On the Cover  Each September-October issue is known as the Annual Meeting issue because it tracks the AM theme. Inside you will find the latest AM53 updates, articles that reflect the theme, and articles outside the theme that are timely and unique. AM53 is titled, “Do It Live, Do It Now, Get Involved!” - and it reflects what NCURA is all about. NCURA is only as strong as the members that are involved.

The issue begins with the latest news from AM53, including the Do It Live Sessions, Learning Lounge, and NCURA Communities. Kerry Peluso provides timely advice on how to get involved as a financial research administrator; Diane Barrett provides her own set of steps to getting involved; Tony Ventimiglia and Samantha Wescott speak to the many benefits of getting involved; and Maura Gilmartin writes about active and passive involvement as being equally winning choices.

Dean Kamen, a widely known inventor and entrepreneur, talks about innovation and the central role that universities play in fostering innovation. Our colleagues at NSF, Rick Noll and Justin Poll, provide an update on the new NSF approach to award payments. Another federal colleague, Rebecca Taylor at the State Department, talks about “global grand challenges” and how universities can be an integral part in addressing them.

This issue is the largest in the history of the Magazine. This is a testament to our colleagues who choose to “Get Involved” by writing articles. Due to space constraints, not all authors are mentioned here; but, suffice it to say, a special thank you is in order to all authors for their contributions.

Lastly, the following individuals will receive NCURA awards at the Annual Meeting: Peggy Lowry, Pat Green, Ed Herran, Heather Offhaus, Kerry Peluso, Beth Seaton, and Mark Herbst. Congratulations!

Enjoy the Annual Meeting, and remember……Get Involved!

James Casey  
Senior Editor
What’s new at this year’s Annual Meeting (AM53)? There are lots of cool, new things, but we wanted to let you in on the specific activities that we are most excited about – they are AWESOME!

**Do It Live Sessions** – NCURA is fully embracing social media to respond to and fully engage our members. We want to provide the best Annual Meeting experience we can for our members. These Do It Live sessions will be discussion-group type gatherings that NCURA creates “on the fly,” while at the meeting, based on the buzz of a particular topic. We’ll be “listening” for buzz-worthy topics via Facebook and Twitter. We will then communicate the time, place, topic, and presenter for each session. If you’re not tied into the FB and Twitter world … no worries! … We’ll have a live Twitter Feed displayed at the meeting, providing continual updates so everyone can “Get Involved.” Real-time response on critical issues…now that is “Doing It Live!”

**Learning Lounge** – At this year’s meeting we’re trying out a new way to engage and educate! These 15-minute sessions are designed for one, specific topic to be discussed. Presenters will speak in an open venue with seating for up to 40 people. With 20 sessions scheduled (10 on Monday and 10 on Tuesday), there are plenty of topics to help you find answers to your research administration questions. So if you are between sessions, or not sure what session or discussion group to attend, – “Do It Now”, come on over and join us in the Learning Lounge and find that golden nugget.

**NCURA Communities** – This Fall, NCURA will be unveiling its professional networking software (NCURACommunity). This software will enable our members to “Get Involved” and self-form into groups/communities, centered on whatever aspect of research administration the community is interested in. At AM53, we want to encourage the development of these communities by providing an opportunity for newly formed groups to get together for their first face-to-face at an NCURA Community Breakfast – look for details in the coming weeks.

**Do It Live, Do It Now – Get Involved!**

Dan Nordquist, Bruce Morgan, and Kallie Firestone
NCURA 2011 ELECTION RESULTS

PATRICIA HAWK, Director of Sponsored Programs, Oregon State University, was elected Vice President/President Elect of NCURA. Since joining NCURA in 1981, Hawk has been an active member for a number of years, both regionally and nationally. She currently serves as Chair of the Professional Development Committee. In addition, Pat is currently a Departmental Research Administrators Workshop faculty member and is a member of the National Peer Review team. She’s also a past Fundamentals Workshop faculty member and past Financial Research Administration Workshop faculty member. Pat has served on many program committees and has been an NCURA TV presenter as well as featured on NCURA Webinars. Pat served as Secretary-Treasurer of Region III, 1984-1986, and was Chair of Region VI, 2001-2002. Pat then served on the National Board of Directors, 2003-2004, and is the recipient of the 2006 NCURA Distinguished Service Award. As Vice President, Pat will be responsible for the 2012 Annual Meeting.

ROBERT ANDRESEN, Assistant Director of Post Award Services, Research and Sponsored Programs, University of Wisconsin-Madison, was elected Treasurer Elect. An NCURA member since 1994, Andresen is the current Chair of the Select Committee on Peer Review and is a current Financial Research Administration Workshop faculty member. He was Co-Chair of the 2011 Financial Research Administration 12 Conference and was a 2011 NCURA TV presenter. He served on the Board of Directors in 2010 and was a member of the Financial Management Committee, 2006-2007. Additional service includes Fundamentals Workshop faculty member, 2007-2009, speaker for NCURA podcast session “ARRA Part II”, 2005, Region IV Member of the Board of Directors, 2006-2008, and Region IV Chair of the Nominations Committee, 2007. In addition, Andresen is a 2004 graduate of the NCURA Leadership Development Institute.

About his service as Treasurer Elect, Bob offered, “I am honored to be selected for this role. I am looking forward to working on behalf of all members to continue to provide high quality professional development opportunities and to maintain the financial strength of NCURA.”

The NCURA membership also elected GEORGETTE SAKUMOTO, Administrative Officer, Office of Research Services, University of Hawaii, to the position of Secretary. Sakumojo joined NCURA in 1991, and currently serves on the National Board of Directors, following her previous service on the Board in 2002-2004 and again in 2009-2010 as the Region VI elected Board member. Her service also includes National Minority Participation Task Force member, 1999, and National Budget and Finance Committee member, 1997. Regional service includes Chair of Region VI, 2006-2007, and Secretary/Treasurer of Region VI, 1996-1998. Sakumoto’s service on regional committees and regional and national program committees is numerous as well. Sakumoto is the recipient of the 2009 NCURA Distinguished Service Award.

When asked about her role as Secretary, Georgette had this to say, “I am so excited to be an integral part of the NCURA executive ohana (family). I look forward to working with every one in the years to come.”


Also elected to the NCURA Board of Directors is MICHELLE VAZIN, Director, Office of Contracts and Grants, Vanderbilt University. Joining NCURA in 1994, Vazin served on the Board of Directors in 2010, the same year she graduated from the NCURA Leadership Development Institute. In addition to her contribution as a 2011 presenter on NCURA TV, Vazin also serves on the Financial Management Committee – Subcommittee on Development, 2006-2010, Co-Chair of the 51st Annual Meeting in 2009, and also served on the Program Committees for the 46th Annual Meeting, 2004, and the Financial Research Administration III and VIII Conferences, 2002 and 2007. Vazin was Chair of Region III, 2006-2007, and Chair of the Region III Nominating Committee, 2002-2004. She is the Co-Chair for the upcoming Financial Research Administration XIII Conference in 2012.

“When asked about his thoughts about serving on the NCURA Board of Directors, Jim responded, “It is an honor to be elected to the Board by my peers. I look forward to working to make NCURA stronger and even more responsive to changing needs in research administration.”

About his service on the Board of Directors, Michelle replied, “I am so excited to be elected to the Board which will enable me to give something back to NCURA. It will be very rewarding to be a part of the group that ensures NCURA stays on track and help in some small way to shape the future of NCURA over the next couple of years.”

Both Casey and Vazin will begin serving on the Board of Directors on January 1, 2012 and will serve for two years. Hawk will take office on January 1, 2012 and will serve for one year after which she will succeed to a one-year term as President of NCURA. Andresen will become Treasurer Elect on January 1, 2012 and will serve for one year after which he will succeed to a two-year term as NCURA Treasurer. Sakumoto will take office as Secretary on January 1, 2012 and will serve a two year term.
We are so excited to announce the 13th annual Financial Research Administration conference will take place in beautiful Orlando, FL from March 26-28, 2012. The conference will be held at the Swan and Dolphin Resort. The award-winning Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin is a Starwood resort conveniently located in the heart Disney between Disney’s Boardwalk and Yacht Club resorts.

The theme of the conference is “Formulas for Efficiency and Success.” FRA XIII will offer a robust and timely program that will address our ongoing need for essential financial guidance and information when dealing with sponsored programs as well as insight and discussions on hot topics and special interests currently relevant to financial research administration. This year’s conference will address many topics, both new and traditional, to help participants enhance and cultivate their knowledge necessary to operate effectively in and around financial research administration. There will be something for everyone!

We want to provide the formulas to assist you in strengthening your skills as well as a venue to promote the active discussion of what it takes to be a successful financial research administrator. In addition, weaved throughout conference workshops, concurrent sessions and discussion groups, there will also be many opportunities for attendees to meet and network with their peers and colleagues from around the country to share their experiences, have some fun and further expand their knowledge base. In the end, we want everyone to journey back to their own institutions with new ideas and strategies that will facilitate their success in research administration as they go forward.

Please make plans now to join us in March for FRA XIII!

Sincerely FRA XIII Co-Chairs,

Brenda Kavanaugh
University of Rochester

Michelle Vazin
Vanderbilt University
Research
Enterprise
Management

BRINGING EXCELLENCE
ACROSS THE INSTITUTION.

The best results are derived from team efforts. Huron’s Research Enterprise Management solutions improve every aspect of research administration performance. Our solutions and deep expertise enable clients to more effectively manage the business of research, improve financial management and cost reimbursement, improve service to faculty, and mitigate compliance risks. To see how our solutions can impact your mission, visit www.huronconsultinggroup.com.
More than twenty years ago, I founded FIRST® (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), a non-profit robotics program that uses competition to motivate kids to explore science and technology. Over the years, FIRST has grown into an international movement with hundreds of thousands of participants. We receive mentors and sponsorship from America’s largest and most influential corporations. And I am proud to say that we also receive support and inspiration from America’s best academic institutions.

This year, the number of colleges and universities that offered FIRST scholarships rose to 132, with $15 million available to our students. Our entire community is deeply appreciative that these institutions of higher learning are engaging in a practice that I am afraid is all too rare in modern academia: providing scholarships to actual scholars.

The vital importance of STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) education to the current generation of American students has been recognized by the National Academies, the National Science Foundation, and the President of the United States. American students currently rank 23rd in science and 31st in math out of 65 developed nations. Despite this failing performance, we are not adjusting our standards or our expectations to address this problem.

America needs a new generation of innovators and technology professionals in order to sustain its economic growth and global competitiveness. Our universities must be at the forefront of this effort to promote STEM and train our future scientific leaders. And to do this, our academic institutions must inspire their scholars to pursue careers in these challenging and rewarding fields.

FIRST is a readily-available source from which universities can draw. According to a study completed by Brandeis University, our alumni are not only more likely than their peers to attend college, but are three times as likely to major in engineering and four times as likely to choose a career in that field. Our veterans are also nine times as likely to secure internships after their freshman year. Among women and minorities, two demographics grossly underrepresented in the STEM fields, the impact of FIRST is equally dramatic.

Consider this fact: ten percent of MIT’s freshman class in 2008 were FIRST alumni. That percentage continues to grow, and other universities such as Kettering and Worcester Polytechnic Institute boast similar numbers for their incoming classes. The benefits of FIRST to college students extends beyond past participation in high school – Purdue is offering a course in their College of Engineering designed to train their students how to mentor a FIRST team. The experience of working with students to develop their own STEM skills reminds our mentors of why they love technology in the first place.

If universities are to lead the charge for innovation in America, then they need students and faculty who dream of blazing new trails in the STEM fields. This requires that these scholars be exposed to and inspired by science and technology at an early age. FIRST has a proven record of accomplishing precisely that.

I encourage each university, particularly those that seek to expand their STEM horizons, to become a part of the FIRST community. By sponsoring teams, offering scholarships, and providing inspirational mentors, America’s academic institutions can play a prominent role in restoring our nation’s technological leadership and economic strength.

For more information, please visit www.usfirst.org.
Some would say the view in the Capitol is pretty grim. Let me suggest, however, that the view for colleges and universities may, in fact, be improving. Without lots of money to spend, the Administration and Federal agencies are focusing much-needed attention on reducing regulatory burden. The responses to the call for retrospective review of regulations included in President Obama’s January 18, 2011, Executive Order 13563, Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review, may not have an immediate effect; but the principle of reducing regulatory burden and the review of regulations to consider burden reduction seems to have caught on in Washington.

One clear sign of potential and fundamental change appeared on June 28, 2011, with the request for comments issued by the interagency task force (A-21 Task Force) of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) Interagency Working Group on Research Business Models (RBM) under the Subcommittee on Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) of the Committee on Science (CoS) to consider potential revisions to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-21. Changes to Circular A-21 which sets the Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Grants, Contracts, and Other Agreements with Educational Institutions would have a significant effect on how colleges and universities conduct business with the Federal government. The list of issues under consideration is a who’s who of administrative burden and research costs: effort reporting; recovery of direct costs for project management and reimbursement under all programs by all agencies of facilities and administrative (F&A) costs at the negotiated government-wide rates; consistency in the negotiation of F&A rates; and rationalization or harmonization between agencies of regulations and reporting requirements, e.g. deemed exports, Institutional Review Boards, visas, etc.

The Washington-based associations weighed in along with numerous colleges and universities. In addition to addressing the topics raised by the A-21 Task Force, the associations called for various reforms including eliminating effort reporting, streamlining sub-recipient monitoring, prohibiting voluntary committed cost-sharing, establishing government-wide electronic document retention provisions, and eliminating duplicative financial reporting and F&A restrictions on large volume or bulk purchasing. Taking the opportunity to address issues outside of A-21, the associations called for greater harmonization of Federal regulations and policies, the consideration of costs to and alternative approaches for educational institutions in any proposed regulations, and the stabilization of funding and improved governance of Grants.gov to ensure its continuation.

The A-21 Task Force has proposed an aggressive schedule for reviewing the comments and making recommendations to the leadership of OMB, pledging to report by as early as late August. We suspect the first targets will be the easiest to accomplish – the proverbial “low hanging fruit.” Some issues can be addressed through directives, memoranda, or guidance from OMB; others may require regulatory or statutory change, a much longer and more complicated process.

A recent example of agencies taking up the challenge of burden reduction and harmonization is the Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) and request for comments issued by the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP – HHS) and the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) concerning Human Subjects Research Protections: Enhancing Protections for Research Subjects and Reducing Burden, Delay and Ambiguity for Investigators. Published in the Federal Register on July 26, 2011, OHRP and OSTP pose 74 questions for consideration covering a wide range of topics. For example, to focus Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) on higher-risk research, OHRP/OSTP propose eliminating continuing review for minimal-risk studies and expanding the categories of research exempt
The functions of the website USASPENDING.gov (or prime awardee depending on status of recipient), and any additional expended or obligated for an individual award per quarter, subawardees including the total amount of funds received and the amount of funds port, not less than quarterly, on individual Federal awards by agency in-

Under the DATA Act, Federal funding recipients would be required to re-

hanging fruit” may offer some more immediate changes.

institution or their individual professional societies in responding to this institutional response, and/or encouraging their investigators to join the comment period, and we hope they will honor those requests. Universities should consider responding to requests for comment and assistance from their Washington-based associations, preparing a separate institutional response, and/or encouraging their investigators to join the institution or their individual professional societies in responding to this request. Changes are not likely to occur quickly, but that notorious “low-hanging fruit” may offer some more immediate changes.

Finally, the university community has been abuzz this summer over the introduction of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2011 – the DATA Act. Authored by Rep. Darrell E. Issa (R-CA), the DATA Act (HR 2146) supports accountability and transparency in Federal spending by enhancing the reporting requirements of Federal agencies and recipients of Federal funds. The DATA Act repeals the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) and establishes a new Board, the Federal Accountability and Spending Transparency (FAST) Board, directed to issue Guidance, establish common data elements, and create the required web site for agency and recipient reporting. Introduced on June 13, 2011, the DATA Act was approved by the US House of Representatives’ Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and sent to the full House on June 22, 2011. Companion legislation was introduced on June 16, 2011, in the Senate by Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA) as S 1222 and referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. No further action has been taken in the House or the Senate.

Under the DATA Act, Federal funding recipients would be required to re-

port, not less than quarterly, on individual Federal awards by agency in-

cluding the total amount of funds received and the amount of funds expended or obligated for an individual award per quarter, subawardees (or prime awardee depending on status of recipient), and any additional information requested. The functions of the website USASPENDING.gov will be transferred to the website developed under the Act. With the re-

peal of FFATA and the transfer of USASPENDING.gov, the DATA Act absorbed the FFATA functions and, in a manner, replaces the FFATA reporting except for the notable addition of quarterly expenditure reporting. This expenditure reporting echoes the reporting requirements linked to the Recovery Act.

The Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) issued a joint statement with the Association of American Universities (AAU) and the Association of Public Land-grant Universities (APLU) opposing the Act when under consideration by the House Committee. With the timely assistance of the Federal Demonstration Partnership’s (FDP) preliminary data on the costs of Recovery Act reporting, we were able to highlight the costs of re-

porting under requirements similar to those included in the DATA Act. The Washington-based associations continue to meet with Congressional staff members to discuss the DATA Act provisions and the potential im-

pact in terms of cost and burden on the recipient community.

“Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose.”

References and Resources:


“Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose.” Loosely, “the more things change, the more they stay the same.” The proverb is of French origin and was used by the French novelist Alphonse Karr (1808-90). From “Random House Dictionary of Popular Proverbs and Sayings” by Gregory Y. Titelman (Random House, New York, 1996).

Carol J. Blum is Director for Research Compliance and Administration at the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR). Before joining COGR in 2001, Carol served Ohio University for ten years as associate vice president for research after three years at the Ohio Board of Regents as director of graduate and special programs. She holds a PhD in history from the University of Cincinnati. She has recently begun exercising the right side of her brain in art classes and continues to volunteer at the Washington Literacy Council and Washington Area (Reproductive Health) Clinic Defense Task Force.
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Regardless of where we live, upon receipt of this issue of NCURA Magazine, we have survived Spring, enjoyed Summer, and, for many of us, eased out of Fair Season into Fall.

I grew up on a ranch and have early Fair memories involving growing, grooming, showing, and selling livestock. In my teenage years, it became more about meeting friends at the accompanying carnival, where we’d lose some coinage at the games and get tickets for rides that didn’t go well with heavily fried or excessively sweet foods. In later years, it became about the exhibitions and, of course, the rodeo.

Rodeos are exciting. There are cowboys and girls of all ages. There is racing and team roping. And one of the most anticipated rodeo events is bull riding. As in riding a real bull. With horns. The saying goes that bull riders have to be a bubble-off-plumb. Really, who in their right mind would ride a bull? These are not calm, well-mannered animals. They are massive beasts.

Having been behind the gate a time or two, I assure you that all of one’s senses are alight. There’s a lot to watch. There’s a lot to smell. The bulls are huge, and might be why “ginormous” is now in some dictionaries. They snort. They paw. They glare. The bull is usually angry and moves like a sumo wrestler trying to swat a wasp off his back. There’s a lot of weight and muscle ramming the fencing. And this is before the chute is opened.

After attempting to firmly affix a cowboy hat and putting on a leather glove, the rider eases over the bull’s back and adjusts and tightens the bull rope, double- and triple-checking everything. The gate man asks, “Ready?” After last-second adjustments, the rider nods. The gate is opened and the bull bursts out, gyrating left, right, up, and down with amazing velocity. Hooves thud as every effort is made to dislodge the rider, which often occurs in a matter of seconds with an abrupt descent into the arena. While the rider scrambles up, a rodeo clown magically appears out of a barrel and works to distract the bull to save the rider’s hide and keep things right and good. Thus the rider is able to do it again. And again. And again.

Consider the life of a research administrator: How many times each day are we unceremoniously morphed into bull riders? Instead of a cowboy hat, boots, leather glove, and bull rope, we face a computer monitor, voluminous email, OMB-Circulars, a ringing telephone, and an annoying keyboard. We regularly lament about all the “bull.” But instead of a bull, we deal with sponsors, PIs, auditors. We double- and triple-check until somebody asks, “Ready?” The chute opens and we’re hanging on for dear life.

Often the ride is far longer than 8-seconds before we safely dismount. Sometimes we get thrown. Fortunately, through it all, we have a barrel called NCURA for protection. And in that barrel are a host of resources and people upon which many of us rely to keep things right and good.

Over the course of my career, I can’t tell you the number of times I have relied on my NCURA colleagues to help me get up and find my hat so that I’m ready to ride the next bull. NCURA provides me with the network necessary to readily gather best practices information, often within a very small amount of time, secure answers, and find a sounding board and a sympathetic ear from someone who’s “been there, done that.”

Unlike clowns, NCURA is neither funny nor frightening. But like a rodeo clown, NCURA helps keep things right and good. Along the way, we develop friends who understand what we do. We share memories and laugh with—and sometimes at—each other. We share knowledge and PowerPoint presentations, websites and emails, audits and resolutions. When helping each other up, we share the NCURA experience.

Questions about extra comp? I reach out to six or eight NCURA colleagues for advice. A difficult conversation with a prominent PI that is particularly unsettling? I call an NCURA mentor who not only talks me out of giving up the rodeo, but makes me laugh about the not-very-funny situation and provides a different perspective for consideration. How should my institution handle what appears to be a faculty independent consulting agreement with F&A? Input from the clowns in my NCURA barrel may not involve big shoes and a small car, but I invariably receive advice that helps keep me on the road to the Land of Right and Good.

Every time I find myself turning into a bull rider, I rely on NCURA to help me survive so that I’m able to ride another day. And another. And another. And if I’m able to laugh about it, even better!

See you at the rodeo!

Judy Fredenberg is the Director, Research and Sponsored Programs, University of Montana
Playing to Your Strengths

By Anthony Ventimiglia and Samantha Westcott

Making the Most of Your NCURA Membership

There are many entry points and paths for getting involved with NCURA

Conferences
- Regional
- Annual Meeting
- FRA
- PRA

Professional Development
- Workshop
- Conference
- Traveling
- RMR
- Magazine
- NCURA TV

Social
- Web
- Twitter
- Facebook
- NCURA Tube
- Hospitality Suites
- Breakfast/Dinner Groups

Volunteerism
- Committee
- Conferences
- Offices
- Regional
- National
- Neighborhoods

Membership
- Profiles
- Magazine
- Updates
- NCURA Web

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS
Established 1959
NCURA
Membership in NCURA has many benefits, not the least of which is the opportunity to participate in events that enrich the experience for each member, for NCURA, and for the profession of Research Administration. There are a multitude of entry points for members to become involved and many paths to take toward participation. Furthermore, there are many benefits to “getting involved” in NCURA.

NCURA is a VOLUNTEER organization. While there are highly-skilled, professional staff supporting NCURA, there is no way this organization could provide the level of service, professional development, networking or any of the successful programs without the tremendous efforts and hard work of the volunteer members. There are times when one may be considering membership or already be a member and unsure of how to best find the right fit as a volunteer and how to navigate the many pathways of NCURA to benefit professional growth, the home institution, and NCURA.

When considering how to work within NCURA, one key consideration is to play to your strengths. Take the time to assess your skillset, your experience, and your interests. Once you are more self-aware, spend time investigating how your skills and experience and interests are met by NCURA. Learning the names and the institutions of NCURA members that work in your areas of interest gives you a great starting point to sending an email or making a phone call and beginning the connection. Research Administrators need to spend a tremendous amount of time on the job reading and studying. We are adept at figuring out how organizations are structured and how they work. Use those skills to ask and read and study and search and query NCURA. Use the NCURA website, the websites for each Region and the social networking tools where you will find more about NCURA and the members. Use the member directory to find other members in your institution or locally and ask for a meeting over lunch. Ask others about their involvement and how to connect with local members. There are many, many ways to find entry points into involvement with NCURA.

Keep in mind that not every volunteer at NCURA is highly visible and there are many roles for volunteer involvement. Not only are there volunteers presenting and teaching, there are many volunteers supporting the development of programs, finding site locations, supporting registration, stuffing packets and name badges, answering questions, selecting meals, and so on . . . Any commitment made should be realistic. Committing your volunteer efforts to any task is a commitment that needs to be met as others depend upon you to fulfill that role. Furthermore the notion that your skills and experience and interests are important in finding the right fit, it is significant to keep this in mind when you agree – or decline – to volunteer for NCURA. It is far better to decline an opportunity if you are unsure you can meet the needs than to disappoint others in the long run. However, if you can meet a commitment, step up and volunteer.

The benefits of volunteering are often compounded by direct involvement of the volunteer. For the efforts you put into NCURA, you will find the outcome of greater value than the effort involved. Of the many benefits, the two we will focus on for this article are professional development and networking.

Professional Development

When most people think of professional development, their viewpoint is usually limited to being on the “receiving end” of a training program or session. However, it is amazing how much you can learn by actively participating in the development or delivery of a program. For example, when serving on a program committee (depending on your role), you can be actively engaged in developing a timely, well-rounded curriculum that addresses key issues within research administration, as well as “hot topics” that are arising within the field. Speaking from experience, time management and multi-tasking skills are significantly enhanced when serving in this capacity!

In addition, if you participate as a presenter, the effort you exert in researching and developing a session (in coordination with any co-presenters) can contribute to your own professional development in both increased knowledge and in working collaboratively (in some cases, this also makes you the “office expert” where any time someone in the office has a question about THAT topic, they come to you….). Facilitating discussion groups at a regional or national meeting can also greatly enhance your knowledge base as those in the group share their best practices.

You may have expertise in an area of research administration that the NCURA membership could truly benefit, however you may not feel comfortable in sharing this knowledge with a larger audience (it can be noted that neither author has a problem with public speaking, or speaking in general…). However, it is important to note that NCURA (at both the regional and national levels) supports its membership through sessions on adult learning techniques and presentation skills. As such, you can develop these skills that would both benefit the NCURA membership (as you gain more confidence in presenting and sharing your expertise) and yourself.

When you take the opportunity to extend yourself, individual professional development is a great ancillary benefit!

Networking

It tends to be very cliché to hear over and over again the old adage, “It’s not what you know, but who you know.” However, when discussing the benefits of networking, it is hard to disregard the applicability of this statement. The reason this statement has some validity is due to the fact that the volunteers working to seek others for work will look to people they know first. In turn, those asked will look to members they know . . . and so it goes. There is no opportunity too small that it does not afford a volunteer the ability to develop a cadre of colleagues whom you may rely upon when questions arise. Whether assisting at the registration desk at a national or regional meeting (where you get the opportunity to put “faces with names”) or volunteering to assist in a regional hospitality suite in a more social and laid back setting, the opportunity to network presents itself on a regular basis. Serving on committees and within leadership roles (both at the national and regional levels) provides you with an opportunity to network with colleagues...
Successful Tips for Presenting

Set Up
✓ Don’t wait to be asked
✓ Don’t wait for the “right opportunity”
✓ Seek or create the “right opportunity”

Be Timely
✓ If you can address the current issue SHARE, there will be a demand
✓ If you cover an ongoing, ever-present topic – look at the most recent advances and approaches

give you chances to see names and match them to faces. Working at a registration desk not only helps meet the needs of members immediately and when there is great demand, you can read the names of the attendees and their institutions, learn the program, learn the operations of a meeting, get the chance to answer questions and provide feedback and support to officers and NCURA staff. A great advantage to supporting the work of others in a conference is that it helps get you remembered. We remember those who are friendly and supportive and when we remember each other well, we seek each other again.

Seek an NCURA mentor. Find a member whom you already know or one who has reached out to you and ask that person to mentor you in your NCURA membership. An NCURA mentor can provide you with introductions to other members and can help you understand how NCURA works. You also can learn from your mentor about opportunities from an individual with experience in getting matched by skills, experience, and interests.

Make friends among your NCURA colleagues. Many of us in the field know that only other Research Administrators often find interesting or understand our work pressures or stories. Getting to know others in NCURA gives you not only those who will understand and empathize with your professional challenges and successes but can also lead to deep and meaningful friendships. It is important to attend and participate in hospitality and networking events. It is extremely useful to stay at the conference hotel when possible. Plan your travel early and make accommodations to go and see some of the local sights with others attending the conference. Be open, be friendly, and be professional. Keep the friendships sincere and let others get to know you. Most of all enjoy the time you spend with your NCURA friends.

It is also important to get to know your region. Find a regional mentor; ask to join a regional committee. There are often needs to find people to support regionals conferences and find the sites for meetings. Many of the regions are in need of very dedicated, hard-working volunteers. It is important to get to know how your region works because each region is unique; however, each region needs supportive volunteers and each region can be a great entry point for members to get more involved.

The most important consideration when working with NCURA is to remember that your relationship with NCURA can be as lengthy as your entire career. This long-term relationship needs to be considered to be a partner to your Research Administration career and treated like any long-term partner. Rather than rush to get committed, get to know one another very well so you can find what really works and will make the relationship successful for both partners.

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Members of the Coeus Consortium have been collaborating officially since 2004, working communally to enhance our many existing features as well as designing significant initiatives like our newest module for Animal Care. Even before the Consortium, Coeus reached out to other institutions to create the best possible IRB module. We know the best ideas are created when the best minds converge.

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Haiti Diaries: Compassion and Service  By Tom Wilson

As research administration professionals we often are called upon by our institutions and in our private lives to volunteer for various activities. Some of the volunteer work can be for an organization such as NCURA. Other opportunities can be within our community; volunteering in a clinic, tutoring children in mathematics or a science curriculum or a number of other possibilities within or apart from our institutions. Recently, I volunteered to be part of a medical team organized through my institution to host clinics in Haiti. This is my journal of the mission.

Day One: We were bumped from our 8:00 a.m. flight out of O’Hare and were booked on the scheduled 10:00 a.m. flight to Miami. Our departure on the second flight was delayed over an hour due to snowy weather conditions at O’Hare and we are certain to miss our connecting flight.

We arrive in Miami and learn that our flight to Port au Prince, Haiti was also delayed due to a mechanical problem. Although the mechanical problem was rectified, the flight was canceled. We learned that the airport in Haiti often does not have lights available on the runway in the evenings and the pilot refused to land after dark!

So my first night on this medical mission is spent roughing it in a king size bed at the Doubletree Hotel in Miami, compliments of American Airlines. I enjoyed grilled shrimp and Mahi Mahi Tacos with Mojitos at the hotel bar watching the Super Bowl...we will have to work harder upon our arrival in Haiti to make up for this lost day.

Day Two: We arrived in Port au Prince at 9:30 a.m., but our checked luggage with the medications does not. Our bags with the medications will be on the 4:00 p.m. flight later in the day. We connect with Dr. Stephanie Wang—our team leader—at the airport and our transportation is waiting, a comfortable, and an air conditioned mini-bus. Traveling through Port-au-Prince is overwhelming.

The devastation from the earthquake over a year ago is still very visible. So many families are still living in tents adjacent to collapsed concrete buildings and motorcycles and open-air buses jam the narrow street. I learned my first Creole French expression, gen blocus: traffic jam.

Our Logistics Coordinator, Alfredo Hernandez, has arranged that we will work in a church-based community clinic organized by Pastor Lemet Zepher at the Eglise Khartienne in the Carrefore section of Port-au-Prince. Even with our late arrival we were able to treat over 50 patients in the clinic on our first afternoon. We plan to maintain this clinic Monday through Wednesday. I worked on inventorying and reorganizing the pharmacy throughout the afternoon and later entertained the local children; so many young children hungry for knowledge and friendship with our medical team.

We travel back to the airport to get our luggage through the traffic...cars traveling in all different directions at each intersection and traffic circles. Tight squeezes through very narrow side streets. At dusk we arrive at our hostel, run by Pastor Jonathan Joseph in Delmas section of Port au Prince. Dinner consisted of chicken, black beans and rice, mixed vegetables and potatoes au graten. Although there are malnourished people throughout the city, we seemed to eat well.

I fall asleep with the sound of the yellow dog in the street barking and wake up to the sounds of roosters crowing.

Day Three: We spent our second day working at the church-based community clinic in Carrefore. Pastor Lemet Zepher spoke to our team before the clinic opened giving us the background of how the clinic was founded and is maintained through volunteers in his church community. The clinic is open to the entire Carrefore neighborhood, not just the church members, and is held on the first and second floors of the church. The Pastor explained expansion plans which will include separate education and clinic buildings.

I spent most of the day in the pharmacy cleaning and organizing the pharmaceuticals as well as hunting down specific drugs for the physicians and nurses on our team. We treated 140 patients in our clinic with primary care and physical rehabilitation issues.

I was particularly struck by an elderly woman who was receiving rehabilitation treatment for a leg injury. The woman was learning to walk on one of our donated crutches. She struggled to walk only a few feet. Her struggle reminded me of the time I spent with my mother at her Rehabilitation Hospital in New Jersey last year when she was recovering from orthopaedic surgery. I could see my mother’s pain in the face of this woman in Carrefore and was very moved to see the patience and care provided by our physical therapist, Katy Koren.

I went for a long walk in the Carrefore neighborhood after the clinic activity was completed in the late afternoon and was immediately surrounded by neighborhood children which I nicknamed the Carrefore Gang. The children are loving and caring and hungry for attention.

Day Four: This was our last day at the Carrefore Clinic and I spent the day dispensing medications based on the orders from physicians and nurses. Dave Unger worked to complete the organization of the pharmacy with help from Dr. Babs Waldman, our medical student Monal Joshi, and our team leader Dr. Stephanie Wang. We had over 120 patients visiting the clinic and took a break from the clinic activity for a short lunch break.
Once all the patients were seen in the clinic the Carrefore Gang arrived. Luckily, we brought gifts for the children and distributed candy, toothbrushes, bottles of bubbles, candy treats, and Gatorade. My thought was that giving a kid a toothbrush was kind of lame, but it was the most sought after gift and we quickly ran out.

Meals at the hostel have been very good with a full breakfast of eggs, ham, juice and coffee. The dinner buffet usually includes vegetables, chicken, and rice and beans. This evening we had a cake in honor of Sandra and Dave Unger’s anniversary. It was a fun celebration after a very long day.

Day Five: We traveled to Jerusalem today which is distant from Port au Prince and home to a large refugee camp. The camp is “temporary” home to people who were displaced over a year ago from the earthquake. Some of the families live in tents and others are fortunate enough to have more permanent housing, which consists of a room building of cinderblock or wood frame construction.

Traveling through the city of Port-au-Prince and Haiti, in general, can be a challenge with all of the traffic and lack of traffic lights at most intersections. Our trip to Jerusalem was delayed a bit when a policeman pulled us over claiming that the paperwork for our vehicle, which is registered in the Dominican Republic, was out of date. Once U.S. dollars exchanged hands we were back on the road.

Our clinic was set up in two tents where patients were seen with a lean-to waiting room next to the partially constructed Jerusalem Baptist Church. An adjacent home was used for physical therapy and the front “porch” of that home was used as the triage area. I worked with Dave Unger in the pharmacy which was housed in our bus transport. Despite these crowded conditions we managed to see over 400 patients with a number of ailments.

After we left the temporary clinic we visited an orphanage located within the refugee camp. Madame LaFleur ran an orphanage in Port-au-Prince with her husband, who was severely damaged in the earthquake and had to be abandoned. The orphanage houses 30 children in two tents at the refugee camp and our medical team examined each child, providing medications as needed. We also left them with bags of treats, clothing and chewable children’s vitamins.

We arrived home late (due to the traffic) for an excellent dinner of fresh vegetables, chicken, and rice and beans. The weather is very warm during the day and it takes a while to cool down in the evening and the bedrooms, which are a step above the army barracks during my boot camp days, can be a bit uncomfortable throughout most of the night, but we certainly have much better sleeping conditions than the people back in the refugee camp.

Day Six: Today we traveled to another refugee camp under development. The camp is located in Croix des Bouquets. The compound that we visited is run by Pastor Theodore Williams and located outside of Port-au-Prince. A number of patients were waiting for us when we arrived in the morning and we managed to see over 250 people before we closed at sunset.

Dave Unger and I managed the pharmacy. We ran out of some of the essentials during the day, but then our transport arrived with our late lunch and sorely needed bottled water. We also received some additional pharmaceuticals which had arrived at the airport earlier in the day.

I took a break after lunch to play soccer with some of local boys donating one of the soccer balls that I had brought from Chicago. At the end of the day we gave the remaining children goody bags and I distributed Mardi Gras beads, two additional soccer balls and a basketball. When we arrived home late in the evening for dinner there was a surprise of pasta with meat sauce. Although I have not had access to a scale to weigh myself, my Haiti diet seems to be working well!

Day Seven: Today we traveled to a church in Delmas a few miles from our hostel (a trip of a few miles can take 45 minutes to an hour in Port au Prince). The medical ministry at this church is an established, well managed organization headed by Dr. Jeff Bercy. A section of the church was already divided into five exam rooms, a triage area, waiting room and pharmacy. All patients were triaged prior to our arrival and waiting to be examined by a doctor. The clinic had a number of volunteers who could supplement our translators and assist in many other ways. There also was a Haitian pediatrician who was very helpful in examining and diagnosing the many pediatric patients. I managed to take a short break and walked the streets with one of the translators and saw some of the street vendors actively selling their items.

After we had seen all of the patients in the clinic that day I distributed soccer balls and basketballs to the volunteers and children. We left the children with treats, and I gave a dozen softballs and a basketball to our Logistics Coordinator which can be given to needy children when he returns home to the Dominican Republic.

After six days of seeing patients we were running short of some medical supplies, even after we had replenished some of the medications the previous afternoon. We were out of children’s vitamins for the past two days and dispensed the last of the adult vitamins early in the day today. Most patients are in need of nutritional supplements and many suffer from dehydration. Each team member brought at least one case of Gatorade in their checked luggage, but we were rationing the Gatorade during the last two days of clinic.

We saw over 250 patients on our last clinic day and over the six days of clinical activity we had administered medical care to over 1,200 patients. This may seem like a large volume of patients, but when traveling through Port-au-Prince and through the Haitian countryside it becomes apparent that this is just the smallest percentage of the population that are in need of quality medical care. I was moved by the graciousness of the people that we cared for during our trip and especially the love and acceptance of the children of Haiti.

Tomorrow we fly home to Chicago and next week I will visit my primary care physician for my annual physical. The waiting room and exam room at my physician’s office is luxurious in comparison to the setting in the clinics that we held here in Haiti, but the compassion and quality of care provided by physicians in Chicago is no greater than that of our medical team in Haiti.

I hope that you will find your volunteer experience with your university community and/or NCURA as rewarding as my Haitian experience. Get involved! There will be a time commitment on your part, but you will receive much joy and happiness in knowing that you have made a difference in the lives of others.

Many thanks to our team:

Stephanie Wang, M.D.
Joel Augustin, M.D.
Cynthia Waickus, M.D.
Babs Waldman, M.D.
Monal Joshi, M.D.
Anna Murphy, RN
Kathryn Koren, PT
Sandra Unger
Dave Unger.

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A Can-Do Approach to RCR Compliance:

Lessons Learned and Strategies Going Forward

By Marty Welsch and Diane Rees

Introduction

“Life is full of obstacle illusions,” is a quotation thumbtacked on our departmental bulletin board over the copier in the Office of the Vice President for Research at Colorado State University (CSU). This quote attributed to Grant Frazier could likely describe some of our trepidation as we in higher education consider the implementation of a new compliance initiative. There are always reasons that the demands of a new compliance initiative in higher ed (or any initiative in any organization for that matter) will be difficult to meet. Resources are tight, particularly now, and it is hard to envision the logistics of the mandated Responsible Conduct for Research (RCR) training that will require information taken from such disparate sources in sponsored research and human resources.

For those of you who aren’t aware of the relatively new RCR compliance regulations, two federal sponsors, the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced in January, 2010, that training in the ethical considerations of research activity and scholarly inquiry, plus more pragmatic competencies such as publication practices, would be required. The NSF policy is meant for any trainee (undergraduate, graduate, or postdoc) supported by NSF funds. NIH RCR guidelines were quite specific, but cover only those funded on training grants, not specifically those funded on other mechanisms such as the R series. Their requirements outline a specific amount of career level training, time-frames and the competencies that should be included. NSF guidelines were more general but the expectations were clear: demonstrated RCR training is now an expectation and a consideration when applying for NSF grants.

So, what did we do at CSU regarding RCR training and how did we do it? We took the can-do approach and are now able to systematically identify the trainee population and provide some homegrown training opportunities not only for those people who are funded by NSF and NIH but also for anyone who is involved in research activity at CSU. There were some information integration challenges along the way which we would like to share with you in addition to some communication lessons learned and strategies for moving forward.

Top Down Buy-In

Endorsement from the Provost’s Office and the office of the Vice President for Research was key to our RCR course creation and implementation efforts. Also extremely helpful to create buy-in was a request from the Provost to create a faculty ad hoc committee to assess the necessity and usefulness of RCR training. From these faculty sessions, the committee reported that some manner of RCR training would be an expectation for every researcher trainee on campus. These endorsements from the Provost’s office based on recommendations from the ad hoc faculty committee made all the difference in our RCR communication efforts.

After the Buy-In: Communication, Evaluation and Coursework Creation

To meet the compliance mandates, we needed to (1) identify and communicate what discipline-specific face-to-face (f2f) courses were already being taught on campus,(2) create a general, non-discipline-specific course for those colleges and/or departments that had no such delivery mechanism, and (3) evaluate available online courses and/or create a course. That’s all!

We were fortunate that CSU had some discipline-specific courses already being taught that, with some tweaking, would meet RCR f2f requirements. These courses are listed on an RCR website that was developed in-house. The link is http://rcr.colostate.edu/ and will give you a flavor of what we had on hand and what we needed to develop.

For the general RCR course, we worked with the Graduate School to develop Grad 544: Ethical Conduct of Research. This course is designed as a general use course for those colleges and departments that do not have discipline-specific RCR training. Grad 544 centers its coursework on the core competencies outlines by NIH guidelines:

- Ethics and Social Responsibility
- Conflict of Interest
- Animal/Human Subjects and Safe Laboratory Practices
- Mentorship
- Collaborative Research
- Data Acquisition, Management, Ownership
- Research Misconduct
- Responsible Authorship, Publication and Peer Review

Grad 544 also covered a classroom session on Fiscal Responsibility, which covered such matters as proposal submission, direct and indirect costs, and developing a budget.

Grad 544 was introduced in Fall, 2010, with over 40 students and was held again in Spring, 2011, with approximately 65 students. The student population was a mix of undergraduates, graduates, and postdocs; but graduate students were the largest population. Students from a variety of disciplines participated. Grad 544 is scheduled to be held again in Fall, 2011. It is an 8-week, one-credit course that meets once per week for two hours.

Grad 544 was taught by a variety of professors, instructors, and administrators on a volunteer
basis. Generally, the first hour was a didactic session with instructors using powerpoint slides. The second hour was usually an interactive session involving breaking the class into small groups to consider case studies focused on the subject matter. Volunteer facilitators were recruited from colleges and departments with a significant degree of enrollment to help promote conversation in the small groups. Some research associate deans and compliance committee leaders were involved as facilitators as well.

**Collaboration is the Key to RCR Training**

Collaboration with many different groups is essential for RCR training development. RCR does not happen in a vacuum! We continue to be fortunate to have aid and guidance from a variety of sources such as the Provost’s Office, the Office of the Vice President for Research, the Council of Research Associate Deans, Faculty Council, the Council of Deans, the Graduate School, the Research Integrity and Compliance Review Office (RICRO), and the Department of Philosophy. Plus, we are fortunate to have an ongoing interest by volunteer faculty and administrators who help with the class sessions of Grad 544.

The collaborative efforts do not stop with the above groups!

**On-Line Training Development**

The development and implementation of Grad 544 was one huge step in RCR training delivery. An online training mechanism was also necessary to implement the overarching standard set forth by the faculty recommendations: It is an expectation that all trainees involved in research activity or scholarly inquiry receive RCR training no matter the funding mechanism.

For a variety of reasons, and with endorsement from the Provost, CSU embarked on a mission to create its own online training. We hired a consultant to help us implement the process but, make no mistake, the RCR team was intimately involved in all details of the project. Case studies were researched and in some cases written to highlight specific concerns for CSU. The online mechanism can be viewed at [http://rcr.colostate.edu/training.html](http://rcr.colostate.edu/training.html), and you can take the test! It is open to everyone, and we have had participation worldwide. There are nine learning modules, with short assessment tests at the end of each module. At the completion of the learning modules, there is a mastery quiz; and, upon successful completion, a certificate can be printed out to document that the course was completed.

Once again, collaborative efforts were the key in getting the online testing developed and implemented. Besides our consulting relationship, we were fortunate to have content review from subject matter experts in Philosophy, the Office of the Vice President for Research, IRB and IACUC leadership, the folks at RICRO, the Office of General Counsel, and many faculty members who were willing to lend a hand. Huge help was extended by our Research Services department for guidance on the technical side.

**Identifying the Trainees**

So, how many NIH and NSF trainees were we talking about? How do we identify the trainees and where do they work?

Through a collaborative effort, the RCR office and the office of Research Services (which provides IT support for the division of the Office of the Vice President for Research) reviewed the NSF and NIH policies and established a set of criteria for identifying the trainees. These criteria include employee job title (e.g., graduate research assistant, post doc., etc.) and date parameters (e.g., NSF research accounts created since January 1, 2010). Based on these criteria, research award data are merged with Human Resources employee data to generate a report. The report is generated twice a year and sorted by agency (NSF, NIH). The report includes a project number, Principal Investigator, department, and list of trainees. CSU has chosen to extend the requirement for RCR training to NIH R01s. In the first year of tracking, we have identified >600 trainees who are mandated to take RCR training; the largest group of these is comprised of graduate students on NIH R01 grants. Another very large part of the population is undergraduate student researchers funded on both NSF and NIH grants; CSU undergraduate students play a critical role in our research programs.

**Communicating the Information**

From the information provided by Research Services, the RCR Coordinator notifies the department head, the PI, and the graduate education coordinator of the RCR training required for their NIH and NSF trainees. We have found that direct communication with the PI and the department head generates the best results.

The graduate education coordinator usually gets involved at this point, and we discuss the options for the student. For our undergraduates, taking the online course is sufficient, as the undergraduate courses they are required to take already incorporate basic training in professional responsibilities. The graduate level students and the postdocs need to complete an f2f course as well as the online training.

**Building the RCR Culture**

This is the path that we have taken to implement RCR training on the CSU campus. There has been some resistance, yes; and the work is ongoing. Some departments are better at responding than others. Different initiatives have also been launched in aiding faculty and departments to build their own discipline-specific courses. Two such courses are the Ethics Infusion Program, designed for faculty who would like to “infuse” ethics into their coursework, and a Science Communication series aimed to teach trainees better and more responsible ways to communicate their science to a larger audience. We’ve found that activities such as these keep the RCR conversation going.
Active or Passive Involvement: A Win-Win Choice

By Maura Gilmartin

This issue’s NCURA Magazine theme could not be a more perfect match with the subject of my first article: getting involved. The very act of my writing this piece is an excellent example of this theme. My motivation for volunteering in this manner was not for the purpose of “getting involved,” rather it was for the purpose of matching my love of writing with the industry in which I work. One of the perks of this uncommonly known industry is the myriad of ways in which people can find a match for their personal interests and goals and put them to good use in relation to their work.

When presented with this topic I was instantly intrigued with the definition of involvement. What does “involvement” mean? Is it something that requires active participation where one must speak out, act out, write…out? Does it require some sort of kinetic energy? Or does “involvement” also incorporate our internal thoughts and potential energy? Isn’t engagement, when presented with facts, theories, or thoughts, by the way of film, writings, or even conversation also a type of involvement? I propose that both acts of passive involvement (listening, observing, absorbing) and active involvement (initiating, acting, fostering) are equally valuable. Once you figure out which one works best for you, you should explore it to the fullest.

The most immediate way that the majority of research administrators become involved in their profession is by attending annual or semi-annual conferences. This passive involvement is a great way to further one’s education, as well as to network within the research administration community. National conferences often have interesting and fun social activities, such as an opening wine and cheese reception, scheduled dinners, or sometimes even organized tours of local attractions. All one needs to do is attend and enjoy! This is especially pleasurable when good food accompanies the event, and good food is almost always an accompaniment.

The conferences can involve more than just passive attendance. It takes a lot of human resources to put these events together, and
volunteers are always welcome. While volunteering is an active involvement, it need not be onerous. It can be as simple as directing people toward the right meeting room within a large conference center. It can also involve assisting speakers with hand-outs or media for their presentations. The volunteer can be stationed at the registration desk, meeting and greeting people, and handing out registration materials. All of these volunteer activities provide a low-pressure option for engagement and allow members to gain contact with the greater community.

Another option for networking and participation within the research administration community in an academic medical center is to join local organizations. The New York City area boasts both the Tri-institutional Collaborative Network (TCN) and the New York City Research Administrators Network (NYCRANN). According to its website, http://www.mskcc.org/mskcc/html/87999.cfm, TCN is “a joint initiative developed and supported by the division of Research and Technology Management at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Sponsored Research and Program Development at The Rockefeller University, and Research and Sponsored Programs at Weill Cornell Medical College.” With a strong focus on workshops and presentations, TCN has hosted a number of events for both researchers and research administrators alike.

NYCRANN, the newer of the two, was co-founded by Stephanie Endy, Director, Research and Sponsored Program Office at Lehman College and Debra Schaller-Demers, Director, Research Outreach and Compliance, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Starting off as a small gathering in Stephanie Endy’s home, it has since grown to include additional institutions and expanded its membership. Each networking event, occurring three times a year, is hosted by a different participating institution. More formal events, occurring three times a year, is hosted by an event organization, public speaking, writing, and graphic design skills. An increasing number of organizations have implemented regularly occurring seminars in which grants offices reach out to the research community in both formal and informal ways. Whether it is an annual event with guest speakers, or a monthly lunch seminar where the topic is focused on one subject, there is ample opportunity to play a part. If speaking at a podium is not your thing, perhaps designing and distributing the announcement or writing educational materials would be more appealing.

If you’re the type of person who likes to be a one woman or man show, you can take matters into your own hands. Many grants offices encourage their staff to reach out to research departments or specific groups of researchers within the institution. This can be an easy meet-and-greet, or a more formal meeting with an established agenda. It’s best to be prepared with as much history of the laboratory or department as possible. If there is a formal reporting system at your institution, you can familiarize yourself with their funding history and interests by preparing a metrics report. Arrive at the meeting with the report in hand and distribute it to the attendees as a point of reference. It might be best to first establish contact with the head of the department or laboratory and inquire about their interests, before setting the agenda. They may welcome you into their routine lab or departmental meetings, allowing you some insight into the type of research being conducted under the funded grants you’ve helped them to receive.

Passive involvement is overlooked by many when it’s possibly the simplest and most accessible form of involvement. This valuable type of involvement, where one is a spectator, reader, and/or listener, has a wealth of outlets. There are many opportunities for research administrators to educate themselves on the science being conducted by their faculty members. Researchers often present their results in the public arena in an attempt to engage scientists and non-scientists alike. One need only pick up a newspaper (NY Times Science section), read a magazine (Scientific American), listen to a news program (National Public Radio), watch a PBS special (Nova), or attend a local public event (World Science Festival) to gain insight and understanding into the work which is being carried out all around us. Utilizing social networking tools like Facebook or Twitter, and getting your name on to listservs is a great way to be notified of news related to your work. Some listservs of note: NCURA Neighborhood listservs: http://www.ncura.edu/members_pages/list_servs.php; the ResAdmin listserv, run by Health Research, Inc.: http://lists.healthresearch.org/cgi-bin/wa?INDEX; the National Organization of Research Development Professionals: (NORDP) res_dev@listserv.it.northwestern.edu; and the NIH listservs such as the NIH Roadmap: nihroadmap-l@list.nih.gov and the NIH Guide: guidetoc@mail.nih.gov.

Any activity in which we build relationships, increase our awareness, and expand our skill-set is not only a benefit to our professional career experience but also a source of personal growth. Spending time learning about the specific research activities of those whom we service will not just lead to better and more productive relationships between research administrators and researchers, but can lead to increased work satisfaction and happiness. Every day is an opportunity to commit ourselves to our positions, use our strengths and personal goals to positively impact our work environment, and “get involved” whether passively, actively, or both. In doing so, we are, in our own way, helping to foster research.

Maura Gilmartin is currently a Senior Grants & Contracts Specialist at Mount Sinai School of Medicine. She has been a member of NCURA for 8 years. Her experience in research administration has been heavily focused on pre-award NIH funding. This is her first article for NCURA Magazine.
Civics, the STEM Disciplines, Innovation, and the Future

By James Casey

The STEM Disciplines and Innovation

Alan Leshner’s well written editorial in the 27 May 2011 issue of Science Magazine, entitled “Innovation Needs Novel Thinking,” highlighted the important linkages between the STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) and innovation in ensuring that the American economy remains at the forefront of global economic growth. The following section of his editorial struck me as vitally important:

In addition, innovation often comes from nontraditional thinking, and many new ideas will come from new participants in science and engineering who often are less tied to traditional ways. That argues for increasing the diversity of the scientific human resource pool, adding more women, minority, and disabled scientists, as well as researchers from smaller and less-well-known institutions. The benefits of increasing diversity by fostering innovation and economic success have been argued well elsewhere (citation in original article). Both research institutions and funders need to attend more to these sources of novel thinking and may have to refine recruitment, reward, and funding systems accordingly (Leshner, p. 1009).

The ideas he outlined in his editorial, furthermore, can find a kinship with points made by Federal Reserve Chairman Ben S. Bernanke in his speech entitled “Promoting Research and Development: The Government’s Role,” given at Georgetown University on 16 May 2011. As Mr. Bernanke says on pages 10-11 of his speech:

……At the same time, critics of K-12 education in the United States have long argued that not enough is being done to encourage and support student interest in science and mathematics. Taken together, these trends suggest that more could be done to increase the number of U.S. students entering scientific and engineering professions.

The commentaries by Mr. Bernanke and Mr. Leshner are absolutely on point. The United States needs increasing numbers of graduates who are skilled in the STEM disciplines if it is to remain a dominant economic power. But that objective is only part of the goal of increasing innovation and economic wealth. The innovation environment needs to be expanded beyond STEM.

Expanding the Context of Innovation

While focusing on the STEM disciplines is a meritorious approach to increasing innovation and wealth creation in the United States, it does not cover the entire universe of what is necessary to create an innovation society. Attention to non-STEM areas—such as Civics—is critical to creating an innovation society. Civics is the broad area encompassing such disciplines as history, law, and political science. An educated and engaged citizenry is critical to the creation of an innovation society.

One can find the genesis of the intersection of law and innovation in the political & legal document known as the U.S. Constitution. Article I, Section 8, Clause 8, of the Constitution empowers the U.S. Congress:

To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries.

This clause serves as the constitutional bedrock for U.S. intellectual property law. This is the first clue that technology and innovation are not solely a STEM concern.

The May 2011 issue of the ABA Journal (American Bar Association) discusses these issues in an excellent article entitled, “Flunking Civics: Why America’s Kids Know So Little.” The article says the following with regards to a focus on certain disciplines (p. 34):

Since the late 1990s, when American students tested poorly in reading, science and math against students from 20 other Western nations, federal education policy has

focused strongly on those three subjects at the expense of history, social studies, government and civics.

That trend began in 2001 with the Bush Administration’s landmark No Child Left Behind Act, which gives priority to federal funding for efforts to improve student performance in reading and math, skills that are considered fundamental to student success in the workplace. The program continues under the Obama Administration’s support for so-called STEM programs, which reward student achievement in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

Educators fear that this long-range focus on a few limited subjects that are considered fundamental to student success is squeezing out the amount of time and effort devoted to subjects considered non-fundamental, such as history, social science, government and civics.

This concern over the “squeezing out” of non-STEM subjects is matched by documented evidence that U.S. students and adults have a very poor grasp of law, history, or government, all of which can be considered essential for civic engagement. The ABA Journal article (p. 34) notes that a 2005 survey by the ABA found that nearly half of all Americans were unable to correctly identify the three branches of government, and a FindLaw survey that same year found that only 57% of Americans could name any U.S. Supreme Court justice. Retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor is quoted as saying (p. 37):

There are all kinds of polls out there showing that barely one out of three Americans can name the three branches of government, let alone describe what they do.

If the polls are largely correct, meaning that most Americans are illiterate when it comes to their government and what it does, how can they function and benefit in an innovation economy?

The American Bar Association has long had a significant interest in civics education. As noted in the ABA Journal article (p. 37), the ABA Commission on Civic Education in the Nation’s Schools is co-sponsoring a series of academic events around the country where community leaders can teach students about the law, the Constitution, and the importance of civic engagement. The Commission has supported these activities with other resources, such as a resource guide and a website where law schools, courts, civic organizations, and other organizations interested in sponsoring such a forum can find suggested curriculum, formats, lesson plans, strategies, and other information (p. 37).

The Connection Between Civics and Innovation

Drawing upon the basic ideas in the ABA Commission’s project, it is easy to design a high school or undergraduate course focusing on the connection between civics and innovation. This would contain such areas as: 1) the constitutional basis of copyright and patents in the U.S. (Article I, Section 8, Clause 8); 2) the history of inventions in the United States, particularly those of significance to the historical development of the country; 3) basic aspects of the STEM disciplines that bear upon innovation today; 4) the major laws and regulations influencing innovation presently; 5) current issues in innovation in the United States; and 6) where innovation is going in the short and long term.

This approach would help engage all students at the high school and college levels in the concepts of innovation and its relationship to civic engagement. Such a course would educate all students, not just students engaged in the STEM disciplines or majoring in those areas.

Beyond formal education, it is critically important that dimensions of civics and innovation are infused within social and government structures, so that adults are much more aware of their importance and interrelationship to the future economic development of the United States. The pie needs to increase in size, and innovation is a primary ingredient in that pie.

Conclusion

If America truly wants an innovation society that creates lasting wealth, then the education of America’s kids will have to go far beyond the STEM disciplines. Substantive civic education and engagement is necessary, far beyond the internet, Facebook and Twitter. This requires students well versed in American history, law, politics, and civic engagement. The connection between these areas and the STEM disciplines is clear; it is important that students understand that innovation in the United States results from the twin pillars of democracy and capitalism. Focusing on the STEM disciplines is a large part of the puzzle, but it is not the whole puzzle.
The National Science Foundation (NSF) has a reputation for performing as a model organization in many areas of grant administration; a reputation built on NSF’s capability to leverage innovation to empower its business partners. As its system technology platforms are continuing to age and the Foundation is under increasing pressure to provide more timely and accurate reporting on how tax dollars are being spent, NSF finds itself in the midst of an administrative evolution where NSF cannot simply maintain the status quo. NSF and its business partners must be innovative as they strive to be good stewards of Federal funds. Many stakeholders, including Congress and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), are requiring more up-to-date and accurate financial information and are less willing to accept the constraints of traditional delays which exist under the current systems and reporting procedures.

As such, NSF is striving to meet the demands of the ever-changing political and social environment and has decided to develop a new approach to handling award payments and the associated post award financial processes. This endeavor is currently underway and NSF anticipates implementation of the new payment system during the Federal fiscal year 2013.

The development of the new payment system is focused on achieving the goal of enhancing access to award financial data in real time or near-real time for both awardee administrators and NSF program staff while minimizing the burden on the awardee providing the...
data. To accomplish this goal, the new payment approach will be based on:

- Developing a process which allows awardees to provide award level detail at the time of each payment request;
- Maintaining the current system’s benefits;
- Eliminating the need for the quarterly Federal Financial Report (FFR);
- Developing input processes that meet the needs of all size and types of awardee institutions; and
- Working closely with the awardee community to develop a timeline that minimizes interference with the awardee institutions’ activities and fiscal year end dates.

Comparison: Why Providing Award Level Detail Is Necessary

NSF’s current approach, often referred to as a “pooling payment request” method or linked to the even older method of “Letter of Credit” draws, focuses on institution level records. Pooling requires awardees to request a single payment for all of their grant fund needs. Awardees must perform a quarterly reconciliation, which means matching revenues (payments received) to expenditures at the award level. This reconciliation is facilitated by the submission of a quarterly FFR to NSF. Due to the reconciliation occurring in this quarterly fashion, cash on hand discrepancies often exist and the distribution or allocation of the payments received does not always match the records that produced the original payment requests. Furthermore, the pooling payment approach does not support the government-wide requirements on NSF for monthly reporting of appropriation statuses and spending rates.

The new approach, on the other hand, will focus on award level institution financial records. Awardees will still be able to submit a single payment request according to their own schedule; however, they will be required to provide the award level detail at the time of the request. The request will need to be based on actual expenditures or amounts expected to be expended within 3 days of the payment request date. This will enable NSF to record expenditures at the time of payment rather than waiting for the quarterly FFR submission. NSF and awardee institutions will have the ability to match payment requests to awardee records and to complete reconciliations when the requests are generated. This real-time reconciliation should help eliminate discrepancies and distribution errors. The immediate access to award level information will also eliminate the need for NSF to produce monthly estimates of expenditure activity to meet OMB and Treasury reporting requirements.

Our Vision

NSF takes pride in setting the bar and performing as a model organization including the development of its systems. NSF does not want to take a step backward when implementing a new system. For this reason, NSF will maintain the beneficial functionalities contained in the current system in the new system to the extent possible. Some of the popular features contained in the current reporting system include:

- Pre-population of NSF data;
- The ability to enter an awardee identification number for each NSF award;
- Sort and search abilities built into the system; and
- The ability to request adjustments to both open and closed awards.

While maintaining these important functions is crucial, NSF also sees the transition as an opportunity to improve system functionality and administrative processes. The new system will be built on the Research.gov platform. Research.gov is the next generation electronic solution for NSF and will eventually replace all of the functions of FastLane. Added benefits anticipated with the new system include:

- Improved access to award data for both NSF and awardee staff;
- The ability to request funds in the same manner as the funds are booked on institution systems;
- Improved access to historical payment and expenditure information through development of new static and customizable reports; and
- Improved institutional ability to make timely changes or corrections to a previously requested amount.
What about the Administrative Burden?

NSF has heard frequent feedback, through discussions conducted with awardee institutions, that the new payment system has the potential to greatly increase the administrative burden on awardee institutions, especially those with more than 35 active awards. NSF shares this concern; the potential for increased burden is contingent upon how well the system is implemented. To mitigate that risk, NSF plans on implementing three input options to accommodate the needs of institutions of all sizes:

• **Manual Web Entry**
  NSF expects the manual web entry option to be appropriate for smaller organizations (70% of the user community). These organizations won’t have many active awards at any given time, and won’t require system automation.

• **MS Excel Spreadsheet Download/Upload Entry**
  The MS Excel file upload option has been an existing option to all institutions for completion of their quarterly FFR. This feature is primarily utilized by medium and large institutions, (20 – 30% of the user community), who want to avoid entering their reports manually via the online web form. This technology has proven to be very useful in the past and NSF expects it will continue to be a valuable solution in the new payment system.

• **Bulk XML Data File Upload**
  The bulk data file upload option will allow institutions to develop a query in their systems to produce a data file which can be uploaded into NSF’s new payment system. In order to accommodate the time needed for institutions’ development of the new query, NSF expects to define and make available a data dictionary several months before the new system is implemented.

In order to classify institutions by size and determine who the users may be for the various input options being considered, NSF utilized the table displayed, which illustrates the distribution of grants, as of 01/01/2011, among institutions that currently utilize the FFR and electronic payment system.

**Transition Options, Awardee Preparation, and Outreach**

NSF is currently in the planning stages of system development. This means requirements are being defined, the implementation timeline is being developed, and stakeholder feedback is being sought. As NSF progresses through this process, it plans on working with the awardee user community to develop a timeline which minimizes interference with the awardee institutions’ activities and fiscal year end dates. Several options are being considered, but NSF expects to transition to the new system during Federal FY 2013.

Before a smooth system implementation can occur, NSF recognizes a thorough reconciliation must occur to ensure beginning balances in the new system are accurate. The goal of the reconciliation will be to align expenditures reported with revenues received between awardee and NSF records. Since expenditures will be recorded at the time of payment in the new system, it will be important to reach an artificial zero cash on hand balance to guarantee awardees have received payment for all previously reported expenditures prior to enabling their use of the new system. At this time, NSF is evaluating the reconciliation options.

Additionally, the transition to the new system will include a live pilot period where NSF will solicit 20-30 institutions to begin using the system 3-6 months prior to full implementation. NSF will ask these volunteers to perform the reconciliation prior to using the pilot system and provide necessary feedback on the effectiveness of the option selected. With the pilot system and reconciliation feedback received from the pilot institutions, NSF hopes to achieve a smooth implementation for all.

Awardees can be preparing now for the system implementation by doing the following.

• **First,** ensure that they can reconcile the Cash on Hand (COH) balance reported on their quarterly FFR to the COH balance on their financial records. Awardees should be able to identify any reconciling items that cause differences between the two numbers such as budget overages, at-risk spending, and refunds made on canceled appropriations.

• **Second,** awardees should make an effort each quarter to submit their FFR on time.

• **Lastly,** awardees can start bringing their operating COH balances as close to zero as possible. This means an awardee should be current on its payment requests to reduce negative balances and should not delay refunding any positive balances.

NSF will continue to engage the awardee community and other stakeholders throughout the entire process. NSF is currently conducting annual outreach visits to institutions in various states to discuss this issue and other topics in order to collect user feedback. NSF is also working closely with professional organizations such as the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA), the Council on Governmental Relations, (COGR), and the Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP). NSF has conducted presentations at conferences associated with these organizations and expects to conduct additional sessions at future conferences. Awardees can also expect to see future email communications providing updates as well as future webinar trainings as implementation draws nearer.

**Conclusion**

As with any process change, there are concerns related to the change. NSF is committed to help alleviate these concerns by developing a high-quality system while moderating the potential increased administrative burden on the awardee institutions. NSF will engage the stakeholders at each phase of the process and values the feedback it receives. NSF is focused on providing a smooth implementation for all users, which will include a thorough reconciliation, effective and open communications, and training opportunities when appropriate. NSF welcomes additional feedback at any time. Please feel free to contact the Division of Financial Management, Cash Management Branch at cmb@nsf.gov.
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“Other groups would have charged at least $150,000 for a report of this type and not have delivered half the value!”

Research University

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Research University

“The exit interview was well managed and provided an excellent discussion of key issues, highlights of strength, and suggestions for improvements. I think the exit interview was one of the best I’ve been involved in.”

Emerging Research Institution

For further information about the NCURA Peer Review Program, e-mail peerreview@ncura.edu or call 503-364-1847.

The program is completely booked for 2011, now booking visits for 2012.
Exploring Emotional Intelligence

By Michelle Vazin, Helena Moynahan and Robyn Remotigue

As research administrators we function in a fast pace work environment with emails, instant messaging, texting, and voice mails. It is so easy to get caught up in the world of electronics, that it becomes a challenge to work on our interpersonal skills. For example, when was the last time you thought about your own interpersonal skills? How long has it been since you stopped by one of your colleague’s office just to say “hello” or ask “how are you doing?” In fact, I have wondered myself when someone asks “how are you doing?” do they really want to know and do they really want to take the time to listen – really listen?

As students of the Leadership Development Institute, we learned about Emotional Intelligence (EI). As a part of the LDI, we learned that leaders who possess (EI) are generally distinguished as those that are outstanding rather than just being adequate. These leaders have the technical and analytical skills that are required in a leader, but they also possess the personal qualities of a humanistic approach. Emotional Intelligence has to do with knowing when and how to express emotion as well as how to control it.

Daniel Goleman was the first to bring the term “Emotional Intelligence” to the world’s attention in 1995 when he titled his book the same name. Goleman found that traditional qualities such as toughness, determination and vision are required for success. However, alone they may be insuffi cient to be a truly great leader. Leaders that are most effective distinguish themselves from the rest because they possess a high level of (EI). In this article we will describe the various components of (EI) and we will share ideas and tips on how to boost your (EI) to strengthen your leadership abilities.

Defining EI

So if the really effective leaders in society possess a high degree of Emotional Intelligence, what are the skills or attributes we are talking about? Daniel Goleman does a great job of describing what the skills are in his article for the Harvard Business Review, entitled “What Makes a Leader?” and his book, “Emotional Intelligence”. Goleman lays out what the five components of Emotional Intelligence are at work. First, one must have a sense of Self-Awareness. This is demonstrating the ability to recognize and understand your own moods and emotions and what is important to you as well as how they affect those around you. People with this trait tend to be self-confident and realistic about their capabilities and limitations. Second, there must be a degree of Self-Regulation. Basically this is “thinking before you leap”. A person with self-regulation has the ability to effectively control their impulses or moods. When this trait is present, people tend to be seen as trustworthy and honest and can accept change when it comes. The third skill related to EI is Motivation. People, who are motivated, love what they do for the sheer joy of it and as a result, they tend to bring a lot of energy and drive to the table. Adjectives that could be used to describe someone with motivation would be optimistic, driven to achieve, and committed. The fourth attribute of EI is Empathy. When one possesses empathy, they have the ability to understand the emotional makeup of those around them. They tend to be successful in building and retaining talent in an organization and satisfy their clients and customers needs effectively. The fifth component that Goleman attributes to Emotional Intelligence really ties the first four together. It is Social Skill. When people’s social skills are healthy and present, they exhibit a proficiency in managing relationships and building networks within an organization. Building a rapport and finding common ground amongst groups comes easily. They are very persuasive and excel at leading change.

It seems clear that Emotional Intelligence is very much focused on the “people-side” of things. That is, the more accepted qualities of leadership such as intellect, determination, strength, vision etc. are definitely important traits in successful leaders. However, when these traditional qualities are partnered with the traits described above that are associated with Emotional Intelligence; the leaders’ success rate rises dramatically. Being able to understand and connect effectively with the people being managed and led is critical. The human aspect of an organization is the heart of its success and the leader that acknowledges that fact, understands that fact and can tap into that vital resource as a result of a high Emotional Intelligence factor will succeed with outstanding results.

Tips to Boost EI to help prevent the “amygdala hijack”:

You feel like you are a good leader, but you know there is always room for improvement. Tapping into the EI components described above may be the secret for you. Where should you start? What are the things to be considered? Let’s start by introducing one more concept that Goleman developed – an “amygdala hijack”. An amygdala hijack was a term coined by Goleman. The amygdala is in the center of the brain, the “emotional brain”. It controls the proper emotional reaction to triggers. When the amygdala erupts from an overheated limbic system, it has been hijacked. So the opposite of an amygdala hijack is emotional intelligence. If we agree that having a high degree of EI enables one to become a better leader, then preventing “amygdala hijacks” would be beneficial.

Try these worthy strategies for boosting your EI components and preventing the amygdala hijack effect. These might offer you some tips which will help you improve you leadership skills and ensure that you don’t “lose it” in work settings which can be awkward and unproductive.

Self-Awareness - Know who and what pushes your buttons. Keep a journal. Knowing how someone or something produces a negative reaction is critical in developing the ability to take control of the situation and maintaining your composure and calming yourself down. Seek feedback from others. This can be a real eye-opener. How do your emotions and reactions af-
EI for Better Leadership

ffect other people? Seek specific examples and situations. How you are perceived is great feedback for working on those emotions and reactions that are impacting others negatively. Watch the ripple effect. Even those seemingly on the sidelines are impacted. Get to know yourself under stress. Most people recognize the warning signs. Take the time to recognize the signals and recharge your batteries.

**Self-Regulation** - This component builds upon self-awareness which is necessary for effective self-regulation. You need to be aware of your emotions in order to manage them. Take slow deep breaths... The next time you find yourself in a stressful or emotional situation, focus on taking in more oxygen. The short shallow breaths that most people take are enough to run the necessary basic functions of the body, but if you want to remain focused and calm, try deep breathing. Count to ten... this one our mothers reinforced when we were young. It works. Both the counting and the breathing will help relax you and keep you from making a rash decision or action long enough to regain your composure and perhaps gain a more rational perspective of the situation. If you’re in a meeting, bring a drink. You may not want to count to ten but taking a drink gives you the same amount of time to regroup and it’s subtle. How about sleeping on it? Time may help you to self-regulate. Time helps you gain control of emotions that might lead you down the wrong path. Wait for the dust to settle before you act. Try smiling and laughing more... Our brains respond to the nerves and muscles in our faces. Customer service is a huge portion of our jobs. Put on that ‘pudding face’ when you’re really not feeling up to it. It will help counteract that negative emotional state. Don’t let your bad mood paralyze your judgment. Be aware of your own self-talk. Negative self-talk is unrealistic and can be self-defeating. Stop beating yourself up over every mistake and you’ll stop making your problems and issues bigger than what they are. Make your self-talk factual not judgmental. This may take some practice.

**Motivation** - You need to like what you do in order to stay motivated. Be an optimist in adverse situations. Being around a negative person is deflating. Inspire service, effort and commitment by your own actions. Recognition- take the time to acknowledge a job well done or that person who shows initiative. Make the extra time it takes to recognize your staff because the rewards are great. Know the strengths of your people and set goals that are attainable and well-defined. Make time for fun.

**Empathy** - Observing people will help in your ability to recognize and understand the emotions in others. Step into their shoes. Try to gauge what their reaction to a problem might be. Be curious about the other person. The more you know the better you are at meeting and understanding their needs. Don’t give mixed signals. If you are telling someone they did a good job on a project but your body language and voice are not projecting this in a positive way, the person will trust what they see over what they hear. Match your tone with body language. Be sincere.

**Social Skills** - Greeting people by name is a strategy to live by in all walks of your life. Everyone is important and addressing people by name is extremely important. Try not taking so many notes in a meeting. Focus on the people to recognize and understand how they are feeling and thinking. By focusing on note-taking, you might miss the clues that shed light on how others are feeling or what they are thinking. Don’t interrupt a conversation. Wait until the person is completely finished. You should be fully engaged in what the other person is saying. We’re in the discussion to learn not necessarily to make our own points. Practice listening. Hear the speed and volume of the voice. When you are on a phone call, don’t type an email. When someone enters your office, turn toward them and away from your computer. Use ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ more. Incorporate these into your relationships. Building trust is a big one. Consistency over time with our words, actions and behavior will build trust.

Hopefully, some of the points made in this article already resonant with you. There is definitely food for thought here in bringing more of the human connection back into our professional interactions. The concept that “people matter” can truly get lost in this age of technology. We can do almost everything remotely. Choose not to more often. Connect with the people around you. If you want to see ‘eye to eye’ then you might need to meet ‘face to face’. Build and maintain your relationships. Tap into your EI attributes and make a difference in your corner of the world. You may be surprised by how effective you can be as a leader once you attain a high degree of Emotional Intelligence.

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Over the years, many financial research administrators have asked me how they can develop as professionals in the field of financial research administration. My response is always that they need to take responsibility for their own development and look at how they can become more involved in the field. While I have been blessed to have been able to interact with and learn from many experienced research administrators during my career, much of the development I have experienced has resulted from my own initiative. Stealing a bit from JFK, my highest recommendation is to look not at what your profession, institution or department can do for you, but rather, at what you can do for your profession, institution or department.

As many of us do, throughout my career, I have recognized areas that have needed improvement within my various departments/institutions. Many of these areas became developmental opportunities for me. At times when it was not included as part of my position responsibilities, I have built websites, designed/published newsletters, drafted policies/procedures and participated on various University improvement initiative committees. Outside of my institution, I have volunteered for several other organizations (including NCURA) by participating on committees or boards, by providing training, and eventually, serving in regional and national leadership positions. These situations provided me with the opportunity to professionally develop and to be recognized in a variety of different areas.

Getting Involved
at Your Institution

Notice what is happening or not happening in your department or institution. If you see areas that are not working well, think about what might be done to improve the situation. If you can identify a solution, think about what you could do to contribute. Talk to your supervisor about your general proposal before taking action. Hopefully, your supervisor can provide some further insight or guidance into the issue. It is important to understand that there may be details that you are not aware of and/or reasons why management has not addressed specific situations. If your supervisor does not feel the area that you identified is an area that you should concentrate on, don’t be discouraged. Ask about what other areas you might be able to help in. Even if it is an area that is not as attractive to you, take it on. It will provide you with the opportunity to develop and show what you are capable of. And you might find it much more rewarding than you expected.

• Possible areas to get involved in your department/institution:
Getting Involved Outside Your Institution

There are many community and professional organizations that offer opportunities for professional development. My first try at developing and publishing a newsletter was at my son’s elementary school. I volunteered to handle the newsletter for that year. I learned a great deal about the process required to create a newsletter including strategies for communicating to contributors and how to use several types of software. My motivation was to contribute to my son’s school but at the same time, I developed a skill that I later used in my professional career. I developed and published research administration newsletters at University of Pennsylvania and Emory University.

There are a variety of professional organizations that offer professional development opportunities for research administrators. NCURA offers many opportunities—many of which can be done locally without travel. My first volunteer role with NCURA was participating on the FRA Neighborhood Subcommittee. Through this opportunity, I was able to contribute to a resource that would provide many financial research administrators with a valuable resource to assist them in meeting the demands of their positions. There are many other ways to become involved with NCURA as a financial research administrator. These include:

- Assistance at a Conference—There are many ways to assist at a regional or national conference. This can include greeting or registering people, hosting events and many other functions. It is a great way to meet people and learn about other opportunities.
- Present a Session at a Conference—This is a great way to become involved and gain presentation experience. If you have not presented at an NCURA or similar conference in the past, you can usually find someone more experienced to work with you on an initial presentation. For financial research administrators, NCURA’s national meeting in November, NCURA’s Financial Research Administrator’s Conference in the spring or an NCURA Regional meeting can all be fantastic venues for this.
- NCURA Magazine—If you have Financial Research Administration expertise that you feel would be beneficial to others in the form of an article in the NCURA Magazine, contributing an article is an available opportunity. If interested, you should contact the Contributing Editor for Financial Research Administration to discuss your proposed topic. (For 2012, I am in this role and can be contacted at kpeluso@emory.edu.)
- Workshop Evaluator—If you have achieved a higher level of expertise in a particular area, evaluating a workshop may be an interesting way for you to be involved and perhaps learn something in the process. NCURA’s national meeting in November and the Financial Research Administration Conference in the spring both provide opportunities for this contribution. Regional and other conferences may also provide these opportunities.
- Participate on a finance subcommittee at the regional or national level.
- Attend a Conference—Initially, one of the best ways to become involved is to attend a conference and attend the networking events. This is a great way to meet other research administrators and learn about possible developmental opportunities.

Getting involved with NCURA provides fantastic opportunities for professional growth and development and is a great way to connect with colleagues who you can later reach out to when facing a research administration challenge. For more information on the above volunteer opportunities and upcoming conferences, please visit www.ncura.edu.

In Summary

Many people struggle when they primarily focus on what promotion they want next or how long they have been in their current position without a promotion. A much more productive approach is focusing on what you can do in your current role and how you can make the most of that role. This focus allows you to develop and allows others to see what you can offer. Generally, these will be the two most important contributors to whether you get a promotion. More importantly, they are what will best allow you to enjoy and thrive in your current role.

Kerry Peluso is the Associate Vice President for Research Administration at Emory University. Kerry has over 22 years experience in research and grants administration, is a CPA and holds an MBA. In her current role, she is responsible for the Office of Sponsored Programs and the Office of Grants and Contracts Accounting. Kerry has been involved in a variety of roles with NCURA including serving as National Treasurer, Chair/co-Chair of national conferences, Chair of the Financial Research Administration Neighborhood Committee, as a faculty member for NCURA’s Financial Research Administration Workshop and is currently a Peer Reviewer for the NCURA Peer Review Program and a Contributing Editor to the NCURA Magazine.
Mentoring an Office?

Beyond the Personal Mentee

By Marisol Vera, Kathleen Doyle Grzech, Arlene Heredia

At present, institutions of higher learning face new demands to comply, not only with their own existing standards of excellence in education, research, and service, but also with external forces, some that motivate priorities for institutional advancement and some which regulate these organizations. In the research arena, funding shortages, technology challenges, infrastructure needs, and an ever more complex set of compliance issues, among other driving forces, increasingly affect 21st century universities. If managing these challenges is difficult for large research universities, consider what a phenomenal task it poses for non-research intensive, primarily undergraduate institutions (PUIs).

How does a PUI develop institutional capacity to support research in this current environment? Institutions of higher education are increasingly embracing research development—broadly viewed as the infrastructure, human resources, and strategic processes to compete for public and private research resources—as an operational construct in conjunction with traditional pre-award processes. The challenge we face, however, lies in adopting strategic research development activities that specifically address our identified needs.

In 2009, the University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez (UPRM), one of eleven campuses in the University of Puerto Rico system, undertook a bold new mentored research development initiative to establish and institutionalize a Proposal Development Unit (PDU) to enhance institutional capacity in research administration. Key elements in this initiative were to assess the areas of specific need, to identify a mentor institution as a collaborator, and to outline a research development model that could be implemented within the PUI framework.

Funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the UPRM Research and Development Center (R&DC) ultimately embarked on a program of ‘office-to-office mentoring’ in cooperation with the University of Kentucky (UK) Proposal Development Office (PDO).

Evaluating PUI needs: the UPRM case

As a Hispanic-serving land-grant institution with a student population of about 13,000 undergraduates and 1,100 graduate students, UPRM has been moving from a primarily teaching institution to a teaching-research institution with a science, technology, engineering, math (STEM) dominant graduate instructional program. In keeping with its land-grant mission, UPRM supports a well-established agricultural research base administered within Agricultural Research Stations. Research in other disciplines (arts and sciences, engineering, and business administration) is centrally administered by the R&DC, an administrative unit supporting post-award grants management and a traditionally small pre-award service. As a result of an alignment of university and R&DC strategic plans in 2008, two clear needs emerged: to expand UPRM’s extramurally funded research base and to strengthen pre-award services within the R&DC. It was also clear that achieving these goals would require a more strategic research development focus and a greatly enhanced level of direct faculty support.

Identifying a service model and a mentor

Three key factors drove selection of both a model for service delivery and an institutional mentor: 1) the ability of the service model to fit the PUI framework; 2) identification of a mentor with a history of outreach in research administration; and 3) logistical issues.

The service model. Recognizing the need to provide faculty with more targeted support, lead R&DC administrators participated in a UK workshop for research administrators sponsored by the National Institute for General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) and began exploring UK’s model for direct proposal development assistance to researchers. UK operates a well-established "pre" pre-award research support unit, i.e., one whose pre-award focus spans an array of activities that support the actual development of proposal content to facilitate submission of competitive grant applications. The PDO service set offers a spectrum of activities from which to design a model suited for a PUI. Thus, we conceived the UPRM PDO as a vehicle for direct faculty support in grant-seeking and modeled it after UK’s PDO. To launch the PDO, we recruited a faculty research development leader, Dr. Marisol Vera (PI of the NIH-EARDA grant*), to lead strategic planning, and a proposal specialist, Ms. Arlene Heredia, whose previous STEM experience added specialized expertise for proposal narrative review and consultation services.

Mentor expertise. As a research institution with an academic medical school, UK (student population 28,000) maintains a robust biomedical research enterprise. Moreover, UK has a well-established record of outreach in research administration. A long-standing memorandum of agreement between the UPR System and UK provided a platform of previous engagement of research administrators with campuses in Puerto Rico. Key extramurally funded initiatives spanning more than a decade also facilitated extensive engagement of UK research administrators.
with minority-serving institutions. These activities provided a level of understanding of UPRM’s needs but also a mentor team with a demonstrated willingness to share expertise.

**Logistical considerations.** The distance between UK in Lexington, Kentucky and UPRM in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico meant that geographical and travel issues were also important in the mentoring relationship. Funding for and willingness to travel on both sides were essential since face-to-face interaction was critical to building strong relationships and transferring the service model. The use of web-based meetings and other technologies to support interim communications and share resources constituted other viable means to maintain the relationship.

**Role of the mentoring office**

The ‘mentoring office’ was fundamental to this ongoing initiative since it demonstrated a fully functional service model which could be emulated and/or adjusted to fit the PUI’s needs and idiosyncrasies. Mentoring staff provided experienced insight on service configurations that work and assisted in defining the services to offer and their delivery in a modified model. In this regard, the UK PDO plays a unique role in university research administration, with staff working as consultants to faculty developing proposal narratives, an uncommon feature of the standard research administration infrastructure. PDO staff offered guidance on daily operations and service challenges, providing examples of office resources that enable or support service delivery and suggesting ways to adapt these resources to our system; discussed solutions to challenges; and trained new PDO staff on service implementation. Mentoring staff also provided model operating procedures, demonstrated their web service suite and databases, shared valuable training and outreach resources, and recommended professional development sources such as NCURA.

**UPRM Proposal Development Unit**

Training of two PDO staff, including the newly hired proposal specialist, started with a visit to UK to attend a three-day intensive UK/NIGMS Research Administrator Workshop, which provided in-depth training on pre- and post-award grants administration for NIH-funded projects. PDU staff followed up with a two-day stay to visit PDO facilities, meet with PDO staff, and learn about its day-to-day operation. Using UPRM summary statements for unsuccessful applications being considered for resubmission, PDO staff provided hands-on training in proposal narrative review and development of NIH resubmission applications. The PDO Associate Director, Kathleen Grzech, consultant to the EARDA project and UK PDO Mentor Liaison to the UPRM PDO, provided guidance on daily operations and service challenges, office resources, and suggestions for their adaptation. Following the visit, the PDO initiated services by mid-March 2009 providing pre-submission proposal review, resubmission consultation/support, grant-related trainings/workshops, dissemination of funding opportunities, and custom funding searches, among other services. The PDO website was designed to support online paperless service requests and assist in tracking/monitoring requests. The first PDO client services supported the resubmission of an R01 application. This application, awarded American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, is UPRM’s first successful R01 and a direct beneficiary of this office-to-office mentoring relationship.

**Securing the mentoring relationship**

In this endeavor, the key to securing a proper office-to-office mentoring relationship was to seek mutual benefit and establish long-term collaborations. We did so by 1) planning annual visits of the UK PDO Mentor Liaison to UPRM over five years; 2) communicating regularly by email for staff training support on services and advise on research-related administrative issues; and 3) promoting collaborations between UPRM and UK researchers and research training directors. As a result, three UK researchers in chemistry and computer sciences and biosciences have visited UPRM to promote undergraduate summer research opportunities and to recruit graduate students. In addition, four UPRM research administrators and three faculty members have attended workshops at UK focused on NIH grants administration for responsible conduct of research.

**Final comments**

In summary, this foray into office-to-office mentoring has improved UPRM’s sense of research administration community, facilitating access to knowledgeable contacts that provide otherwise “unavailable” information on pertinent issues. The mentoring has resulted in a fully functioning research development unit that is increasingly recognized as a valued asset of the university, with a rise in service demand. The overall strengthening of the research enterprise is a national priority. Thus, collaboration among PUIs and research institutions is a must to provide a strong research support infrastructure to meet current and future demands of our challenging times.

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**References:**


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Not Just for Geeks and Techies…
(although there’s nothing wrong with that!)

By Sherie Donahue

Whether our primary duties are in compliance, departmental administration, financial research, international issues, or pre-award, each of us is involved in electronic research administration (eRA) on a daily basis. We all must use a variety of systems to complete our work, and that means that each of us has much experience to offer our colleagues in the realm of the NCURA electronic Research Administration (eRA) Neighborhood, regardless of our technical expertise. The eRA Neighborhood has the most subscribers of any community at NCURA, and getting more involved is simpler than you might think.

What is the NCURA eRA Neighborhood?
The boundaries of the eRA Neighborhood are not as clearly defined as the other neighborhoods since by its nature eRA touches all areas of research administration. Many of those active in the eRA group are not IT staff or developers, and their primary duties are in other areas such as pre-award or post-award. The eRA Neighborhood committee has often questioned what projects to work on that would not be covered by another Neighborhood. The committee has worked under the premise of “if it has to do with electronic research administration, we will look at it.”

Why get involved?
Electronic research administration is an evolving field that seems to change almost daily. As research administrators, many of us learn on the job and from our interactions with each other. Due to the fluidity of the field, involvement in the eRA Neighborhood is not a truly altruistic gesture since you will probably learn as much as you instruct in your interactions with other members.

How do you get involved?
1. Become an active member of the listserv.

   • Step 1: Join the listserv. Sign up by sending a request stating which neighborhood listserv(s) you would like to join to info@ncura.edu. Please note: You can join multiple NCURA neighborhood listservs.

   • Step 2: If you have a question, post it on the listserv (ncuera@lists.ncura.edu). It does not matter whether the topic is simple or complicated; chances are if you have a question on a particular topic, someone else does, too.

   • Step 3: Respond to questions that others post. Do not allow their queries to be lost in the black hole of cyberspace. If no one responds to the questions posted on the listserv, its functionality is lost; and members will quit posting and move on to other more effective venues. If you do not comment immediately on a post that you might be able to answer, leave it in your inbox for a couple of days to see if anyone else responds. If no one responds, try to take the five minutes or less needed to reply.

   Bottom line: The more people who are active on the listserv, the more useful it will be to everyone.

2. Check out the eRA Neighborhood website (http://www.ncura.edu/content/regions_and_neighborhoods).

   The home page (Overview) is updated monthly by the eRA Neighborhood Committee with the most recent news from the sponsors. The Committee has created spreadsheets for Communication Tools of Information Sources (useful blogs, listservs, etc.) and an eRA System Matrix for registering and logging into sponsor systems [sponsor name, URL, site function(s), password rules, what roles should register in the system, and much more], along with compiling information on S2S vendors. As with everything in the electronic world, these are works in progress; so please feel free to contribute to them by following the instructions on the website.

3. Become a member of the eRA neighborhood committee

   When I was first asked to be on the eRA Neighborhood Committee (We are always looking for new members, so please feel free to contact the chair if you are interested in joining.), I was concerned about what I could offer and the time commitment. My concerns about what I had to offer were based on the fact that although I had worked in research administration for several years, I had only been in an eRA role for a short time. I should not have worried about either issue, because I later discovered that everyone has something to contribute to this group, and the time commitment is only 1-2 hours a month.

4. Volunteer to write an article for the NCURA Magazine on a topic related to electronic research administration.

   These are just some of the ways we can give back to the research community. So, visit the eRA Neighborhood website, stop by the Neighborhood booths at the NCURA 53rd annual meeting, send us an email, or post to the eRA listserv. Do it live! Do it now! Get involved!

Sherie Donahue has worked in research administration for 10 years, and has spent the last three years in the electronic research specialist role at Loma Linda University. She is also a member of the NCURA eRA Neighborhood Committee.
When NCURA began working with other organizations outside the U.S., international collaboration among its membership was still fairly unknown territory. At the time, NCURA’s President and Board of Directors saw the early signs of increasing international collaboration among faculty and understood that avenues for communication and knowledge sharing needed to be developed. As little as three years ago, sessions at the Annual Meeting dealing with international collaboration were sparsely attended in direct contrast to last year’s meeting where a number of sessions found meeting rooms crowded. Clearly, things have changed.

The need for information on how and why to collaborate with institutions outside of one’s country has been steadily rising with more individuals from outside the U.S. attending NCURA national conferences and the Annual Meeting and, U.S. research administrators leaving the country to attend the annual conferences of the European Association of Research Managers and Administrators, the Canadian Association of University Research Administrators, Australasian Research Management Society, and others.

NCURA’s participation in EARMA conferences has enabled research administrators and managers from the European Union to learn how to collaborate with U.S. institutions and has opened doors to allow them to attend NCURA meetings where they have shared and continue to share their knowledge with NCURA’s members. In June of this year, eight NCURA members were in attendance at the 17th Annual Conference of EARMA, which took place in Braganca, Portugal. President Judy Fredenberg, University of Montana; Vice President Dan Nordquist, Washington State University; Immediate Past President, Dave Richardson, Pennsylvania State University; and NCURA Executive Director Kathleen Larmett, each presented sessions at the conference in Braganca, Portugal. Attending on behalf of their institution and presenting sessions were Jim Casey, The University of Texas at San Antonio; John Carfora, Loyola Marymount University; Denise Wallen, University of New Mexico; and Tom Wilson, Rush University Medical Center. While there, NCURA’s Vice President and Chair of the 53rd Annual Meeting, Dan Nordquist, had the opportunity to invite a number of EU Research Administrators to present sessions at this year’s Annual Meeting. Among those agreeing to travel to Washington, DC, and present are EARMA President, Jan Andersen, University of Copenhagen, Denmark; EARMA Board Members, David Lauder, York University, England, and past EARMA-NCURA Fellow, Patriq Fagerstedt, Karolinska Institute, Sweden; EARMA Treasurer, Susanne Rahner, YGGDRASIL, Berlin, Germany; Zygmunt Krasinski, Polish Academy of Science, Warsaw, Poland; Annika Glauener and Agatha Keller, University of Zurich; José Mario Leite, Gulbenkian Institute, Portugal; John Wenteensee, Chair of INORMS 2012, Aarhus University; and Tracy Swift, University of South Australia.

With expanded participation and continual information exchange, NCURA has realized a growth in membership from outside the U.S., leading the Board of Directors to add an eighth region to the Council, earlier this year. During the EARMA Conference, the newly-formed NCURA International Region gained a chairperson when President Judy Fredenberg’s invitation was accepted by EARMA past Treasurer, Jose Mario Leite. Jose will travel to this year’s 53rd Annual Meeting and will chair the first business meeting of the International Region.

Vice President/President-elect Dan Nordquist will continue the expansion when he takes NCURA’s Pre-award Administration Annual Conference to Vancouver, British Columbia, next year. Nordquist, who recently appointed conference co-chairs Denise Wallen, University of New Mexico and Normar Hebert of Brown University, both members of NCURA’s Ambassador Corps, said he looked forward to participation of NCURA members from around the world at NCURA’s first international conference. “As research administrators, it important for us to understand and successfully function on the global playing field. Facilitating these international collaborations is an important key to significantly growing each of our institutions reputation. NCURA, and its members, need to continue embracing our colleagues around the world, which really is becoming smaller and smaller.”
International Insight:
A Brief Interview With Jose Mario Leite

By John M. Carfora

I have known Jose Mario Leite for several years, so I was particularly delighted to see him at the recent Congress of the European Association of Research Managers and Administrators (EARMA), which convened in June at the Politechnic Institute of Braganca – in one of the oldest cities and most beautiful regions in Portugal.

With formal post-graduate study in informatics, management, technology, accounting, economics and finance, Jose is Deputy Director at the Gulbenkian Science Institute (Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência or IGC) where he is responsible for all non-scientific matters involving finance, accounting, safety, infrastructure and general management. Jose has been EARMA’s Treasurer since 2008.

Can you tell us a little about IGC and the Gulbenkian Foundation?

The IGC was founded and is supported by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian) to carry on biomedical research and educational initiatives, and operates as a “host institution” offering excellent facilities and services to international and Portuguese research groups or individual scientists. IGC is particularly attractive among post-doctoral fellows who are expected to develop their projects and form their groups with complete autonomy.

The Institute’s scientific interests are focused upon the genetic basis of development and evolution of complex systems, with emphasis upon organism-centered approaches and experimental models that include plants, yeast, insects, mice, and the genetics of complex human diseases. Along with a strong theoretical component, IGC is also noted for its central commitment to international exchange, graduate courses, and high-profile workshops and symposia. IGC offers library and bio-computing services, animal SPF (Specific Pathogen Free) facilities, a service for production of genetically manipulated animals, high-speed cell sorting, electron and confocal (multiphoton) microscopy, automated DNA sequencing, genotyping and GeneChip® technology, along with monoclonal antibody preparation and Biosafety Level-3 laboratories (P3).

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation’s statutory aims are in the fields of the arts, charitable giving, education and science, and its head office and museum are located in Lisbon, Portugal’s capital city. In addition to those areas occupied by the Foundation’s management and other departments, the premises include a large auditorium, space for temporary exhibitions, a congress area with auditoriums and other rooms, as well as a large building that houses the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum and the Art Library. The entire complex is set in the Gulbenkian Park. In 1983, the Modern Art Centre, consisting of a museum and an education centre, was opened at one end of the park. The Gulbenkian Foundation also has a delegation in the United Kingdom and the Calouste Gulbenkian Cultural Centre Center in Paris. The Foundation actively pursues its statutory aims in Portugal and abroad through activities and grants that support a range of timely projects and programs.

Tell us about how this particular venue was chosen since it is rurally located and not a major European city where most international conferences would likely convene? Personally, I found the rural setting an attractive alternative. Similarly, what were some of the challenges of pulling together such an impressive international congress?

I formally presented the application for the Braganca conference at the EARMA meeting in 2008, when I was elected Treasurer. At that time there were two other competing venues: Dublin and Vienna. EARMA’s General Assembly decided that Bragança should host the 2011 conference, while Dublin and Vienna would respectively host the 2012 and 2013 meetings.

My goal was to make Bragança an unforgettable meeting, and do so at a very low cost for participants. Indeed, now that the conference has ended I can say that all our goals were accomplished according to the number of positive and congratulatory messages we received from attendees. Indeed, the 2011 EARMA Conference attracted a record number of attendees, and for the first time drew participants from Australia, Brazil, China, Qatar and South Korea.

In actual fact, planning the Bragança Conference started five years earlier in 2006 during the EARMA Conference in Paris. To effectively plan a meeting in a regional city without an international airport or train service naturally entails additional travel costs, so we had to offer special transport incentives to participants. At the same time, we also needed to offer an interesting, timely and meaningful conference – and again at an affordable price. That was precisely what I promised EARMA members when the proposal was first put forward (in fact, it was the only way to convince them to approve it). To be sure this could be possible, I need two things: (1) to enlist the support of dedicated volunteers; and (2) to involve and develop a “special partner” for this task.

Regarding the former, I managed to involve some Lisbon-based colleagues who agreed to
The natural “special partner” was Bragança’s municipal government. That said, as we all know small city governments have limited budgets and their prime goal is to obtain resources and not spend them. The Mayor of Bragança was easily convinced on the positive impact this Congress would have on the Region. Similarly, to lessen the investment of the municipality I found a program where 70% of the total municipal cost was covered by non-municipal money.

The success of the conference was also achieved due to the sheer quality of the topical and thematic sessions, along with an attractive range of workshops designed by Anna Groeninx van Zoelen and the exceptional breadth of subject-matter speakers invited by EARMA’s Conference Committee. Similarly, a large part of the conference’s social and cultural success was based upon the hospitality and traditions of the remarkable people who make northeastern Portugal so popular with visitors from around the World. Last but not least, I am also confident that one major metric of success was the comprehensive communication plan we developed, whereby advertising started six months before the congress with particular emphasis on an early-bird promotional period. After that, all relevant milestones were regularly announced to potential attendees, and we did so on a monthly basis and in a highly personalized way. From January to June, more than 6,000 direct e-mails were exchanged; the feedback was superb and the congress a genuine success.

From your point of view, what are the more important challenges in research administration?

Perhaps the most important challenge for international research administration and management is developing a sufficient critical mass of stakeholders to lobby major science agencies and funders around the World. This is precisely why the activity and cooperation of national and international research associations (like EARMA, NCURA, SRA, INORMS, etc) are so important. I am confident that recent changes made by the European Commission are largely due, for example, to value propositions put forward by international research associations and organizations.

Science has become a truly globalized activity, so it is important for researchers and research managers to share information, skills and knowledge. I am always surprised to discover that most of the problems faced by European research managers are quite similar to those faced by American and Canadian colleagues. Based upon my experience, so-called “best practices” are generally applicable on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as in Africa, Asia and Australia. This is one reason why the EARMA/NCURA fellowship program should be extended to include other associations around the World.

We have duty to help change the world based upon our experiences and skills. We need to train, instruct, prepare and share knowledge, and effectively advocate and help funders see that we belong to a transparent community with regard to applying and being accountable for expenditures of public and private funds.

Share with us your thinking about future directions for professional research associations in Europe?

In Europe, national research associations were founded and strengthened over the past two decades, and the next step is to promote and extend cooperation between European and other research associations around the world. For example, the new Lusophone Association (ALLA) opens the door to countries in the developed world (like Brazil), along with countries in development with promising scholarship and research opportunities (like Angola), and other nations mainly in Africa (like Mozambique, Cape Verde, Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe) and Asia (Timor).

Looking forward, as research managers and administrators we need to promote and extend cooperation with other countries, and work more collaboratively with developing countries. We also need to promote and encourage the exchange of ideas, best practices and shared experiences with all international partners. The future certainly looks exciting for international research collaborations.

Dr. John M. Carfora is Associate Vice President for Research Advancement and Compliance at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, and co-author of The Art of Funding and Implementing Ideas: A Guide to Proposal Development and Project Management (Sage, 2011).
The woman in front of me at the NCURA sales table was asking simple enough questions: “What do you think? Does this color look good on me?” Little did she know that if there were adult Garanimals (that wonderful system where children use embroidered animals on their clothing as cues for coordinating as they get dressed all by themselves!), I would be using them. I, who asks my significant other if my clothes match almost every morning. I, who in my single days had a friend come over and make a chart of what went with what and taped it next to my closet. I am not kidding. What the heck. “Hmmm,” say I, not a trace of irony in my voice, “I like that yellow very much, but the red is also quite attractive against your skin tone.” A sale! The woman leaves smiling, her new NCURA polo shirt in hand.

Thus began my career as a volunteer with NCURA. Back in the day, the merchandise for sale at the national meeting was simply laid out on tables directly across from the registration desk. I had wandered by in a sea of noon lunchers and mumbled to a lovely, smiling woman standing next to me, “It’s too bad the table isn’t open with all of these people going by.” This woman turned out to be Cindy White, who grinned at me and said, “Let’s open it!” My jaw fell to the floor, and to my great astonishment, she grabbed the money box from behind the registration desk and said, “Come on! This will be great fun.” And it was. Here was a senior (to me) NCURA member, a person of many badge ribbons and obviously even more friends, talking and laughing with me. And I, who in twelve years attending the national meeting had probably said a total of 15 words, was suddenly struck with the realization that I could do this! I could talk to people! They talked back!

If I could do this, I could do anything. I tell this story to anyone who will listen, and Cindy has become one of my dearest friends. As I have moved up into the long-in-the-tooth category, I am constantly reminded that there are many NCURA members like me at that time, people who want to take their NCURA experience to the next level but have no idea how to go about it. Sure, you hear the word “volunteer” again and again, but how? Like our number one phrase in research administration, the answer is “it depends.” There is no right and perfect way, but there are things that will help. A few people have a volunteer “plan” with a course laid out in their minds. Most of us fall into our volunteering, just as we fell into our research administration careers. To our surprise, we find ourselves in a profession and an organization that we love. We want to make a difference in both.

First, let’s dispel some myths:

You have to be a presenter first in order to be noticed. Nope. Nada. It is true that you often see presenters who are also volunteering in many ways, but only because their faces are more familiar. Presenting is a great thing if you enjoy it and are good at it. Emphasis on enjoy. One of my little quirks is that I love to present to any size group, whether I know anything about the topic or not, but put me in the hospitality suite and I slink into a corner, a smile frozen in place. I instantly become a human bobble head, nodding and nodding and not having the faintest idea what the person next to me is saying over the racket.

People with a lot of badge ribbons are way “up there” and wouldn’t want puny little you to be talking to or helping alongside any of them. I can understand this because I felt the same way. They were, and are, busy talking to each other. That’s not because they don’t want to talk to you. It’s because you will find that your NCURA friends may become your closest friends, and you don’t get a chance to see them often. NCURA people are friendly people, and most of us love to talk. Ask a question! Then you will have a new friend, too.

You have to be outgoing to volunteer. Not true! There are opportunities that aren’t so “out there.” I spent an entire afternoon at the national meeting several years ago in a back closet putting together table decorations for the big banquet. How did this happen? I simply walked up to the registration desk and asked if there was anything I could do. (I sincerely wished someone else had walked up that day, too. There were over 1000 of them, I am sure.) Despite that, I ask what I can do whenever there is an opportunity. It sometimes happens that an evaluator can’t make a session or someone needs help finding a room. Even if there is nothing I can do to help, the staff has seen my face enough that they know who I am and that I am willing to put 1000 table decorations together. That recognition leads to other ways to help.

There are lots of volunteers, so you are not needed. Nothing could be further from the truth. NCURA now has 7000 members, but...
If you aren’t able to chat with your region’s volunteer coordinator at a meeting, call or email and ask what you can help with. Be persistent. Names occasionally get lost, but there is a place for anyone who has the desire. If you have a particular strength, say so. If you see a need that isn’t being filled, suggest it. Be persistent, not pesky….persistent.

2. The registration desk is a great way to meet people. They are all happy to see you, and you have a legitimate reason for asking their names.

3. There are always things that are happening in the background at any meeting, and your regional meeting is a good place (but not the only place!) to start. Maybe it is nothing more than greeting people as they file in for a luncheon, or helping stuff packets, or helping in the hospitality suite, or being a mentor to a newbie who has nobody else from the home institution with him/her. Work not only with your volunteer coordinator, but ask at the meeting if the chair-elect needs somebody to do a task.

Wonderful, you say, but how do I move beyond these things? How do I become an officer or serve on a committee?

This is where we all take different paths, but, in general, many people serve first on a regional committee, such as the communications committee or awards committee, after having established their credentials as a volunteer. These types of committees allow you to get your feet wet and begin to understand the workings of the region and the organization as a whole. From there, many move to chairing one of these committees and eventually decide to run for a regional office. That is not the only way, however, and it isn’t the way I did it. I was first on a national committee, and, while that was a wonderful experience, I am glad I later worked on several regional committees, eventually becoming a regional chair. That gave me a solid foundation of knowledge from which to build my ongoing NCURA volunteerism. There is nothing quite like being a regional chair-elect and running a regional meeting. That’s how I know that there are lots of little tasks that come up at the last moment and sometimes not enough people to do them.

Once you have put some time in, you may wish to consider the new Executive Leadership Program. The members chosen for this program are recommended by their regional leadership or, in some cases, the national leadership. Unlike its predecessor, the Leadership Development Institute, this program is for those that have been in the field and the organization long enough to make it clear that the investment in these people will clearly lead to developing NCURA leaders. But how do you get nominated to the Executive Leadership Program? How can you be successful when you self-nominate for committees? How can you become a “go-to” person? To put it bluntly, it is the history and reputation you build by doing things like those mentioned above. Some observations on my part:

1. Follow-through on your commitments, whether it be putting together 1000 centerpieces or writing an article for the NCURA magazine. Go above and beyond what is expected, and do it consistently and cheerfully. Give 110%. This is not effort reporting, people. Go for it with gusto and always be dependable. This may seem obvious, but I am surprised at those people who give lip service about how they will contribute in a certain way but accomplish nothing, and then ask why they haven’t been chosen for greater levels of responsibility….duh. Don’t make someone else have to scramble to cover your commitment. Instead, be ready to cover somebody else who has failed to live up to their commitment. There are no entitlements in a volunteer organization, and your word means something.

2. Find a mentor or two or three. Ask for guidance on how to accomplish your NCURA goals, or simply ask about the journeys of these mentors. I had good advice along the way, and I still ask for and get good advice. I would be nowhere without the advice of my mentors.

3. Be realistic about your time commitments. We are all incredibly busy people, but there are times in our lives that are better or worse than others. Think seriously about your ability to accomplish what needs to be done before you make a commitment.

4. It is wonderful if you are able to take advantage of programs like the ELP, but very few of us can. Don’t let that discourage you. The ELP is only one pathway out of many.

5. It isn’t essential to attend meetings at all. There are many other ways to help: write articles for the regional newsletter or NCURA Magazine, offer to communicate with new members via email or phone, become a mentor yourself in whatever capacity you can, work on the regional website, etc.

6. Join one of the NCURA neighborhoods and be an active participant. These communities are a wonderful way of connecting with people in your same areas of interest. You may soon find yourself chairing a neighborhood, or becoming one of those people that other people depend upon for your expertise.

7. Be secure in the fact that NCURA needs you. It may take awhile to find your own pathway, but if you want to volunteer, be one of those 700. Don’t be dissuaded. The time will come.

In a recent NCURA Magazine issue, our president, Judy Fredenberg, commented that the pathway to NCURA leadership was more like being on a merry-go-round than a ladder, and she is right. There are lots of places to jump on. However, there is a ladder and it’s one that you will build yourself, rung by rung, and the strength of it is of your own making. Go sell a polo shirt. I found it to be a terrific first rung.

Diane Barrett is Associate Dean for Research in the School of Human Ecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She attended her first NCURA meeting in 1985, the same year that, as a graduate assistant, she became a research administrator, giving up her advanced degree in percussion performance but finding a terrific outlet for her creative writing (fiction) skills. Diane’s volunteer activities with NCURA include serving in several regional capacities, including Chair of Region IV, the Professional Development Committee and is the incoming Vice Chair of the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee. She was privileged to be co-chair of the 52nd Annual Meeting. Perhaps most notably, she was the instigator and facilitator of the Introverts 101 discussion group at the national meeting, now a recurring program feature.
Attracting and hiring excellent staff is the goal of any manager faced with a vacancy; however, filling a specialized role quickly can be very challenging. Our institution has a relatively small number of staff with large portfolios and distinct expertise. A staff member leaving has a significant impact so we have developed a multi-faceted plan to address such transitions. Advertising, selecting and interviewing candidates as well as presenting the employment offer are all important steps of the process that require informed decision making and efficiency. Laying the groundwork now will help alleviate a potential crisis when one of your strongest performers vacates a key role.

**Treat Your Current Staff Fairly**

It is commonly known that it is more economical to retain a good employee than to seek, recruit and train another. Treating your current employees well not only increases your institution’s chance of retaining them but also significantly improves your odds of good recruitment for 4 reasons:

1. When employees leave they will have a sense of loyalty to the institution and are more likely to help find their replacements and ease the transition. They may be willing to help write the job posting, advertise the position to their contacts, draft interview questions, suggest candidates, review resumes, give a longer notice period to help train a new hire or agree to be available to answer questions or e-mentor the new incumbent.

2. Employees are the best advertising for your skills as a manager. Experienced applicants will consider them a source of information about what it is really like to work in your office. High achievers are well-known in their fields and will get “off-the-record” calls and emails inquiring about the job posting. Being well thought of by staff will bear fruit for your organization as a result of conversations that take place prior to anyone even applying for the role.
3. Even before you have vacancies, you and your staff are projecting a memorable image to external parties. How you treat staff, coworkers within your hospital or university or peers externally, your behaviour at conferences, even how you work as a team on conference calls or managing routine tasks can leave a lasting impression. Intelligent, ambitious and happy staff will attract like-minded individuals to your organization in the future.

4. Staff will remember the experiences of former coworkers who have previously left the research administration office. If the manager was respectful and formally acknowledged their time, service and achievements to the entire team, it creates a sense of dignity which influences employees now planning their move. A consistent practice of exit interviews, goodbye parties, cards or other recognition reflects well on the manager’s competence and professionalism.

Additionally when a staff member delivers her resignation, managers use that opportunity to chat informally about what appealed to her about the new opportunity. Gathering this information provides insight to the manager about how the role could be modified to retain the staff member or the next employee. People are more inclined to be completely honest when they have another job offer and the risk of candid discussion is minimal.

Advertise Appropriately

1. A detailed job description, including the pay range, will appeal to a wider audience. Some employers make the incorrect assumption that they have all the power and candidates would be privileged to apply. Busy professionals are not likely to have time to research pay ranges at your institution or spend a considerable amount of time poring over your advertisement looking for basic information about expectations, hours, etc. or interpret what your posted position compares to at their current institution. Vague statements about “pay commensurate with experience” should be made more precise, and therefore more appealing, with the inclusion of at least the starting pay point. Add value to the job description by providing some metrics about workload to add context to the pay scale and hours. If the role normally involves the negotiation of 650 agreements per year the potential applicant can weigh all factors and save you interviewing someone who would not be interested in a job with that workload.

2. Think beyond the traditional approach of simply posting the job on your institution’s HR page. For little or no cost you could:
   (i) Provide a link to the position from your research administration page where people in the field most frequently visit.
   (ii) Add a tag line to your office email signatures saying we are now hiring and provide the link.
   (iii) Use social networking sites like LinkedIn to post the position to your network of professional contacts.
   (iv) Let your researchers and affiliated offices know about the opportunity and ask them to pass it on.
   (v) Ask your current staff to let their counterparts at other institutions and in industry know.
   (vi) Check with professional associations about advertising opportunities. The Canadian Association of University Research Administrators and the National Council of University Research Administrators advertise job postings on their members’ website and members can email the entire membership about the vacancy.
   (vii) Call people you would love to hire and see if they’d be interested. Even if they are out of town and not likely to relocate, they may be able to suggest some potential candidates and forward the job posting to their contacts.
   (viii) Consider internal staff that have transferable skills like a strong work ethic, good attitude, and dedication to customer service and see if they’d like to train in a new role.

Reviewing the Applicants

If you are fortunate enough to get a few candidates who seem to be a perfect match for the position, don’t neglect your research prior to requesting interviews.

(1) Check basic facts such as degrees and professional designations.
(2) Do an internet search of the person’s name to make sure nothing conflicts with information on the resume.
(3) Call a respected colleague that knows the candidate to identify any warning signs regarding work ethics. Colleagues can also provide endorsements that enhance an
applicant in cases where an applicant might be underselling himself or herself in the cover letter.

(4) Review the work history on the CV. Some candidates are deliberately vague because they are hiding a significant weakness. For example, vague dates of employment to hide the fact that the professional voluntarily changed jobs a total of 7 times in one year as no workplace ever suited him or her.

(5) Look for evidence in the CV to support claims. For example, “a strong communicator” could be supported by examples of speeches given, workshops led, articles written or meetings chaired.

“Excellent organizational skills” could be illustrated by a high volume of work managed in tight timelines. Descriptors like “ambitious” and “committed to growth” should be illuminated with examples of courses taken, especially if one has worked at a university where tuition waiver is a staff benefit.

(6) Look beyond the person’s current role for transferable skills your team could use. Multi media aptitude, leadership skills garnered from volunteer work on a community board, experience in public relations, communications or project management are all valuable in research administration.

The Interview

Judging people in interviews is very challenging but the application and references help round out the picture. Nervousness or confidence on the part of the candidate can contribute to an inaccurate perception by interviewers.

(1) Design questions to draw out metrics and evidence that will help give you a baseline to compare candidates.

(2) Help candidates with examples to illustrate what you are looking for. If you ask about an improvement they have made to their role, you could suggest a process to ensure accuracy such as a checklist.

(3) Do not be afraid to ask! Addressing potentially uncomfortable topics such as why a candidate frequently changed, provides the candidates a chance to present themselves in the best light and satisfy any concerns you may have.

(4) Ask “outside the box” questions. For example: “When was the last time you were truly impressed?” When asked a question not specifically about their work history and accomplishments, the applicant can open up and speak more freely. An interview panel can learn much about a candidate’s personality and demeanour by allowing the opportunity for a less formal exchange.

(5) Answer the applicant’s questions honestly. Dismissing or sidestepping obvious questions, even in a joking manner, could be discouraging for the job seeker. The more information you provide up front the more interest and confidence you will inspire.

The Reference Checks

Some people interview very well but make sure you continue your research to see past the dazzle. Check at least 3 references. If a candidate doesn’t want to provide his current supervisor, suggest others who are familiar with his work:

(1) researchers
(2) peers
(3) external customers like sponsor representatives
(4) staff from other internal offices
(5) former supervisors
(6) people with whom he or she worked to prepare for a conference, write a policy, etc.

The Offer

If you are able to offer more than the minimum pay then do. An excellent employee is priceless. Can you offer a one-time signing bonus to make the offer more appealing? If you are restricted by a tight budget, learn what other compensation you can offer from other funds. For example, does your institution provide a professional development allowance to higher level staff that would be appealing to your candidate? Can you commit to funding for annual conference attendance out of another budget? Could you commit to shorter hours for the same pay or a flexible work arrangement? Are there personal days as well as vacation days? Can you offer on-site parking?

An important factor to keep in mind is offering things to the new hire that your current staff has an opportunity to earn too. Hiring someone with a skill set similar to existing staff and providing extraordinary benefits or a much higher pay level often leads to resentment.

Upon Acceptance

Once the offer is accepted, be sure to formally welcome the new employee to your organization. Offer as much flexibility as is reasonable regarding a start date. Remember, as a supervisor you appreciate fair notice from staff member moving on to a new opportunity. Allow this new hire the same courtesy in providing notice to his or her employer.

Prior to their start date, forward the employee some practical information about your organization. Information including maps, parking information, employee benefit plans and on-site amenities are helpful to a new employee. Receiving this type of information before starting a new position is a pleasant way for a new hire to become oriented to their new place of work.

In Conclusion

Hiring the right employee can be a challenging process for any supervisor. The risks of hiring an unsuitable candidate are notable, but the rewards in finding the perfect fit in terms of position and candidate are enormous. By following the best practices outlined above, Hamilton Health Sciences has built an impressive research administration team. Our strength is our people, and we are proud of the investment we’ve made in developing best practices for recruiting excellent research administration staff.

Sarah Lampson BA (Hons) is the Clinical Research Agreements, Contracts and Grants Specialist, Cancer Research at Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation. She has more than ten years progressive experience in research administration. Sarah chairs a mentoring program through a national research network, and has published articles on research administration including a recent paper on training and retaining research administration staff in NCURA (National Council of University Research Administrators) magazine.

Katie Porter. MA, B.Ed is the Clinical Research Agreements and Contracts Specialist at Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation in Ontario, Canada. Katie is a regular guest lecturer at McMaster University speaking on topics ranging from broad research legal issues to specific contract negotiation skills. A recent speaker on intellectual property contract terms at the MAGI (Model Agreements Guidelines International) 2011 Conference, Katie has co-authored an article with Sarah Lampson for NCURA (National Council of University Research Administrators) magazine on training and retaining research administration staff.

The authors have significant experience in hiring and managing staff. Sarah and Katie have written a book on career management and advancement in research administration entitled, Steer Your Career: A Research Administrators’ Manual to Mapping Success due to be released in 2011.
NCURA is pleased to announce its newest DVD Workshop.

The workshop was developed to help you and your faculty comply with the newly released financial conflict of interest regulations. The workshop is targeted to:

✔ Faculty
✔ Post-doctoral researchers and later stage graduate students
✔ Deans, School Chairs and Conflict of Interest Officers
✔ University technology transfer professionals and those involved in the commercialization of inventions and new company formation
✔ University business development officers, incubator professionals, and corporate relations staff

The program is broken in four brief modules:

- **Objectivity in Research**
  - Regulatory Environment
  - Disclosing Conflicts
  - Faculty Consultant vs. University Investigator

- **Intellectual Property**
  - Ownership vs. Exclusivity
  - Royalties vs. Publications

- **Facilities Use**
  - Use of Facilities
  - Cost Recovery
  - Risk/Insurance
  - Use of Institutional Employees

- **Conflict of Commitment**
  - Multiple Demands on Time
  - Release Time
  - Supporting Students
  - Effort Reporting

The ninety-five minute DVD includes a workshop guide with supplemental resources. The program is an excellent addition to the educational resources supporting your institution’s research mission. Institutions are granted an exclusive license to use this workshop for on campus education including posting the modules to your secure website.

Presenters: **David Richardson**, Associate Vice President for Research, Pennsylvania State University; **Jilda Garton**, Associate Vice Provost for Research and General Manager, GTRC/GTARC, Georgia Institute of Technology; **Denise McCartney**, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Administration, Washington University; **Lillie Ryans-Culclager**, Director of Contracts, SRI International

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Setting Up a CRA Study Group

By Denise Hall

When I stumbled into the world of research administration, I had no idea that one day I would be inspired to test for national certification. I have had many other careers so in the beginning I thought this too would just be another chapter in my career book. First it was intriguing and then slowly I began to really find joy and passion in the challenges. I cannot leave out the daily humor that flows endlessly in the journey of “interpreting” federal statues and guidelines and then the added task of “explaining” them to the research faculty. So the need to add nationally recognized professional credibility to the endless hours of reading contract terms and conditions, NOGA, OMB circulars and FAR clauses, becomes a no brainer for those of us who recognize that we have to study and understand all this stuff anyway. Why not add the support of validation without having to justify qualifications in our daily interactions or occasional job interview?

The Research Administrators Certification Council (RACC) provides nationally recognized certifications for research administrators called the CRA (Certified Research Administrator) and the CPRA (Certified Pre-Award Research Administrator). CRA ® is registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Having the CRA denotes that the individual has successfully completed the course requirements and has obtained the knowledge necessary to be a professional sponsored program administrator. The certification provides documentation from an independent professional organization that the individual has taken time and effort beyond work experience to demonstrate a commitment to the profession.

Getting Started

Setting up a CRA exam study group is no easy task. Where do I start? Anyone who has casually browsed the RACC Body of Knowledge page knows exactly how overwhelming that can be. The site is filled with valuable information that provides an outline of seemingly endless links of content that lead to more pages of more links from infinite resources. The task of deciphering this Body of Knowledge is left to each individual to figure out how they will manage it. For those of you who have pioneered this quest and lived to tell the tale, the rest of us are in awe of you. RACC does offer review sessions of the Body of Knowledge, but if you are not near one or cannot fly to the closest one, then you are left on your own. In my case, I could not do either but did not want to go on the study journey alone. I called upon my co-workers to see who might also be interested. I found quite a few interested people. I brought this to the attention of my supervisor and found quite a bit of support—even more than I had anticipated. In response to the idea she sent out an internal email to see if there were others across campus who would be excited about the opportunity. We received such strong feedback that my supervisor turned to our IT professionals and requested a listserv. There are many campuses out there that have chosen to have classroom settings for their study groups. For instance, Virginia Tech provides a four week study group that meets for 10 two hour sessions and is limited to 20 participants. Duke University also provides a study session limited to 20 participants. The University of Texas at San Antonio provides a 10 week Research Administration Training course that is designed to prepare 25 participants for the CRA exam. Employees who qualify for the exam are encouraged to pursue the RACC certification. Face-to-face groups are great for smaller groups and for those who can set time and space for those meetings. It also requires a great deal of structure which is obviously a better way to go but may not be attainable to all campuses. The idea of the online listserv was perfect to me because a listserv creates an archival system in which all participants can view past and present activities. Through the listserv, everyone is part of the conversation and can participate whenever their personal time allows.

Certified Mentors

Listening to those CRA mentors is a must! Since I am one who does not like to re-invent already working models, I have no problem looking and asking others for guidance. The CRA mentors are not only knowledgeable but the advice I received was filled with platinum content. The best part was the level of eagerness each mentor contributed to the request for information. It was refreshing to communicate with others who share the passion and who were so encouraging of the journey. I found a great deal of inspiration in my communication with CRA mentors. Any doubts I had about being able to do this were washed away by the streams of emails from CRA mentors with a wide variety of realistic options for taming the Body of Knowledge. Having the listserv also allowed me to share the mentor’s advice with all in the group. Essentially each mentor was not only speaking to me but to each member and also those who will join in the future. Many of the suggestions included which books to read, the OMB circulars to focus on, study guides and sample test questions and topics.

Getting the Group Together

Defining your group parameters helps in knowing where you are going. The main point is you cannot have a group if you are the only person you know interested in taking the test. How do you get others involved? How do you find enough people who can provide feedback and share your interest in exploring the possibilities? As research administrators, it is hard enough to find time to study and then add finding people to study with in which you all find the same time together. We started this process with the intent to set up brown bag lunch meetings once a month. That idea washed away as I found myself re-inventing the parameters of the group. The life changing advice I received from the mentors was the suggestion to join the RESADM-L@hrinet.org listserv. I saw right off that there were individuals asking for study groups they could access nearby. One was from Texas so I invited her to join our University of Houston group. This conversation created interest from others out of state and it only made sense to me that location should not be an issue in today’s world of electronic communication. So, one by one the group grew and I knew that I would need to be organized and on point.

The Syllabus

Creating a syllabus requires organization and understanding of time constraints. Even with the
Body of Knowledge outline it is worthwhile to create for your group a syllabus that all can follow. Depending on the time you have prior to the exam, you need to allocate the amount of time needed to study each section. This process will depend on the strengths of the group. If the group is made up of mostly department administrators, pre-award administrator or directors, the focus will likely vary for each group. In our case the group was large and diverse. I knew the level of experience and understanding varied a great deal and that many members would have had more of both than me. So my task was to focus the syllabus on time for each section. As a post award administrator, I had the help of our director, a pre-award administrator and a department administrator. This made our insight and overview complete. We worked together to form a syllabus of the Body of Knowledge that covered a 40 week period for the group. It all worked out well but as the group progressed there was evolution and development of what worked better and better. We were interactive and co-created the success of the group.

The Material

Choosing what to read outside the Body of Knowledge is hard if you have never taken the test. I received all kinds of suggestions from the CRA mentors regarding what to read. Unfortunately, there are no CRA textbooks. We reviewed a few textbooks and suggested to our group the OMB circulars A-21, A-110, A-122, and A-87 and the corresponding links in the BOK. Fortunately, NCURA offers all kinds of books and guides for how to be a good research administrator. The best advice from CRA mentors, I think, was starting with Managing Federal Grants. This guide is very expensive so we could hardly recommend that anyone purchase it on their own. The saving grace is that most, if not all sponsored program offices, have access to the guide for their administrative staff. If you are not at an institution which has access to this guide, then the NIH and NSF policy guides are a good fallback. NCURA’s Regulations and Compliance and Sponsored Research Administration are also great guides to add into this process.

Interactivity

Group interaction makes it more fun. In our study group, it was left up to the individuals to do the outside reading on their own. My original purpose was to create an environment whereby we would all be able to interact daily or weekly on each topic and question each other on what we read. It didn’t work out that way. More and more I became the facilitator of information. This wasn’t a bad place to be since I too was studying for the exam and it did help a great deal for me to always be involved in the questions as they came in and out. On some occasions I felt like I was talking to myself. The real fun was had when others got involved in the conversation. I especially enjoyed when there were questions or challenges on subject or content. This way I knew what others were thinking and absorbing the information to integrate into our knowledge pool. Anyone who leads training or seminars knows that getting audience participation can be challenging. It becomes more so when you can’t see your audience. I spent a lot of time sending out definitions and links. This process may have been helpful to the group but it did not draw much interaction. In this arena the best way to elicit that interaction is with questions.

Testing

Assessment testing of the group provides lots of questions. Now this is where the real work comes in. The process of creating and finding questions that provides challenges and stimulation to more learning is a huge endeavor. The questions have to be a mix of categories that represent the variety in the level of understanding. We want to encourage with the easy ones while offering a gauntlet of topics to conquer. This area should be fun and serious. Since this is a study group there is no grading. This area is really meant to offer practice without pressure. It is very time consuming creating practice questions. I asked our mentors to send in questions they thought would be useful and of course searched the web for examples to use. While the question may not be exactly like those on the exam the practice helps a great deal to help get the group into the testing state of mind.

The Results

Did I Pass? When I took the test I was not completely sure how to respond to it. For the most part I think I was very well prepared. The questions were a mix of very easy to moderate uncertainty between answers and there were a few I had no idea about and knew I wouldn’t be able to make an educated guess. I have to say there were 2-3 of the latter for me. So I went in very calm and at peace with whatever the outcome.

In our study group we covered a lot of material but there were things I have to say that without actual research administration experience and understanding, I don’t feel I would have answered correctly. All those hours of reviewing contracts and interpreting statues and guiding faculty will pay off come exam time. The information in the Body of Knowledge provides the balance needed to reach the goal. When studying the information, you should be able to connect everything you study into what you do every day.

As far as the overall success of the group, we are still at the early stages. We are always evolving and recently our institution has created a blackboard class for campus employees to have access to the materials. The listserv group remains separate and we currently have 85 members across the country. Three members are mentors who started with us to help provide direction. There are ten new CRAs who remain members for support. We have strong positive feedback regarding the material and the guidance we provide. Not everyone on the listserv takes the exam at the same time and not everyone on the listserv has the intention of taking the exam. Many have joined solely to be part of the gaining of CRA knowledge. Eventually, I believe some who started as voyeurs may in time feel comfortable enough to take a shot.

Denise Hall is a Senior Research Administrator and CRA at the University of Houston. She received her first research administrator opportunity at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and credits her understanding and passion for research administration to Diane Veros—ERC Director, Finance and Operation at RPI and Denise Clark—Assistant Vice President for Research Administration and Advance ment at the University of Maryland-College Park. If you would like to join the study group listserv send your request to denise@uh.edu.
Introduction
What do the university research community, startups, and “global grand challenges,” as defined by the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), have in common? They are all pieces of a puzzle that complete the picture of how to more directly apply the leading edge capability of U.S. universities, startups and small/medium enterprises (SMEs) to the global challenges of clean water, clean energy, maternal/child health, and food security.

These four “Grand Challenges” are the focal points to U.S. diplomacy and development programs, and they underlay the State Department’s recently released Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR). The QDDR states that “science, engineering, technology and innovation are the engines of modern society and a dominant force in globalization and international economic development.” Moreover, completing this puzzle addresses the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and its aim to improve economies and standards of living in most countries around the world. We know the figures well: 1 billion people without access to clean water,2 1.5 billion people without access to electricity,3 3 billion people cooking on fireplaces instead of using cleaner alternatives,4 and 1 in 3 women and children with no access to prenatal/postnatal care.

These programs have a “WIFU,” or “What’s In It for the U.S.” perception problem. The issues raised revolve around deployment/support costs and the difficulties of accessing immature markets. The author discusses how to view the situation differently, suggesting there is instead an opportunity, and a large one.

Background
Led by the semiconductor industry and related research, many products and services have recently ridden the cost curve in an aggressive downward direction. This includes many solutions to MDG and other development challenges. These challenges typically are not addressed effectively due to perceived cost and margin problems and because businesses located in developed countries have not traditionally designed for “the other 90% of the world.” This issue is worth addressing, as the challenges of developing countries are attached to very large potential markets. It is a tough problem, but recent approaches have promise and should be promoted, replicated, and explicitly supported as a strategy for U.S. diplomacy and development policies, U.S. economic growth and job creation.

As is so often the case, we are shown the way by our innovative universities. They are creating student-led teams that are designing for the “other 90%,” those whose income is less than the top 10% of earners for a given country.

One stellar example of this approach is a product called “Embrace,” a simple solution to the problem of low birthweight babies whose mothers are far from a hospital with incubators. Often, these babies die during the multi-day walks their mothers take, themselves in a weakened state, to get to these facilities.

Designed by a university student-led engineering team, Embrace replaces the incubator, its dependence on electricity and its high cost, with a simple blanket and a pouch containing a non-toxic reusable material that is heated by boiling it in water. The infant is wrapped in the blanket along with the pouch, helping to keep the infant’s body temperature regulated during the first few days of life. It can be used while transporting the baby, or in some cases can eliminate the need for the incubator altogether.

A second example, the Berkeley-Darfur Stove, links research and commercialization to address a profound need in a developing economy - cook stove technology. The stove was developed by an engineering team of scientists from a U.S. national lab, a team of engineering students, and volunteers from Engineers Without Borders. This project was the result of a design course integrating engineering, entrepreneurship, and a dictum that any product designed needed to be inexpensive and aimed at developing nations.

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1 http://www.state.gov/qddr
2 http://www.unicef.org/wash/
4 U.S. Department of State’s Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves.
Connecting these two universes in a lightweight, easy-to-approach manner is the challenge and opportunity before us. Making these connections could result in faster commercialization for university research, faster growth for the companies formed to commercialize university research, more robust SME/startup partnerships across borders, increased U.S. employment and manufacturing opportunities, and quicker responses to U.S. diplomacy and development priorities.

**Current Activities**

There are two approaches currently under investigation at the Office of the Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State (STAS). One involves open challenge competitions leveraging the power of the Internet, the other a matching tool accessible to universities, startups, and SMEs, as well as officers located at U.S. embassies and missions around the world.

The open challenge competition approach has been used successfully at NASA and the Defense Department to rapidly find answers to problems that have escaped resolution using other means. These are under evaluation as to their fit for the purpose of rapidly connecting the Two Universes.

Matching tool approaches are being tried in multiple government agencies, including OPIC, ExIm Bank, the Federal Laboratories Consortium, the Department of Defense, and the Commerce Department. All of these are under evaluation as models for what might work in the environment described above.

An initial look at a lightweight matching tool has been done in the STAS office, and a workshop on open challenge technologies was held in July 2011. Continuous feedback is currently being incorporated into the matching tool’s description via numerous discussions between the STAS office, other U.S. agencies, and various embassies. It is currently known by the moniker “SME Gateway,” though names will change as the investigation continues.

The current discussions revolve around how such an approach might best fit into the operating practices and infrastructure at the embassies. Once that discussion has progressed further, a decision will be taken as to how best to proceed.

An interesting outcome of this effort may well be in fostering earlier and more robust partnerships between U.S. small businesses and small enterprises in a given country. This effort has, and will continue to focus on how best to facilitate more and faster partnering opportunities for small enterprises within the country of interest. Almost immediately from the moment a U.S. SME finds a customer in another country, it is going to need local representation and distribution. Often for an SME, another SME is the right way to proceed. The SME Gateway is a stimulant to accelerate the rate of partnering and tangible results that address issues of import to the US and its partners.

What are the implications for U.S. universities? If a mechanism such as SME Gateway takes hold, there will be more opportunities for university research to enter the commercialization pipeline and be tested meaningfully in large applications affecting very large populations around the world. Much work remains between now and realizing this scenario.

**Question for the University, Start Up, and SME Communities**

These two approaches may prove appropriate for the Department of State and USAID as one piece of the puzzle. But what would make sense for the university, startup and SME communities? What does a “lightweight” matching mechanism look like? This is the question the author of this paper wishes to put forward to the reader. In particular, we would like to receive feedback on what approaches have previously been tried to bring promising research to bear on the Grand Challenges as defined by the Department of State and USAID, via more rapid commercialization. The author may be reached at the contact information below.

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**Rebecca S. Taylor** is serving as 2011 IEEE Engineering & Diplomacy Fellow, in the Office of the Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State. Comments and feedback can be sent to Rebecca at taylorrs1@state.gov.

Views expressed in this article are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of State or the U.S. Government.
BOOK REVIEW

THE EMPEROR OF ALL MALADIES
A BIOGRAPHY OF CANCER

SIDDHARTHA MUKHERJEE
The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer by Siddhartha Mukherjee is an expansive book, but it never feels tedious. Mukherjee’s prose is accessible to the general reader, and his thoroughness, compassion, and humor show through in the writing. As narrator, he presents many scientific concepts, but he comfortably conveys the complex ideas in uncluttered language. In six chapters (Parts) and 470 pages, he manages to distill a vast amount of disparate information into an engaging mystery story. The mystery – What is cancer?

Though his primary focus is the last 100 years, Mukherjee introduces characters and weaves in anecdotes spanning the past 400 years. Among them are Atossa, an ancient Queen of Persia, whose story is believed to include one of the earliest written accounts of breast cancer. Mukherjee’s narrative follows the hunt for clues to solve the riddle of uncontrolled growth, cancer’s defining feature. It demonstrates scientific progress and human understanding as the result of countless incremental advances and nearly equally-many false starts.

In the Prologue, Mukherjee introduces Carla Reed, a young mother and kindergarten teacher. Recently diagnosed with leukemia, she is about to begin treatment at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston. At the time, Mukherjee is in the middle of a Clinical Oncology Fellowship at the hospital. In this first encounter, he carefully explains the course of her treatment and reassures Carla that her cancer is curable (30% chance). With that, the two begin a journey together that spans the rest of the book.

In Part One, Mukherjee looks back on the history of leukemia. Until the 1940s, it was a well-described condition (“white blood”; an overabundance of white blood cells), with no cure. Sidney Farber’s discovery of anti-folate and his measurement of therapeutic response were turning points. (Farber is one of two key individuals that Mukherjee returns to repeatedly throughout the book.) This is the first instance of scientific observation and deduction being used to develop a drug based on cancer biology and to measure therapeutic effect.

A pathologist by training, Farber compulsively observes cells, and finds that he can count them to determine progression of leukemia (and its response to therapy). Studying earlier work on anemia, Farber finds a compound, Folic Acid or folate, that stimulates regeneration of red blood cells. He reasons that folate should restore the balance of red blood cells in leukemia patients, and he quickly tests it on several patients. (This is the era prior to Institutional Review Boards, the Nuremberg Code, and the Belmont Report.) However, he finds it has the opposite effect, accelerating the progress of the disease. Undaunted, he turns his attention to finding an “anti-folate” that would slow disease progression. After testing several compounds, Farber finally achieves remissions with the antifolate aminopterin. His approach marks the beginning of cancer medicine as a scientific discipline.

In Part Two, Mukherjee tells the story of Mary Lasker (his second touchstone). Lasker is a New York socialite who takes up the cause of cancer advocacy. Based on her childhood experience with illness, she brings a religious zeal for patient care and combines it with the tools of advertising to revolutionize disease fundraising. In the waning days of World War II, she founds the modern American Cancer Society from a moribund medical society and shifts its focus squarely onto patients (instead of doctors). She also adopts the imagery of war. She envisions a “Manhattan Project” for cancer research, and the “War on Cancer” is born.

When Lasker and Farber meet, each recognizes their complement in the other. By this time, Farber has devoted himself to scientific research as the driver of new cancer therapies. His aims meld perfectly with Lasker’s, as she cajoles the public and politicians to fund research in the hope of a cure. The two have a profound effect on the organization and funding of cancer research. Their combined efforts result in billions of dollars directed to cancer research, establish patient/disease advocacy as a driver for national research policy, and culminate in the passage of the National Cancer Act of 1971 (NCA).

In the next three parts, Mukherjee describes significant shifts in the medical landscape for cancer.

When Sidney Farber dies in 1973, just two years after NCA, clinical trials have become a central focus in the cancer drug development. Treatment strategies change as radical surgery is proven no more effective that simple surgery plus radiation, as chemotherapy is pushed to extremes in the form of bone marrow transplant, and as the first non-toxic drug therapy (hormone treatment for prostate cancer) is introduced. Treatment philosophy also changes as palliative care becomes recognized as a legitimate branch of medicine (and a dignified option for patients) and compassionate use (demanded by activists) opens experimental therapies to terminal patients. Lastly, after years of research into external causes, cancer biology shifts its focus inward to the cancer cell and its genes (oncogenes).

In the last chapter, Part Six, Mukherjee takes stock. At the time of Mary Lasker’s death, studies show declines in mortality in every major form of cancer, but there has been no silver bullet. Prevention and early detection have contributed as much to the reductions as drug therapies and surgical techniques. A critical mass of basic scientific results has been built, and it is leading to new discoveries. Newly-identified vulnerabilities in the cancer cell are now the focus of attention. Targeted therapy (identify an oncogene, link it to a disease, and find a drug targeted to it) has become a reality, and drugs such as Herceptin and Gleevec are its signature successes. Oncogenes are implicated in all key biological questions.

In the Epilogue, Mukherjee returns to Atossa. For each era of cancer medicine, he re-imagines her fate had she received a diagnosis during that time. It is a thought experiment that neatly illustrates the progress that has been made. Cancer can be durably cured in some cases and reduced to a manageable chronic condition in others. However, for some diagnoses, medical science can only offer palliatives. The exercise also more subtly describes the evolution in society’s view of cancer, from something foreign (to be excised, burned, or poisoned away) to something that is innately part of our biology. Mukherjee ends with Carla Reed. She returns for a check-up, hopeful that her remission remains intact.

On balance, Mukherjee has produced an admirable work. Its one noticeable weakness is that the overlapping chronologies among chapters may confuse readers. One could come away with the impression that certain events were contemporaneous, when they were actually separated by decades. However, this shortcoming could be easily addressed by the inclusion of a chart gathering all the major events of the book on a single timeline. Such a chart would fit nicely among the excellent references and notes already provided. Nevertheless, this book fills a void by pulling together the many disparate stories of cancer into a cogent and cohesive whole. The reader will be left with sense of finishing an epic novel, and they will be left with a greater understanding of cancer.
NCURA Gives Back: Families of Freedom Foundation

At the 2001 NCURA Annual Meeting, 1340 members gathered together as a community to comfort each other, celebrate their reunion, and to show the world that they were not afraid to fly to Washington, DC, and carry on with life. They also decided to help others, by collecting money to help victims of 9/11. And so began the tradition of “NCURA Gives Back.” Over the course of three days $3,000.00 was collected. With the amount matched by the Washington Hilton, a check for $6,000.00 was sent to the Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund. The fund, founded six days after the events of September 11 was built to support the educational dreams of the financially dependent children of those who were tragically killed. Originally chaired by Bill Clinton and Bob Dole, it has distributed $67.7 million to 1,695 students. The fund will continue to help students until the year 2030 when the last of the remaining 5,000 children apply for scholarship assistance. On September 7, 2011, Kathleen Larmett, NCURA’s Executive Director and Joelle Niemaszyk, Washington Hilton Hotel’s Director of Association Sales, were invited to New York City for an evening of remembrance where they had the opportunity to meet with some of the families and hear stories from the children who have attended college because of scholarships from the Fund. NCURA’s 53rd Annual Meeting has chosen “Families of Freedom Foundation” as this year’s NCURA Gives Back charity. Watch for the final Annual Meeting program and learn how you can get involved and help the final 5,000 go to college.

Executive Leadership Program

NCURA’s first Executive Leadership Program class met in June for a four-day retreat, which was the culmination of the six month program. The innovative ELP was designed by a Leadership Team made up of Vivian Holmes, Broad of MIT and Harvard; Pam Whitlock, UNC Wilmington, Retired; Jerry Fife, Vanderbilt University; Garry Sanders, Research Foundation of SUNY; Kathleen Larmett and Tara Bishop of NCURA. The class of 2011 was comprised of Nancy Daneau, Research Foundation, State University of New York at Stony Brook; Winnie Ennenga, Northern Arizona University; Mary Louise Healy, Towson University; Joseph McNicholas, Loyola Marymount University; Dennis Paffrath, University of Maryland, Baltimore; Cathy Snyder, Vanderbilt University.
Peggy Lowry, Oregon State University, Emeritus, is the 2011 recipient of the NCURA Outstanding Achievement in Research Administration Award. This award recognizes a current or past NCURA member who has made 1) noteworthy contributions to NCURA, and 2) significant contributions to the profession of Research Administration. First awarded in 1994, this award is NCURA’s highest honor.

Peggy, an NCURA member for 35 years, most recently served as Director, Office of Sponsored Programs and Research Compliance, Oregon State University, prior to her retirement in 2007. Post-Retirement, Peggy continued to serve Oregon State University as the Compliance Administrator, 2007-2009, and as Interim Director, Office of Research Integrity, 2009-2011. Among her many accomplishments throughout the research community, Peggy’s contributions to NCURA are numerous, including her outstanding leadership as Chair of NCURA’s first live satellite TV program during a PUI conference in 1998. She was also part of the volunteer team that designed and built NCURA’s successful Peer Review program.

Diane Barrett, University of Wisconsin-Madison, speaks to Peggy’s knowledge and commitment to adult learning styles in presentations when she writes, “Peggy has been at the forefront of moving NCURA towards this kind of teaching. Early on, she was gently helping people understand what it means and why it is important whenever she could.” Diane also offers, “Peggy’s resume, as well as other supporting letters, address Peggy’s commitment to her institution and to NCURA in ways that I have not mentioned. What matters more to me are those personality traits that exemplify the best NCURA has to offer. Peggy has been, and continues to be, one of my most treasured mentors. She is always there for me, just as she is there for many others.”

Stephan Hansen, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Emeritus, shared, “In addition to being a teacher, Peggy has had a significant impact upon research administration through her participation on NCURA’s committees and boards. While serving on those committees, Peggy worked to implement NCURA’s strategic plan which reshaped the organization, helping to make it into the premier professional development organization. Beyond these significant contributions, Peggy has had an impact upon the profession in a more subtle and intangible way. She has helped us articulate our professional values and standards through her unwavering integrity, fairness, and civility. These qualities are what make us want to learn from her, and what makes her achievements in research administration not only significant, but outstanding.”

Patricia Hawk, on behalf of Oregon State University, wrote about Peggy’s accomplishments within the Offices of Sponsored Programs and Research Compliance and Research Integrity, and added, “But it is Peggy’s contributions to NCURA that I believe truly showcase her knowledge of research administration and professional development.

Beth Seaton, Western Illinois University, offers, “A quick review of Peggy’s CV will convince anyone how active Peggy has been with the organization over the course of her 35+ years in research administration. Peggy is a constant presenter, facilitator, and workshop coordinator for the organization [NCURA]. She has served as traveling faculty for at least two different NCURA traveling workshops and we have already seen fit to recognize her for her distinguished service when the organization presented her with the Distinguished Service Award in 2006”.

In addition, Robert Andresen, University of Wisconsin-Madison, shares about Peggy, “Throughout her career, she’s been an active member of NCURA. She’s been a presenter, an editor, a workshop faculty member, a Board member, and served on countless committees at the national and regional level. Peggy is a true colleague; always willing to listen, share her expertise, and advise her peers. She’s been an amazing resource to her universities, her colleagues, and NCURA.”

On her award, Peggy shares, “It has always been a privilege to be a member of a profession where colleagues have so much passion and heart for what they do and are willing to so openly share their expertise and advice. I am honored to be part of this profession and am humbled to receive this award.”

Peggy Lowry will receive the Award for Outstanding Achievement in Research Administration on Monday, November 7, 2011, at the 53rd Annual Meeting Keynote Address.
This year the NCURA Nominating and Leadership Development Committee selected five veteran NCURA members to receive the Distinguished Service Award. This award recognizes members who have made sustained and distinctive contributions to the organization.

Each recipient has contributed to NCURA’s success in numerous ways and for many years. The following summaries provide a snapshot of their service and contributions in addition to the many presentations they’ve each made at regional and national meetings and conferences over the years.

**The 2011 Award recipients are:**

**Patrick Green,** Associate Director, Division of Sponsored Research, Vanderbilt University. Pat’s service over the years has included member of the NCURA Board of Directors, LDI Advisor, the NCURA 50th Anniversary Task Force and the Financial Management Committee. In addition, he has served on the Nominating and Leadership Committee, Board of Directors, and on the PRA 4 Program Committee. Ed served as Region IV Chair Elect/Chair, 1998-1999, and Treasurer in 1997. His Region IV service also includes regional Board member, and service on many regional committees. Ed is the recipient of the Region IV Distinguished Service Award in 2003.

**F. Edward Herran,** Director, Grants and Contracts Financial Administration, Purchase College, SUNY. Ed has served as NCURA Treasurer Elect and Treasurer, 2004-2006 and has served as a member and the Chair of the Financial Management Committee. In addition, he has served on the Nominating and Leadership Committee, Board of Directors, and on the PRA 4 Program Committee. Ed served as Region IV Chair Elect/Chair, 1998-1999, and Treasurer in 1997. His Region IV service also includes regional Board member, and service on many regional committees. Ed served as Region II Treasurer, 2004-2005, and has served on many regional committees as well.

**Heather Offhaus,** Director, Medical School Grant Review & Analysis, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. Heather currently serves on the NCURA Board of Directors and is a member of this year’s Annual Meeting Program Committee and is a member of the NCURA Traveling Workshop Faculty. Heather also has served on the PRA 4 Conference Program Committee and was Co-Chair of the Board-appointed Regions Best Practices Task Force. Heather has served as Chair Elect/Chair of Region IV, 2005-2006. In addition, she has served on the Region IV Board of Directors and many regional committees. Heather is the recipient of the Region IV Distinguished Service Award and the 1998 Kevin Reed Outstanding New Professional Award.

**Kerry Peluso,** Associate Vice President for Research Administration, Emory University. Kerry is currently the FRA Contributing Editor for the NCURA Magazine and also is a member of the NCURA Traveling Workshop Faculty. She served as NCURA Treasurer in 2007-2008 and has served on the Board of Directors, Financial Management Committee, FRA 5 Program Committee and on the Select Committee on Peer Review. Kerry’s service also includes Subcommittee and Task Force participation as well as LDI Advisor and Chair of the FRA Neighborhood. Kerry served as Region II Treasurer, 2004-2005, and has served on many regional committees as well.

**Beth Seaton,** Director of Sponsored Projects, Western Illinois University. Beth’s current service includes this year’s Annual Meeting Program Committee, NCURA Traveling Workshop Faculty member and NCURA Peer Reviewer. Beth also was selected, last year, to be an NCURA International Fellow and was hosted by the Gulbenkian Institute in Portugal. Her previous service includes NCURA Magazine Contributing Editor, Professional Development Committee, PDC Evaluation Subcommittee, On Campus Interview and FRA and PRA Program Committees. In addition, Beth has served on the Region IV Board of Directors, as Newsletter Editor, and on many regional committees. Beth is the 2009 recipient of the Region IV Distinguished Service Award.

The Distinguished Service Award recipients will be recognized at the 53rd Annual Meeting during the luncheon on Monday, November 7, 2011. Please join us in thanking them for their service and their contributions!
Joseph F. Carrabino Award

The Joseph F. Carrabino Award, established in 2003 by the NCURA Board of Directors, is named after the late Joe Carrabino, NSF Grants Officer. This award recognizes a current or former Federal partner who has made a significant contribution to research administration, either by a single project, activity, or innovation, or by a lifetime of service. The NCURA Nominating and Leadership Development Committee selected Mark Herbst, Department of Defense, as the recipient of the 2011 Joseph F. Carrabino Award.

Mark Herbst received his Ph.D. degree from the University of California at Los Angeles and currently serves as DOD Staff Specialist for Research and Grants where, under the Director for Basic Research in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, Dr. Herbst develops and recommends policy and works on issues related to:

**Basic research** – budgets, program policy and OSD leadership for the university research instrumentation program that Military Department research offices jointly execute.

**Universities** – DoD and Government-wide issues such as cost sharing and indirect costs.

**Grants and other assistance instruments** – DoD and Government-wide policy. In this area, Mark is a member of the CFO Council’s Grants Policy Committee and also serves as co-chair of the task force currently reviewing university cost principles in OMB Circular A-21.

On his contributions to research and the research community, Jane Youngers, Assistant Vice President for Research at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and Gunta Liders, Associate Vice President for Research Administration at the University of Rochester cite three examples:

“As a representative for all federal agencies, Mark:

• Serves on the Research Business Models Subcommittee, and specifically on the working group on Common Practices among Agencies. The goals of this working group are to review policies and procedures among agencies, streamline and unify grants administration practices, and review the impact of regulation and administrative requirements and the variation in agency treatment of indirect costs.

• Assisted with the implementation of Public Law 106-107, that started the paradigm shift from numerous agency specific paper application forms to a single electronic format

• Was an advocate and proponent to establishing 2 CFR, a “one stop shop” for federal circulars related to award administration, common laws and funding agency implementations.

• Played an important role in the implementation of the FFATA requirements as they pertain to grants reporting; specifically, he was responsible for the grants implementation not requiring purchasing information as is required in the contract part of the FFATA implementation.”

Julie Norris, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Emeritus, offers the following as additional examples of Mark’s “understanding of the issues and his ability to address those issues in a special and effective way.” First is his involvement in “the OMB clarification memo in the early 1990’s concerning graduate student compensation and voluntary uncommitted cost sharing” and second is “his role in reversing the 35% IDC limitation which had been imposed in the mid-2000’s for research funded by the Department of Defense.”

Carol Blum, Director of Research Compliance and Administration, Council on Governmental Relations, agrees and adds “As a member of the executive committee of the Research Business Models (RBM) Subcommittee of the Office of Science and Technology’s Committee on Science, Dr. Herbst has helped craft policy recommendations that have quite literally changed the way we do business, most notably the establishment of standard research award terms and conditions, an outgrowth of the work of [the] Federal Demonstration Partnership.”

On his award, Mark offers, “NCURA’s high standard of professionalism and expertise in research administration is what makes this award special for me. I have learned and grown from many associations with NCURA members and have the utmost respect for all that you do for the research community.”

As recipient of the 2011 Joseph F. Carrabino Award, Mark will be recognized at the 53rd Annual Meeting during the luncheon on Monday, November 7, 2011.
With summer in full swing we are looking back on an outstanding Spring Meeting. We had over 300 attendees at the meeting. On behalf of the leadership of the region and all of the attendees I would like to thank Pat Fitzgerald, Chair-Elect and Program Chair, his co-chairs Nancy Kendrick and Estelle Lang and the entire program committee for putting together such a successful event. I would also like to extend our thanks to all of the speakers that made the time to put together the sessions offered at the meeting. From the Keynote Address to the final session we witnessed record attendance in the sessions.

We also recognized our travel and service award recipients. Danielle Chamberlain from Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Judit Totth from Howard Hughes Medical Institute, and Linda Wang from Harvard University were recipients of the Travel Award. Franc Lemire from Worcester Polytechnic Institute was recognized as our Distinguished Service Award recipient for his years of commitment to the Region. Tom Egan from Massachusetts Institute of Technology received the Merit Award. Kris Monahan from Providence College, Chair of the Volunteerism and Membership Committee was presented with the Outstanding Volunteer Award. And Nuala McGowan from Harvard University, Chair of the Sponsorship Committee, received the Outstanding New Professional Award. Please join us in thanking these members for their efforts on behalf of Region I.

Region I would also like to congratulate Denise Lentini from Harvard University. Denise was the first recipient of the Travel Award to the NCURA Pre-Award Conference held in Chicago in July. Nominations are currently being accepted for travel awards to the National Meeting in November. Please visit the Region I website at www.ncuraregion1.org to learn more about the application process.

A year ago when I penned the first of my Regional Corner articles, I was sitting exactly where I am today on the swing on my side porch enjoying a beautiful summer day while thinking about Washington in November and New York in May, about the Region’s leadership and what my goals would be as Chair for the next 17-months, and about how hard it was to write one of these articles. As I look back at that article and what’s happened in 12 months, things have gone pretty well. We had a lot of fun at the Tailgate and hundreds of us have “I♥Region II” t-shirts, we packed more sessions into, and then had a huge turnout for, the Spring Meeting in Brooklyn, our committees are full of volunteers, Region II has a Facebook page, the Region II ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee has just delivered its report to the Steering Committee, and I’ve accomplished two of my three New Year’s resolutions. And yet these articles are still hard to write.

The question I began that first article with is the same this year: Is it ever too early to start talking about the next Spring Meeting? Never! The Program Committee, Chaired by Jill Frankenfield and Co-Chaired by Mary Louise Healy is hard at work and by the time this article is printed you will have already received information on our plans for Gettysburg, PA. Along with a longer format (we’ve added a day) and continuing to offer sessions of varying lengths, we are increasing the number of discussion-oriented sessions, refined our focus on the different tracks and have added a medical/clinical track. These changes also continue to provide increased opportunities for members to present a session. If you haven’t presented at a Spring Meeting, please feel free to contact the Program Chair or Co-Chair to talk about your idea and how it might be developed into a session. A link to the session abstract submission site is on the Region II homepage.

**Spring Meeting 2012**

**Dates:** April 22 to 25, 2012  
**Location:** Eisenhower Hotel and Conference Center, Gettysburg, PA

**Schedule:**  
**April 22:** Workshops, 1 to 4:30 pm  
**April 23:** Plenary, Concurrent Sessions, Business Meeting, 7:30 am to 5:00 pm  
**April 24:** Breakfast Discussion Roundtables, Concurrent Sessions, 7:30 am to 5:00 pm  
**April 25:** Concurrent Sessions, 7:30 am to 12:30 pm

Bethanne Giehl is Chair of Region I and serves as the Manager, Research Systems at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.
A final note on the 2012 Spring Meeting: If you are attending NCURA’s 53rd Annual Meeting in November, be sure to stop by the Region II Hospitality Suite to pick-up your special “bling” to help us spread the word and promote our trip to Gettysburg.

Speaking of NCURA’s 53rd Annual Meeting (November 6 to 9, 2011, “Do It Live, Do It Now, Get Involved”) if you didn’t read anything else in this issue of NCURA Magazine, plan to take advantage of the social time built into the program to meet and get to know your peers from across the Region and across the nation.

Strategic Planning: Four ideas developed by the ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee have already been approved by the Steering Committee. Two of these have already been announced: our Facebook Page (http://www.facebook.com) then friend NCURA Region II) and the longer Spring Meeting. The other two include the creation of a Professional Development Committee and the creation of a Regional Workshop Series, which will be created and managed by the Region II PDC and its chair, Brian Squilla. Regional Workshops will be day-long professional development opportunities offered in different geographic areas of the Region. The other ideas presented are concerned with welcoming and involving the Regional membership, communication, and the Region’s administrative structure. Please watch for an Eblast announcement on the first set of workshops and a presentation at the Business Meeting in Washington on the other ideas under consideration.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the other members of the ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee for their service and hard work, commitment to six months of bi-weekly meetings, and, most of all, for their creativity and vision. The members of the committee were: Alex McKeown (Johns Hopkins University), Anna Welland Dement (New York University School of Medicine), Brenda Kavanaugh (Johns Hopkins University), and Denise Moody (Princeton University). Jared Littman (St. John’s University), Jeanne Galvin-Clarke (University of Maryland, Baltimore), Erin Bailey (University at Buffalo, SUNY), and Mary Holleran (West Virginia University).

Region II Current Officers and Steering Committee: Chair, Martin B. Williams (William Paterson University, williamsmb@wpunj.edu); Chair-Elect, Jared Littman (St. John’s University, littmanj@stjohns.edu); Secretary, Anne E. Albinak (Johns Hopkins University, aalbinak@jhu.edu); Treasurer, Mary Holleran (West Virginia University, mary.holleran@mail.wvu.edu); Treasurer-Elect, Erin Bailey (University at Buffalo, SUNY, eedbh@buffalo.edu); Past Chair, Alexandra A. McKeown (Johns Hopkins University, amckeown@jhsph.edu) Past Treasurer, Holly Benze (Johns Hopkins University, hab@jhu.edu), Regionally Elected Member of the Board of Trustees, Toni Lawson (University of Maryland, College Park); At large members: Cheryl Williams (University of Rochester), Brian Squilla (Thomas Jefferson University); Pam Wheat (Lehigh University), Christine Katsapis (Gallaudet University), and Denise Moody (Princeton University).

Spring Meeting 2011: Chair, Jill Frankenfield (jfranken@umd.edu), Co-Chair, Mary Louise Healy (mhealy@lowson.edu).

Martin Williams is Chair of Region II and serves as Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs at William Paterson University.
Three cheers for flamingos Jennifer Shambrook, Ph.D. (St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital), the newly installed Editor and Brigette Pfister, MHRA (Clemson University), Editorial Assistant of the Research Management Review (RMR)! Readers of NCURA’s scholarly journal may look forward to the new publication format, which is more useful and friendly. Region III authors contributed significantly to the current volume, which has exceeded 100 pages for the first time since its inception. Authors include Jo Ann Smith, Ph.D. and Laurianne Torres (University of Central Florida), Dr. Shambrook, Thomas Roberts, Ed.D. (Florida Gulf Coast University), Dhanonjoy C. Saha, Ph.D. (Carolina HealthCare System), Linnea Minnema and Miriam Campo (University of Tennessee, Knoxville), Tim Atkinson, Ed.D. and Tom Pilgreen, Ph.D. (University of Central Arkansas), and Robert Porter, Ph.D. (University of Tennessee). Congratulations to these authors for their contributions. Please look for even more RMR articles and news on the horizon from flamingo writers.

Save the Dates: Region III is already excitedly preparing for our return to beautiful Panama City Beach, Florida, for our 2012 Spring Meeting. We will again enjoy the Bay Point Marriott Golf Resort & Spa’s relaxed atmosphere and comfortable meeting spaces along with its location near a wide variety of activities and attractions. Save the date, watch for more information to come, and join us May 6-9, 2012 for another excellent regional opportunity for professional development and networking!

We anticipate a program replete with educational workshops, strong presentations, sponsor representatives, and plenty of subject matter experts covering every level of experience and topic in research administration. Be sure to block off some extra days for some fun at the beach to help preserve our reputation as “One Beachin’ Region!” This is one meeting you won’t want to miss!

Region III Chair-Elect Cindy Hope (University of Alabama) and the Program Committee are already hard at work developing an agenda that will make this a meeting to remember. Thanks to Site Selection Committee for taking us back to this fantastic venue for our next meeting. We look forward to seeing you there!

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

REGION IV
Mid-America
www.ncuraregioniv.com
https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ncura-Region-IV/134667746605561

Summer weather is in full swing for many of us in Region IV. While the year has absolutely flown by, I wanted to take time away from the sweltering, humid Midwest heat, to reflect upon our spring. The Regional Meeting in Cleveland, “Research Rocks” was held on April 16-20, 2011. It was a great 4 days and all the evaluations have backed up that claim. I have also heard many positive comments from our membership and, in my humble opinion; the meeting was a great success. We had over 225 registrants and also tripled our original expected profit! Especially, given the economic hardships that many of our institutions are facing, this large profit is great news. The region is doing well after this meeting.

A special thank you goes out to the Program Co-Chairs (Robert Aull & Elena Cruse), as well as to the Program Committee. Together, they put on a fantastic program. Each and every person on the program committee deserves the credit for a successful meeting. We had great planning and great willingness to adjust on site. I’m amazed at Region IV’s willingness and ability to throw your hand in the pile to contribute. That is what makes NCURA and Research Administrators what they are. That volunteer spirit and providing service are things that we’ll continue to keep in mind as we forge ahead.

I also wanted to say a special thank you to all the great workshop faculty and concurrent session presenters, who did a fantastic job at the Regional Meeting! These folks offer a wealth of knowledge and can be added to your NCURA network. All our presentations for the concurrent sessions are posted on the Region IV website under Session Handouts (http://ncuraregioniv.com/meetings/Spring%20Meeting%202011%20Presentations.html). We also had many, many conference volunteers – all of whom were instrumental in putting such a great conference together for the Region IV membership. A sincere thank you to each of you!

As we move into the fall, Region IV will continue to work on offering a variety of professional development opportunities that occur in a nurturing setting, where we will be able to share day to day research administration challenges and learn best practices. Some items on my to-do list are:

• Continuing the initiative and work of the Mentoring Program Task Force. Recommendations have been given for the Region to provide 3 areas of mentoring: guiding/navigation, mentoring for leadership and mentoring for the workplace.

• Continuing the initiative and work of the Website Task Force. Recommendations have been given for the Region to re-design the website.

• Working to define volunteer roles in the Region to better assist with volunteer recruitment.

• Working to streamline sponsorship and advertising in the Regional newsletter and at the Regional meeting.
If anyone is looking for the Region to provide anything specific in terms of professional development, please don’t hesitate to contact me or any of the Region IV Board members.

For me, the Regional Meeting reminded me that this research administration “gig” is not just a job. There are many people who are working on their craft. They are working on their profession! It’s often at the Regional Meeting where professional relationships are established that help someone, like me, develop within the profession. We do have some committee positions to help us in the coming year. They are:

- Awards Committee Chair: Elena Cruse, University of Kansas Medical Center
- Communications Chair: Sue Kelch, University of Michigan
- Membership Committee Chair: Sheila Lischwe, Saint Louis University
- Nominations Committee Chair: Christa Johnson, Johnson, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
- Regionally Elected Member to the National Board of Directors: Dave Lynch, Mayo Clinic
- Site Selection Chair: Michelle Ginavan-Hayes, University of Kansas Center for Research
- Site Selection Member: Natalie Goodwin-Frank, Washington University
- Volunteer Coordinator: Debbie Meltzer, University of Wisconsin-Madison

If anyone is looking to get involved, please don’t hesitate to contact me or contacting any of the folks listed above.

Another exciting event in the fall is AM53 (November 6, 2011 – November 9, 2011) in Washington, D.C. We are beginning to plan and will be looking for exciting ways to give back to our membership. In the past, we have offered things like the DC After Dark Bus tours, dinner groups, etc…

At AM53, we will be holding a joint hospitality suite with Region V. That suite will be room #5101 at the conference hotel, the Washington Hilton. I’m excited about getting to know Region V’s membership. Our goal is to provide an attractive setting that will offer networking and social opportunities for all the members of Region IV and V.

The joint hospitality suite will help lead us into the winter and spring of 2012. Mark your calendars: Next year’s spring meeting in St. Louis (April 14, 2012 – April 17, 2012). The St. Louis Ballpark Hilton is the conference hotel. This is a great venue and I know Jeff Ritchie (Program Committee Chair, Region Chair-Elect) is putting together a great program. He’s joined by two great Program Co-Chairs: Greg Luttrell (Notre Dame University) and Kirsten Yehl (Northwestern University). Anyone who wishes to help with the Spring Meeting can contact Jeff at: jeffrey.ritchie@aurora.org.

Last, but not least, a special congratulations goes to Beth Seaton (Western Illinois University) on her recent appointment to the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee beginning January 1, 2012.

David Ngo is the Chair of Region IV and serves as the Effort Administrator/ECRT Manager at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

It’s HOT, HOT, HOT in the Southwest! Literally and figuratively we are breaking records.

The spring 2011 meeting in Houston was a record breaking success. With over 260 people in attendance, we had over 100 more (62% increase) people than the previous record attendance for a single meeting. We had to shutoff registration early due to hotel capacity and although the first day started a little tight, the Magnolia hotel was very accommodating in making numerous adjustments. We had a great program and thank all of the presenters, volunteers, Houston area universities, our university hosts, sponsors and most of all our members – both new and seasoned for making the meeting a smashing success.

A special thanks to Sarah Fella, UT Austin, for filling in the last minute as Volunteer Coordinator; Sheila Allen, UT Arlington for being the first ever Evaluation Coordinator and Sarah Panepinto, UT Arlington for managing the hotel arrangements.

New Officers: At the Spring meeting Region V announced the election of Kathleen Harris, Texas Tech University, as Chair-Elect; Hollie Schreiber, Oklahoma State University, as Secretary; Carolyn Ivey, University of Houston and Matt Berry, University of Oklahoma ad hoc members of the regional Executive Committee, and Marianne Woods, UT San Antonio as the Region V Member of the National Board of Directors. Jeremy Forsberg took office as the Regional Chair at the close of the meeting.

National and Spring Meeting: This year we will have a joint spring meeting with Region IV. The Spring meeting will be held in St. Louis (Save the date) April 14-17. To help us get acquainted with Region IV, we will share the hospitality suite at the National Meeting. Get involved: please contact Kathleen Harris Kathleen.harris@ttu.edu or Sarah Fella Sarah.Fella@austin.utexas.edu for volunteer opportunities at the National or Spring Meetings.

Professional Development Committee: As announced at the Spring Meeting this past April, we have chartered a Professional Development Committee for our Region. James Casey, UT San Antonio, has agreed to Chair this committee. The Professional Development Committee is charged to investigate, review, analyze and recommend the implementation or creation of programs, events or materials to serve the professional development needs of NCURA Region V members. With the continued growth in membership for our Region, we will look to expand and deliver more opportunities to the membership for their professional development.

Congratulations: Govind Narasimhan, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, has been selected to serve on the 2012 Nominating and Leadership Development Committee. Rhonda Williams, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, was awarded the 2011 Catherine Core Minority Travel Award for the National meeting.
In Remembrance: Region V membership were saddened to learn of the passing of Joan Howeth, a longtime member of NCURA. Joan was a past Chair of Region V and the recipient of Region V’s Distinguished Service Award. She was not only a highly respected colleague; an active, outgoing volunteer to NCURA; and a valued mentor, but a dear friend to many within the region and nationally. May all of our thoughts and prayers be with her family during this unexpected loss.

In recognition of Joan’s commitment, The Region V Executive Committee has approved the re-naming of the National Travel Award in her honor to now be the Joan Howeth National Travel Award.

Jeremy Forsberg is Chair of Region V and serves as the Assistant Vice President of Research at The University of Texas at Arlington.

REGION VI
Western
www.ogrd.wsu.edu/r6ncura

Fall is the time to channel the vibrant energy of summer into something of form and substance – finish up those final projects and set some new challenges for yourself. One way to channel your energy is to Do it Live, Do it Now – Get Involved by attending and actively participating in the upcoming NCURA 53rd Annual Meeting in Washington, DC from Sunday, November 6, 2011 – Wednesday, November 9, 2011. The array of workshops and concurrent sessions and networking activities will benefit all aspects of your professional development. This meeting is one of the best ways to keep abreast of changes and trends in the never-a-dull-moment profession of research administration.

While at the meeting, don’t forget to attend the Region VI Business Meeting on Tuesday, November 8th from 2:45-3:45 pm for a chance to hear what’s going on in the region, learn about volunteer opportunities, and maybe win a raffle prize! Another great way to network and get to know your colleagues is by visiting the infamous hospitality suites. This year, the International Region will be joining the festivities in our hospitality suite. Please take the time to welcome and integrate the newest region and its membership.

The Call for Applications for the Annual Meeting Travel Awards has been sent and the Awards Committee is hard at work reviewing applications. The winners of the Awards will be announced at the Business Meeting. Thank you to the Awards Committee—Kevin Stewart, University of California, Santa Barbara; Ann Pollack, University of California, Los Angeles; Csilla Csaplar, Stanford University; Maren Boyack, University of Alaska – Fairbanks; and Kimberlee Eudy, University of San Diego — for your diligence in reviewing applications and selecting this year’s travel winners to the Spring Meeting, PRA, and Annual Meeting.

The LeadMeProgram continues to be a successful mentoring program and a wonderful opportunity for new research administrators, thanks to the efforts of Linda Patton, Chair of the Education and Professional Development Committee, and her excellent committee. This program provides an opportunity for new research administrators to “partner” for the year with more experienced research administrators and to grow in the profession. Thanks to the mentors who stepped forward to be matched with the newer research administrators in our region.

Finally, the arrangements for the 2012 Spring Meeting on the Big Island have been finalized – information can be found at http://www.ogrd.wsu.edu/r6ncura/meetings.aspx. Our meeting will be held April 15th-18th, 2012 at the Hilton Waikoloa. Volunteers are needed to ensure the meeting is a success — interested persons should contact our 2012 Spring Meeting Co-Chairs Rosemary Madnick or Vicki Krell.

Jeri Muniz is Chair of Region VI and serves as Executive Director for the Department of Contracts and Grants at the University of Southern California.

REGION VII
Rocky Mountain
ncuraregionvii.asu.edu

Greetings from Montana. After a long winter of snow and a spring of rain we are finally having a beautiful summer. I know all of you are busy making plans for the national meeting in Washington, DC, November 6 – 9 2011, in our home away from home at the Hilton. Early Bird registration should be completed by October 3, 2011. Be sure to join your entire NCURA family at the joint region VI/VII hospitality suite. It will be great to see everyone again.

As you may or may not know region VII lost its host site at the University of New Mexico for our webpage. Thanks goes out to Brian Christian for all of his years of service as the web master. Arizona State University, Deb Murphy, Candace Lindsay, and Vicki Krell, have stepped up to the plate and have done a great job of recreating the site at its new location. Check it out at http://ncuraregionvii.asu.edu/.

Thanks goes out to our co-chairs of the region VII travel award committee, Candycce Lindsay and Kimberly Page. They put in a lot of hard work this summer. I look forward to introducing our two winners at the national meeting. Also, make sure to introduce yourself to our awardees and show them what NCURA has to offer.

I also want to thank Winnie Ennenga and Deb Murphy our wonderful co-chairs of the nominating and elections committee. As you read this we are seeking nominations for Chair Elect, Secretary/Treasurer, and one Member-at-Large. Elections will follow. Please be sure to vote. Your vote does count. We will announce the results at the business meeting in Washington, DC.

NCURA’s Board of Directors early this year approved the creation of an International Region. Following that it was recently recommended that the international region share a hospitality suite with an existing region.
Jeri Muniz, chair of region VI, and I were approached and asked if we would consider inviting the international region to partner with our hospitality suite. We agreed. So, I ask all of you to welcome our international members into our hospitality suite.

Be sure to mark your calendars for the 2012 joint regional meeting to be held at the Hilton Waikoloa Village on the Big Island of Hawaii, April 15–18, 2012. Vicki Krell, Arizona State University and Rosemary Madnick, Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute will be co-chairing the meeting. Please think about volunteering and getting involved. You will get so much more out of it than you ever put in.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Washington, DC. Please feel free to pass along any suggestions or ideas tim.edwards@mso.umt.edu or 406.243.4700.

Tim Edwards is Chair of Region VII and serves as the Accountant for the College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences at the University of Montana.

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New FDA Conflict of Interest Guidance

Following a critical report from the Office of the Inspector General in 2009, the Food and Drug Administration has issued new guidance for the reporting of Financial Conflict of Interest on FDA-approved clinical trials. The comment period for new FDA guidance closed at the end of July, and it appears that the language may be adopted later this year. The initiative marks a change in tone by the FDA with regard to reporting conflict of interest.

In the past, investigators were required to self-disclose their existing or potential conflicts. According to the new guidance, investigators will have to disclose all financial interests, and the sponsor and the FDA will determine where a conflict exists and how it will be resolved.

Another key change is a broader definition of “clinical investigators.” Under the old guidance, most sponsors limited the definition to only the Principal Investigator, but the new guidance makes it clear that it includes any “investigator or sub-investigator who is directly involved in the treatment or evaluation of research subjects.”

The revised guidance also includes the spouse and dependent children of investigators. Specifically exempt from the disclosure requires are healthcare workers who “do not make direct and significant contribution to the data.”

The new FDA guidance comes nearly a year after the Department of Health and Human Services released revised guidance of its own. In many cases, the DHHS guidance is more stringent than the FDA version. The DHHS guidance, for example, requires disclosure of any equity interest in a privately held entity – not just an equity interest in the sponsor.

The guidance from the FDA also refines its definition of “due diligence” to be conducted by the sponsor and the “mitigating” factors that it would consider if a researcher on a clinical study is found to have a conflict of interest. FDA reviewers would compare the results from a potential compromised study against other studies that have no known conflicts. The FDA would also evaluate information obtained from on-site inspections and review the methods, design and endpoints of the study.

The effort by the FDA improve its conflict of interest reporting came after an OIG report in 2009 that showed nearly a third of all marketing applications to the FDA were not properly screened for financial conflict of interest, and of those report a conflict, 20% were allowed to go forward with any action being taken to minimize potential bias.

With two potential sets of guidance on conflict of interest, it is likely that a combination of FDA and DHHS guidance will emerge at some point in the future.

Social Networking for Departmental Administrators: Is it Worth the Investment?

Social media has come a long way in such a short period of time. For example, Facebook which was created in 2004, was initially developed as a spin-off from the website, “Hot or Not”; a site that allowed users to rate the attractiveness of other members. According to the latest figures provided by Facebook (2011), the website has approximately “750 million active users” and has established itself as the most frequented social media website for users of all ages. Similarly, Twitter has approximately 200 million users worldwide and has changed the media, business, and politics (Picard, 2011).

As the field of research administration continues to flourish, individuals who work within the profession are constantly challenged to keep abreast of the many rules and regulations which govern the profession. Given the voluminous amounts of information a research administrator retains, what is the most effective way to efficiently impart knowledge to and between our colleagues? Many research administrators utilize social networking as a way to attain a greater reach when corresponding with various sponsors, research administrators, faculty and staff. Recently, subscribers to the NCURA Departmental Research Administration (DRA) listserve were asked, “how are you using social media like Facebook, Twitter, blogging, tweeting?” According to the calculated results 83 people responded and 52% of respondents were using social media for professional purposes e.g., to post job descriptions, exchange experiences with particular sponsors, funding information, or highlighting the benefits of acquiring a graduate degree within our profession. Ironically the popularity of social media is not enough to cause the remaining percent of people to succumb to this revolutionized way of communicating with one another. As a DRA, how is the equipoise and propriety of social media use determined?

The most advantageous function of social media allows an individual the opportunity to showcase his/her message, while demonstrating a personal desire as a DRA to make a contribution to some of social media’s most frequented sites such as: Facebook, Twitter, Wikipedia, or a Blog. Social media not only allows an individual to propel his or herself into the limelight, it is also a great tool to utilize when seeking to disseminate information to all affiliates within the profession of research administration.

Jeffrey Ritchie is a member of the Compliance Neighborhood Committee and serves as Grants Management Analyst at Aurora Health Care.
Although there are some advantages to using social media, there are also some detrimental aspects when using social media as well. For example, does the routine updating of a social networking site fall within the purview of one specific individual’s day-to-day responsibilities? Achieving results from social networking involves more than just an assembly of subscribers on one particular site at a particular point in time. One of the biggest reasons companies fail at social networking is that they are not prepared for the long conversation between the customer and product provider (Owyang, 2011). It is important to evaluate the need and see if the investment in time and upkeep is worth taking. Is a dialog being created that will drive people back to your social site? With the right support system, it can be the right platform to obtain and disseminate information; the challenge is getting such a diverse group of individuals to take part and sustain the momentum.

If your institution is invested in social media (and it may not be, the low cost of entry allows employees like DRA’s to be in a medium before their employers) (Owyang, 2011) suggests to make sure you use the social media that can offer resources that can provide information to your target audience. There are times when the most popular social networking site may not be the right site for a certain individual. In a recent article published within The Chronicle of Higher Education, Young (2011) stated, “Many professors have decided to reserve Facebook for personal communications rather than use it for teaching and research.” Even if you’ve spent hours on your Facebook page, you could find people reading it but not commenting or requesting friendships. Ultimately, you and your institution have to decide what organizational advantages may be ascertained when using social media, and if your prepared for the long conversation you’re about to begin.

At the time this article was being written, Google+ emerged as the newest venture within social networking and seems very promising. According to an article published within USA Today by Scott Martin (2011), “Early reviews of Google+ are mostly favorable. Many say Google’s concept of letting people group those they interact with into different social circles is a key differentiator from Facebook.” So far, users who have participated in the Google Plus experience have identified some interesting attributes of the program. For example, one female user finds the program to be predominantly used by men. However, Desmond-Harris (2011) comments that the program is “easy enough, multiple personality friendly, stalker friendly, and not overwhelming”. Although the program is still in the development stage, it will be interesting to see if Google+ will be just as addicting (if not more) to the current social networks for which research administrators rely in order to disseminate information.

Which sites should I use and why?

1. To establish website presence – Facebook and MySpace are easy to use for sharing simple materials and information regarding research administration. It is good for attracting people who are interested in social networking.
2. Promoting specific actions – Good for asking a question and getting a response
3. Consolidate existing unofficial social network sites related to your institution. It is better to have one official site then several informal sites.
4. Informal outreach that can blend personal with professional – immediate way to say in touch with a group of people who are departmental administrators. Allows individuals to stay in touch and continue their involvement in an organization.
5. Great way to disseminate information such as new funding regulations, compliance information, articles, etc.

References


Timothy R. Schailey serves as Research Business Manager at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

Garrett M. Steed serves as Training Program Manager at Georgia Institute of Technology

Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions Neighborhood Watch

Mentors Matter

The PUI neighborhood recently hosted a podcast focused on mentoring at PUs moderated by Katie Plum, Director, Office of Sponsored Projects, College of Graduate Studies, Angelo State University. The panelists: Kris Monahan, Director of Sponsored Research and Programs, Providence College; Pamela Napier, Associate Director of Sponsored Programs, Western Kentucky University; Joseph McNicholas, Director of Research and Sponsored Projects, Loyola Marymount University discuss the importance of mentoring of research administrators at PUs.

The institutional contexts of PUs offer tremendous opportunities as well as limitations of resources and specific nuances of working within a small
school. Establishing connections with those who do similar work in similar institutions is one important part of career development and job satisfaction. The podcast highlights mentoring in general and the newly established PUI mentoring program specifically. This, and other NCURA podcasts, may be found at http://www.ncura.edu/content/regions_and_neighborhoods/neighborhoods/podcasts.php

Hope you enjoy the podcast! Please continue to use the PUI listserv to post your question, raise discussion items, or provide ideas and suggestions for future activities of the PUI Neighborhood Committee.

Kris A. Monahan is a member of the PUI Neighborhood Committee and serves as Director of Sponsored Research & Programs at Providence College.

Pre-Award Administration Neighborhood Watch

As we all know, the world of research administration can often get crazy. During those peak times of proposal processing, it seems we find ourselves putting off the things that don’t have a deadline and can simply “wait until tomorrow.”

As we are approaching the start of a new academic and/or fiscal year and most year-end closeouts, the proposal world gets quiet. The Pre-Award Neighborhood Committee brainstormed to develop a top 10 list of things to do to prepare for the new academic and/or fiscal year:

• File those stacks of paper that have been accumulating for the last nine months
• Clean up your computer files and folders, including archived e-mail files that may be taking up server space
• Catch up on all of the recent policy updates
• Organize your in-box
• Work on finalizing any new forms and procedures
• Catch up on reading your NCURA Magazine
• Rearrange your office to give yourself a “fresh” start on the upcoming year
• Shred! It’s a great way to relieve frustration
• Have a lunch date with the staff, we’re pretty sure you missed a few due to proposal deadlines throughout the year
• Finally, VOLUNTEER… NCURA offers a variety of opportunities for those wanting to become involved. It’s a great way to share your expertise with others and formulate lasting associations with your colleagues.

We wish you all the best with the new academic year and look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting in November.

Shelly Berry is a member of the Pre-Award Neighborhood Committee and serves as Senior Proposal Administrator II a Texas A&M Research Foundation.

International Neighborhood Watch

The call for Fellowships has been released and applications will be reviewed for NCURA Fellows to visit EARMA institutions. The review committee will be comprised of reviewers from the Neighborhood and the Ambassador Corps as well as from the beta fellowship program. The US host institutions have been identified as have the EARMA host institutions. These significant steps will further deepen our international ties and enrich our member professional development opportunities.

The International Neighborhood welcomes two new members: Jose Mario Leite, Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Portugal and Dr. Susanne Rahner, President, YGGDRASIL — Geologie-Projektsmanagement-Trainings, Berlin, Germany. Our new members will bring their EU research administration expertise and knowledge to the committee.

As we go to press, the Neighborhood is finalizing its upcoming podcast, “Large Scale International Projects: Post-Award Issues” which will be moderated by Tom Wilson, Assistant Vice President, Rush University Medical Center.

Denise Wallen is the chair of the International Neighborhood Committee and serves as a Senior Fellow of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy at the University of New Mexico

Financial Research Administration Neighborhood Watch

The Research Business Models (RBM) Working Group (c/rbm.nih.gov/) as a chartered committee of the National Science and Technology Committee (NSTC) (http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/nstc) released a request for information NOT-OD-11-091 (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-11-091.html) on behalf of the A-21 Task Force. They collected feedback on potential revisions to A-21 to help reduce administrative burden and costs. Comments were collected through 7/28/11. A summary of those comments and proceedings should be available in September 2011, so keep an eye out for updates.

Take a look at the FRA Neighborhood Town Hall pages for recent On-Campus interviews posted for Cindy Hope, Assistant Vice President for Research and Director for the Office of Sponsored Programs, University of Alabama, and Jeffrey Silber, Senior Director Sponsored Financial Services, Cornell University.

http://www.ncura.edu/content/regions_and_neighborhoods/neighborhoods/financial_research/town_hall.php

If there are “Hot Topics” that you would like the FRA Neighborhood Committee to discuss or research please send inquiries to any of the Neighbor-
hood members listed in the Town Hall section of the FRA neighborhood website or through the FRA listserv. (http://www.ncura.edu/content/regions_and_neighborhoods/neighborhoods/financial_research/town_hall.php)

Brian J. Sevier is the chair of the FRA Neighborhood Committee and serves as an Associate Director for Contracts and Grants at the University of Florida.

**eRA Neighborhood Watch**

The Electronic Research Administration Neighborhood Committee has been busy keeping up with all the electronic systems and their updates. We discuss and post these updates regularly on the ERA Neighborhood page. Come check it out: http://www.ncura.edu/content/regions_and_neighborhoods/neighborhoods/electronic_research/index.php.

A few of the most recent updates have included the National Institutes of Health forms update. The NIH is phasing in some updated electronic application forms packages known as Adobe forms B2. The new forms were rolled out on July 22 and the current parent R01, R03, and R21 FOAs will expire on January 8, 2012. The NIH will also be requiring grantees to use the No-Cost Extension feature in the eRA Commons. Beginning October 1, 2011 the NIH will no longer accept these notifications via other communication channels. There have also been four new podcasts posted by the NIH. Please see the eRA Neighborhood page for all the information and links to these updates.

Another project the eRA Neighborhood Committee has been working on is our ERA Matrix Tool. This matrix lists all the electronic agency systems, site functions, login rules, and other site nuances. You will find the ERA Matrix Tool as well other links and updates on the eRA Neighborhood page.

Cara Egan-Williams is a member of the Electronic Research Administration (eRA) Neighborhood Committee and serves as a Sponsored Projects Officer in the Office of Research at the University of California, Santa Barbara.
Olga Carr, previously with the New York Academy of Medicine, is now the Director of Grant and Contract Services at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

Denise J. Clark has been named Associate Vice President for Administration in the Division of Research at the University of Maryland College Park.

Michele Codd, previously at Vanderbilt University, is now the Associate Director of Sponsored Projects Administration at George Washington University.

Scott Davis has accepted the position of Associate Director for the Clinical Trials team at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

LaJauna Ellis has accepted the position of Executive Assistant to the Dean of the College of Engineering at Georgia Institute of Technology.

Anna Grove, previously with George Washington University, is now Manager of Sponsored Programs at Baylor College of Medicine.

Kris Monahan is now the Director of Sponsored Research & Programs at Providence College.

Christine Pacheco is now a Sr. Clinical Contracts Specialist with the University of New Mexico Medical Group, Office of Clinical Contract Services.

Anne Pascucci is now the Director of Sponsored Programs at Christopher Newport University.

Bill Ploog, formerly of Dartmouth College, has become the first Director of Sponsored Programs and Research at Saint Anselm College.

Maria Thompson, is now the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at the State University of New York, College at Oneonta.

Tony Ventimiglia has been promoted to Associate Director for Education and Communication, Office of Sponsored Programs at Auburn University.

Samantha Westcott, formerly at the University of California, Irvine, is now the Manager of the Sponsored Research Team, Children’s Hospital, Los Angeles, The Saban Research Institute.

Bob E. Wolfson, previously at the Public Health Institute in Oakland and Old Dominion University, is now Executive Director of San Diego State University Research Foundation.
GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

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Emmanuel College’s graduate programs in research administration are an academic opportunity for professionals currently working in sponsored programs. The innovative curriculum addresses critical knowledge areas including finance and accounting, compliance, legal issues and organizational behavior. Online courses, led by faculty experts, extend the reach of these programs beyond the research and health care hub of Boston.

The Faculty

Webb Brightwell
Grants and Contracts Officer
Harvard University

Gretchen Brodnicki
Dean for Faculty and Research Integrity
Harvard Medical School

Sharon Comvallius-Goddard
Director of Grants and Contracts and Research Resources
Schepens Eye Research Institute

Daniel Danger
Principal
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Mark Daniel
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Anastacia Feldman
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Alan Long
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Melissa Moore
Grants and Contracts Officer
Harvard Medical School

Jill Mortali
Director of Sponsored Projects
Dartmouth College

Jennifer Puccetti
Director of Administration
Department of Social Medicine
Harvard Medical School

Jeff Seo
Director of Research Compliance
Harvard Medical School
NCURA’s fifth annual conference on pre-award research administration brought together almost 400 participants to learn, collaborate, connect and create a solid foundation for research success. The conference, July 24-26, at Chicago’s historic Palmer House Hotel, began with pre-conference workshop program that offered more choices than ever before. After a day of learning, participants were able to connect with the friends and colleagues at the opening reception and then move on to one of Chicago’s many fine restaurants. Monday morning’s Keynote Address by Dr. Michael Turner, Director and Rauner Distinguished Service Professor, Kavil Institute for Cosmological Physics, The University of Chicago, was both informative and humorous and left the audience wanting more! It was the beginning of two days of exceptional learning opportunities along with ample time to gather for important networking and group discussions; all designed to provide attendees with a solid understanding of the pre-award process.

NCURA thanks Conference Co-Chairs, Dianne Horrocks, Idaho State University and Glenda Bullock, Washington University in St. Louis, along with their committee for the outstanding program they presented.
Conference Creates Solid Foundation

L-R: Judy Fredenberg (NCURA President), University of Montana; Glenda Bullock (Co-Chair), Washington University; Michael Turner (Keynote Speaker), University of Chicago; Dianne Horrocks (Co-Chair), Idaho State University; Kathleen Larmett, NCURA
ONLINE TUTORIALS
A Primer on Clinical Trials - 7 week program
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ONLY two more enrollment periods this year!

NATIONAL TRAVELING WORKSHOPS
FINANCIAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP
December 5-7, 2011 ...............................................................Houston, TX

FUNDAMENTALS OF SPONSORED PROJECT ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP
December 5-7, 2011 ...............................................................Houston, TX

SPONSORED PROJECT ADMINISTRATION LEVEL II WORKSHOP
December 5-7, 2011 ...............................................................Houston, TX

NCURATV 2011 DVD WORKSHOPS
Managing Interactions and Potential Conflicts with University Spin-Offs and Other Small Businesses.............Available April 18, 2011
International Collaborations: Negotiations and Compliance..........................................................Available October 11, 2011

NATIONAL CONFERENCES
53RD ANNUAL MEETING
Do It LIVE, Do It NOW - Get Involved!
Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, DC .........................November 6-9, 2011

13TH ANNUAL FINANCIAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION (FRA) CONFERENCE
Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort, Orlando, Fl ..........March 26-28, 2012

6TH ANNUAL PRE-AWARD RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION (PRA) CONFERENCE
Vancouver, British Columbia .............................................July 18-20, 2012

DEADLINES FOR DECEMBER 2011 ISSUE:
Submission of Articles to Contributing Editors ...............October 7, 2011
Submission of Articles to Co-editors .................................October 14, 2011
Submission of Advertisements ........................................October 14, 2011

Additional information for authors can be found at:
www.ncura.edu/content/news/newsletter/author_instructions.php

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