

Hanna Bates

Personal Profile: NCURA Region IV Secretary

As a champion for research administration, a bureaucracy whisperer, and binder aficionado, I'm excited to throw my hat in the ring for the NCURA Region IV Secretary position. In my role as a Research Administrator III at the Nanovaccine Institute at Iowa State University, I manage post-award activities as well as lead science communication efforts and event planning that help bring research to life. I believe deeply in the power of empathetic communication and connection to move research administration forward. Whether I'm balancing budgets, coordinating events, or keeping projects organized, I've learned that strong communication and documentation are what keeps everything running smoothly, which is exactly why this role speaks to me.

In my career, I have been particularly drawn to roles that blend structure with storytelling. Whether it's writing minutes, sharing updates, or supporting events, I find joy in creating clarity and cohesion within a team. In my role at Iowa State University, I am known as a connector and communicator who brings people together not just as scientists, but as people with a common goal. My past experiences include serving on the Society of Research Administrators' Catalyst Newsletter and Podcast Committees. In this role, I researched and wrote about emergent challenges in management in research administration, and how to tackle them with empathy and communication. I have also led the Iowa Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. In this organization I served as Chapter President during the COVID-19 pandemic, which taught me the value of being adaptable to meet logistics and coordination challenges, including pivoting an in-person conference to an online format and bridging organizational goals with service and volunteer opportunities to support communities in need. Additionally, I have completed quantitative and qualitative research on organizational structures and social behavior from the individual level to a federal agency, which has expanded my skillset in understanding social participation in voluntary programs and critical thinking. These experiences have deepened my appreciation for collaborative leadership and thoughtful communication.

While I am a new member to NCURA (less than 1 year), I've gained so much from NCURA's network of professionals at Iowa State University who generously share their knowledge and experience. I'm eager to contribute to the organization by helping the board and its membership stay connected and informed while further developing my skillset. I am particularly energized about the opportunity to be a participant-observer of Region IV leadership, objectives, and programmatic goals via the Secretary position. With over one decade of experience, I don't see the work simply as reporting and minute-taking, but an opportunity to establish clear, accurate, and open communication that preserves the past while making participation and the pathway forward easy on projects and programs.

Fun Fact: My interest in research administration began as an undergraduate student lab worker in a Biological Anthropology lab. In this position, my role included labelling individual bones of model Hominid skeleton sets with tiny, but legible, scribbles in quill and ink. This taught me that no detail is too small, and the smallest of archival detail is important to overall documentation and research function.

