanding applications in 2009!
NCURA Departmental Research Administration Workshop:
Offering Departmental Administrators an Excellent Opportunity to Advance their Knowledge.

Here’s what some past attendees had to say:

It was a tremendous opportunity for the University of Maryland to host its first NCURA workshop geared for departmental research administrators. The uniqueness of DRA [workshop] is that it’s designed by and for the departmental research administrator. The interactive workshop provided participants with hands on experience in dealing with the day to day issues and challenges departmental administrators face in the administration of sponsored projects. UM staff came away with tools and examples to assist them in managing their awards. It was well worth the investment to bring this professional development to the University. Administrators are still asking when is it coming back!

Antoinette Lawson
Associate Director, Office of Research Administration and Advancement
University of Maryland, College Park

The NCURA workshop for departmental research administrators was a valuable experience. The format of the workshop was refreshing, fun, and engaging. The content was relevant and useful. The exercises and workbook gave me hands-on experience that I have been able to use in my daily job. Perhaps one of the most beneficial aspects of this workshop was the opportunity to meet people who serve in similar roles in other departments on campus. I feel less isolated, more supported, and more confident in my ability to respond to difficult and complex situations in my job. I would highly recommend this workshop to anyone who serves in the role of departmental business administrator.

Betsy Slack
Business and Grants Manager
Maryland Small Business Development Center Network
University of Maryland

NCURA Brings Workshops to YOUR Campus!

Looking for a cost effective way to train a large number of staff about the wealth of information surrounding sponsored programs? In addition to Fundamentals, the Financial Research Administration Workshop, and Sponsored Project Administration Level II Workshop, NCURA’s Departmental Research Administration Workshop is now available to come to your campus!

You supply the workshop on-campus location, the meals and beverage breaks, and the necessary AV equipment and NCURA will provide the rest - a faculty, who are leaders in the field, all workshop materials and a discounted registration fee. This is an incredibly cost effective way to educate a large number of people from your campus on the core principles of research administration.

To schedule your campus session contact:
Tara Bishop, NCURA Associate Executive Director, Phone: 202-466-3894 or Email: bishop@ncura.edu

MILESTONES

DENISE ROULEAU accepted the position of Proposal Development/ Research Administration Specialist at the New England School of Acupuncture in Newton, MA effective October 21, 2008.

MARJORIE PIECHOWSKI has been promoted to Director of Research Support in the College of Engineering & Applied Science at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

PATRICIA HAWK is now Director of Sponsored Programs at Oregon State University.

CONGRATULATIONS!
VICE CHANCELLOR FOR RESEARCH AND DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

The University of New Orleans (U.N.O.) invites applications and nominations for the position of Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate School. U.N.O. is an S.R.E.B. Four-Year 2 institution, a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University-Intensive, and a C.O.C./S.A.C.S. Level VI institution, with almost 12,000 students enjoying a broad range of academic programs nearly one-quarter of which are at the master's or doctoral level. Culturally, socially, economically, and intellectually, the University of New Orleans is one of the major assets of the City of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana. For more information about the university, please visit its Web site at http://www.uno.edu.

DUTIES: The Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate School reports directly to the Chancellor and has the following areas of responsibility:

- Coordinating the activities of the university in the area of research, including identifying on-campus research efforts, promoting selected research opportunities, and identifying national trends in which the university should participate; and taking a leadership role in pursuing U.N.O.'s goal of achieving a higher national standing in the academic research community.
- Directing the efforts of the sponsored programs group.
- Working with federal, state, and local agencies and industries to support campus projects.
- Recommending campus-wide research policies to the Chancellor.
- Serving as the liaison with all graduate departments and programs, and with off-campus communities, to maintain excellence in graduate programs.
- Encouraging the recruitment of outstanding and diverse graduate students and faculty members.
- Serving on various university and state committees that ensure quality in graduate education and research.

QUALIFICATIONS INCLUDE: Ph.D. or equivalent from an accredited university; an outstanding record in research and education commensurate with the appointment to the rank of full professor; and a proven record of administrative leadership. The ideal candidate has a broad knowledge of federal funding processes and experience working with funding agencies. The candidate should have excellent interpersonal and communication skills.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE: Please send a current curriculum vitae and contact information, a cover letter, and contact information for at least five references. Applicants will be notified before references are contacted. Electronic submission of application materials is preferred. Please send to: Dr. Dennis D. Murphy, Chair, Director of Grants and Sponsored Research Search Committee, Office of Academic Affairs, Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah, GA 31419-1997.

Applications received after that date will not be reviewed. For additional information, contact Dr. Dennis D. Murphy at dmurphy@armstrong.edu, at 912-344-1997, or at the address provided above.

The University of New Orleans is an AA/EEO employer. Women, ethnic minorities, veterans and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

DIRECTOR OF GRANTS AND SPONSORED RESEARCH

Armstrong Atlantic State University invites applications and nominations for the new position of Director of Grants and Sponsored Research. The university is seeking an experienced professional who can work productively with faculty from its four colleges: Liberal Arts; Science and Technology; Health Professions; and Education. The Director will supervise an experienced grants administrator, receive additional clerical support, and report to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Responsibilities:

- Provide effective leadership in all aspects of pre- and post-award activity for externally-funded academic programs and research
- Provide effective leadership for significantly increasing the university’s research and programmatic grant funding
- Maintain currency with opportunities, processes, and timelines of a broad range of funding sources, particularly federal agencies, and provide to faculty complete and timely information on available grants
- Develop a supportive environment in which the Director will energetically encourage proposal development and actively assist faculty, staff, and administrators in preparing competitive proposals to external funding agencies
- Develop and maintain appropriate operational policies and procedures and effective operation of the office
- Provide clear post-award direction for and general oversight of grant administration
- Work closely with the Office of Business and Finance to monitor all funded budgets and ensure fiscal integrity in all grant administration
- Maintain and document current compliance with applicable federal regulations

Qualifications:

- Earned master’s degree plus experience in administering grant-funded research and sponsored programs and/or grant writing or baccalaureate degree and five years’ experience in administering grant-funded research and sponsored programs and/or grant writing
- Extensive knowledge of applicable federal regulations and familiarity with the IRB process
- Ability to work with faculty from a variety of disciplines to encourage a culture of grantsmanship
- Well-honed skills in both research and technical writing
- Cultivated understanding of primary granting agency programs/processes and award terms and conditions pertinent to grant-funded research
- Experience in administering grant-funded research and sponsored programs at a college or university is strongly preferred

Salary is competitive and commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Letters of application, accompanied by a detailed resume, unofficial copies of transcripts, and contact information for three professional references, should be sent to:

Dr. Dennis D. Murphy, Chair, Director of Grants and Sponsored Research Search Committee, Office of Academic Affairs
Armstrong Atlantic State University
Savannah, Georgia 31419-1997

Review of applications will begin January 19 and continue until the position is filled. Armstrong Atlantic is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution subject to Georgia’s Open Records Act. Employment is contingent upon successful completion of a criminal background check.
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NCURA Calendar of Events

ONLINE TUTORIALS
A Primer on Clinical Trials, 7 week program  Next session: February 2–March 20, 2009
A Primer On Federal Contracting, 8 week program
Next session:  February 2–March 27, 2009
(other dates available for both Online Tutorials, visit the website for details.)

FUNDAMENTALS OF SPONSORED PROJECT ADMINISTRATION
Orlando, FL  February 4, 2009
Albuquerque, NM  March 4–6, 2009
Chicago, IL  May 27–29, 2009
Philadelphia, PA  August 3–5, 2009

SPONSORED PROJECT ADMINISTRATION II WORKSHOPS
Albuquerque, NM  March 4–6, 2009
New York, NY (NYU)  September 14–16, 2009

FINANCIAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOPS
Orlando, FL  February 4, 2009
Chicago, IL  May 27–29, 2009
Philadelphia, PA  August 3–5, 2009

FINANCIAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION X CONFERENCE
La Quinta Resort & Club, La Quinta, CA  February 8–9, 2009

2009 NCURA TV SATELLITE BROADCAST SERIES
Audits and the Audit Process  January 13, 2009
Cost Sharing: Why No Good Deed Goes Unpunished  March 10, 2009
F&A Rates for the Non-Accountant  June 9, 2009
Subrecipient Monitoring: Assessing Risk  September 15, 2009

2009 REGIONAL MEETINGS
Region I: Mount Snow, VT  May 3–6, 2009
Region II: Annapolis, MD  April 26–28, 2009
Region III: Panama City, FL  May 3–6, 2009
Region IV: Minneapolis, MN  April 26–29, 2009
Region V: San Antonio, TX  April 26–29, 2009
Regions VI/ VII: Santa Fe, NM  April 5–8, 2009

NCURA ANNUAL MEETING

For further details and updates visit our events calendar at www.ncura.edu

NCURA Magazine

CO-EDITORS
Robert Lowman
Associate Vice Chancellor for Research, Director of Research Services
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
300 Bynum Hall, CB#4100, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-4100
Ph: (919) 962-0656  Fax: (919) 962-6769
lowman@unc.edu

James J. Casey Jr.
Director of Contracts and Industrial Agreements
University of Texas at San Antonio
Multidisciplinary Studies Building, Room 4.01.70
One UTSA Circle, San Antonio, TX 78249
Ph: (210) 458-7814
james.casey@utsa.edu

Lynette Arias
Associate Vice President Sponsored Projects Administration
Columbia University
254 Engineering Terrace, New York, NY 10027
Ph: (212) 854-0606
L2348@columbia.edu

MANAGING EDITOR
Kathleen Larmett, Executive Director, NCURA
Ph: (202) 466-3894  Fax: (202) 223-5573
larmett@ncura.edu

ASSOCIATE EDITOR REGIONAL ACTIVITIES
Myrta Stager, Manager, Volunteer and Regional Relations, NCURA
(281) 412-6562  stager@ncura.edu

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
Alicia Waldt, Executive Assistant and Publications Coordinator, NCURA
Ph: (202) 466-3894  Fax: (202) 223-5573
waldt@ncura.edu

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
BIOMED CORNER:
Ben Prince
University of Massachusetts Medical School
Ph: (508) 79-7392  Fax: (508) 595-2200
bprince@meyersprimar.org

COMPLIANCE CORNER:
Naomi Schrag
Columbia University
Ph: (212) 854-8123  Fax: (212) 854-1680
ns2333@columbia.edu

erA CORNER:
Robert Beattie
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
Ph: (734) 717-6281  Fax: (734) 764-8510
beattie@umich.edu

CAPITAL VIEW:
Carol Blum
Council on Governmental Relations
Ph: (202) 289-6655  Fax: (202) 289-6698
CBlum@cogrd.edu

LEADERSHIP TIPS:
LDI Class of 2007
Karen Spear
Methodist Research Institute at Clarian Health
Ph: (317) 962-8765
kspear@clarian.org

ROVING AREA:
John Caruso
Oregon Health & Science University
Ph: (503) 494-9063  Fax: (503) 494-1191
jcaruso@ohsu.edu

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Latasha Johnson
Membership Manager
Phone: (202) 466-3894  Fax: (202) 223-5573
E-mail: johnson@ncura.edu
Website: www.ncura.edu

Changes of address should be reported to: NCURA,
1225 19th Street, NW, Suite 850, Washington, DC 20036

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