

NCURA Region IV

MID-AMERICA REGION NEWSLETTER

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Summer 2004

2004 Kevin Reed Outstanding Professional Award Presented to Kristin Wojtulewicz

*Diane M. Meyer
Iowa State University*

The Kevin Reed Outstanding Professional Award honors a Region IV member who is relatively new to the field of research administration and has shown exceptional talent in the field, as well as a willingness to contribute that talent to NCURA. The award recognizes an individual who has had less than five years' experience in research administration, has served on national or regional NCURA committees, and has participated in an annual meeting as a presenter, panelist, or moderator or served as an officer at the national or regional levels.

This year's recipient, Kristin Wojtulewicz, has worked in research administration since January 2000 at Loyola University. She has actively participated in NCURA at both the regional and national levels, having been a presenter at one national and one regional conference and having served on several NCURA committees. Clearly, Kristin has already had an impact on NCURA and the field of research administration, as witnessed by the excerpts below from letters of recommendation read by Awards Committee Chair Sue Carlson while presenting the award at this year's Region IV spring meeting.



Kristin Wojtulewicz, center, with some of those who wrote letters of support for her nomination. From left to right: Sue Carlson, Susan Toler, Kristin, Jamie Caldwell and Christine Creadon.

Susan Toler wrote that Kristin "embodies the spirit and meaning of an outstanding professional." Jamie Caldwell noted that "Kristin is one of the few grant administrators my office can count on to submit the perfect proposal." Dr. John Clancy, Chair of the Department of Cell Biology, Neurobiology, and Anatomy at Loyola University, wrote that "Kristin is by far the best grant administrator the department has ever had. Not only is she very bright and pleasant, but she also is a real problem solver." Dr. Elizabeth Kovacs, a seventeen-year faculty member in the department, observed that "I truly believe that my success as a scientist is, in part, due to Kristin's exceptional talents and enthusiasm for her work."

Finally, Christine Creadon, Director of Administration in the

Department of Cell Biology, Neurobiology, and Anatomy, noted that their department "...was the first basic science department at Loyola to create a departmental-level grant administrator position. Therefore, there were no policies or procedures set in place when Kristin first accepted the position in 2000.... Four years later, she is one of the most well respected and sought after grant administrators at Loyola."

NCURA is lucky to have Kristin Wojtulewicz as an active member of Region IV. She is an inspiring example for other members of NCURA and is most deserving of the Kevin Reed Outstanding Professional Award. Congratulations!



Sue Carlson presents Kristin with the Kevin Reed Award plaque

Letter from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

This morning I found a few minutes, in between proposals and budgets, to look at some of the reading material that has accumulated on my desk. I'm sure you all know that feeling: These things contain important information, but you just can't find the time to read them in between putting out fires...

I was looking for inspiration in the form of a topic for this column and found it in an unanticipated way. As I considered all of the rules and regulations we continually face in our jobs, I thought about the need to keep up to date with changes, in spite of increasing work loads. And I thought about the need to train people—not just new hires but also those of us who have been around a while. We need to remind ourselves continually of the obligation we have to train those involved in research, while also remembering that we ourselves are obligated to seek training opportunities to enable us to perform our jobs in the best manner possible.

At the Spring Meeting in Indianapolis, a group from The Ohio State University Research Foundation (OSURF) presented a session on the importance of training. The session outlined a very well-planned series of orientation and training activities for new staff, and, sure enough, also emphasized the importance of ongoing training and sharing of information.

One of the training areas that I deal with the most is NSF's FastLane. There are always new faculty and staff who need to know the system, so we make an effort

to offer one or two sessions each semester. I work with a member of our central information technology (IT) office, who teaches the participants how to convert files to PDF in keeping with FastLane's requirements. (We still teach this, even with the advent of the PDF conversion software within FastLane, since there are times when it is better to convert your own files, such as when the NSF server is very busy.)



Our collaboration with central IT has worked well. The workshops are more interesting for the participants, who get to listen to two speakers. I have also benefited, since I have learned PDF editing techniques that have come in very handy when facing proposal deadlines. (My faculty now think I know magic....)

The OSURF presenters also mentioned the practice of utilizing other departments in training activities. As we all experience increased workloads but not increases in staff, this makes sense. Human resources departments often have training staffs we can work with to learn overall organizational practices. Our central IT office also has training personnel who will work with us to develop and teach programs.

Our office works with the grant accounting office to offer post-award management training for faculty and staff, and, again, we usually benefit as much as the researchers and their assistants!

We would likely all agree that training is important, but it is so easy to overlook actually doing it, especially for ourselves. We need to make training more of a priority, for our staffs, for other departments that we work with, for our researchers, and for ourselves.

Of course, NCURA offers lots of opportunities for training for us as well, through conferences, video workshops, the web site, and a host of other offerings. This can be the best way to keep up with changes in research administration. It may be easier to get away for a few hours or days and concentrate fully on the things you need to learn than it is to take those few minutes to sit and read the many things that cross your desk or email inbox. It seems like something more pressing always comes up when you are at your desk!

I hope that this column inspires you to think more about training—the training you offer and the training you receive, as well as the training of new staff and of your more seasoned veterans. When change is as rampant as it is in our field, there is always something new to learn!

Pamela A. Krauser
Chair, NCURA Region IV



NSF Regional Grants Conference to be Held this October in St. Louis

The first National Science Foundation (NSF) Regional Grants Conference of fiscal year 2005 will be held in St. Louis on October 4–5, 2004 at the Chase Park Plaza Hotel. The conference, hosted by Washington University, will feature presentations by officials from NSF covering a range of topics including the latest regulations, policy, and programs. An optional pre-conference FastLane workshop will be held on October 3rd.

New as well as experienced administrators and investigators can benefit from the two-day conference by having their questions answered in person by experts from NSF. There will also be several “networking breaks”

where you can catch up with or introduce yourself to administrators from other regional institutions. Day One will begin with an overview of NSF’s organization and purpose. Budget highlights and current budget status and trends will be discussed, as will special emphasis programs and initiatives. Day One will also have sessions on how to prepare proposals that highlight recent procedural changes and the steps of the merit review process. Next, concurrent sessions run by program officers from eight program areas will be held, featuring in-depth coverage of specific program initiatives. These representatives will also field audience questions about their programs. The day will end with a session

on award and administrative issues, covering award requirements, conditions, and monitoring, and the responsibilities involved at all levels of the award process. Technical and financial reporting procedures as well as audits will be discussed.

Day Two will begin with details about the interactions between NSF and Congress. Future directions, strategies, and plans as well as performance measures will be outlined. Program representatives will again be on hand to answer specific questions about their program areas.

The day’s focus will be on award administration, specifically
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Region IV Elects New Board Members

The election results for new members of the Region IV Board of Directors were announced at the Spring Meeting. The results are as follows:

Chair Elect

Heather Mills Offhaus, Director, Office of Sponsored Projects, Medical School, University of Michigan

Secretary

Kathleen M. Engstrom, Assistant to the Head, Department of Physiology and Biophysics, University of Illinois at Chicago

At Large Members

Gerald (Jerry) Pogatshnik, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies and Research, Southern Illinois, University-Edwardsville

Beth Seaton, Director, Sponsored Projects, Western Illinois University

Other Board Member

Glenda A. Luecke, Division Administrator, Washington University, St. Louis

Returning board members include:

Chair

Pamela Krauser, Director, Electronic Research Administration, University of Notre Dame

Past Chair

Joanne Altieri, Director, Contract Negotiations and Research Compliance, University of Kansas

Treasurer

Susan Sloop, Associate Director, Higuchi Biosciences Center, University of Kansas

At Large Members

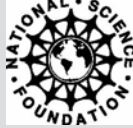
Robert Aull, ERA Grants Manager, School of Medicine, Indiana University Medical Center

Crystal Taylor-Nevils, Assistant Manager, Lead Faculty Service Representative, Physical Sciences Division, Local Business Center, University of Chicago

Outgoing Chair Joanne Altieri passes the crown to new Chair Pam Krauser at the Region IV Annual Meeting.



NSF (continued)



compliance and accountability. Staff from NSF's Cost Analysis & Audit Resolution (CAAR) branch will discuss budget reviews, indirect cost rates, and system reviews. Day Two ends with coverage of cross-disciplinary and special interest programs such as CAREER, GOALI, and REU initiatives.

The preconference FastLane workshop will feature one session targeting sponsored research office staff and another designed for faculty, research assistants, and administrative personnel who assist with proposal preparation, project management, and reporting. FastLane is the web-based real-time system that NSF uses to exchange information with faculty and administrators. The system allows users to prepare and submit proposals, review proposal status, submit project reports, query the NSF award database, submit cash requests, and check the status of continuation funds, plus a range of other functions. Early registration for this workshop is highly recommended, as enrollment is limited.

The conference will take place at the Chase Park Plaza Hotel in St. Louis' Central West End. Registration is \$230 per person for the full conference before September 3rd and \$250 thereafter. The optional preconference FastLane workshop is \$25. Additional information about the conference, including lodging recommendations, how to register, and directions can be found at <http://cme.wustl.edu/NSF/>.

Jennie L. Lovett, PhD
Projects Manager
Midwest Regional Center of Excellence
for Biodefense and Emerging Infectious
Diseases Research (MRCE)
Washington University in St. Louis

A Productive Spring Meeting in Indianapolis

More than three hundred persons attended the Region IV Spring Meeting in Indianapolis in April: *Research Administration from Start to Finish!*



Diane Barrett shares her expertise.

The Crowne Plaza Hotel adjacent to the historic Union Station in lively downtown Indianapolis proved to be a delightful setting for the meeting: Railway cars converted into hotel rooms, nostalgic period statues scattered throughout the hotel, and a host of good restaurants within walking distance were just a few of the features enjoyed by the attendees.



Conferees gain valuable insight into research administration.

The combined NCURA/SRA (Society of Research Administrators) meeting boasted eight workshops, forty-two concurrent sessions and fourteen roundtable discussions. In other words, something for everyone!



Wilma Ruffin, Henry Ford Health System, works the registration table.

Region IV Launches Enhanced Website

The Region IV website has been significantly enhanced to serve as a better resource for Region IV members. Several new features have been added to the home page. The navigation system for the entire site has also been restructured, making the site much easier to use; and a wider screen format displays more information and requires less scrolling. Overall, these changes should make the site more "user friendly."

The Region IV home page includes several new features. Visitors can view the *Calendar of Events* for important dates and deadlines of upcoming NCURA events and access more specific information about events by clicking on the highlighted dates. Another feature is the *Member News* section that lists announcements and activities from Region IV members and their institutions. The home page also contains a *New on the Web* section that highlights recent website additions. The most significant new addition is the *Region IV Listserv Archive*. Visitors can use this page to access recent discussion topics posted on the Region IV listserv or to search the archive by using keywords. The URL for the Region IV home page is <http://graduate.siu.edu/ncura4/>.

The new navigation bar, common to all pages, provides links to the main site directories. These directories are organized around the functions of the Region IV standing committees. The *News & Newsletters* section is centered on the activities of the Communications Committee and contains links to the current and archived regional newsletters. The *Membership* section contains information about the activities of the regional Membership Committee as well as a list of current represented institutions and links to their sponsored programs offices. The *Honors & Awards* section highlights the activities of the Awards Committee and includes a list of previous award winners, guidelines, and nomination information for regional awards and a feature article about our most recent award recipients. The *Meetings* section provides members with information on present and past meetings, as well as information about the Program Committee and the Site Selection Committee. Finally, the *Officers & Committees* section contains contact information for our members who currently serve as officers,

as regional board members, and on NCURA national boards and committees.

This year, the Region IV web team will work to establish stronger ties with the regional committees and with members to provide information that is useful, current, and accurate. We encourage Region IV members to contact any member of the web team with items or information that you

would like to have posted on the web, as well as comments or suggestions for improvements. You can contact members of the Region IV web team by email:

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Communications Committee

Core Committee:

Chair: Bill Sharp, University of Kansas
Co-chair: Erin Nash, Ohio University
Past chair: Dola Haessig, University of Missouri - Columbia
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Webmaster: Jerry Pogatshnik, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

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Tayna Cobb, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Jennie Lovett, Washington University
Diane Meyer, Iowa State University
Nancy Kay Peterson, Winona State University
Petra Schroeder, University of Wisconsin-Madison