# The RAP Up

## VOL 3, ISSUE 1: SUMMER 2012

nurap's    steering    members
newest    commmittee

## NURAP ELECTS NEW STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS, CONDUCTS ANNUAL BYLAWS REVIEW

Last month, the NURAP Steering Committee selected six new members to join their ranks and conducted their annual review of the organization's bylaws.

The Steering Committee is the primary decision making body of NURAP. It is currently comprised of six research administration professionals. With the addition of these five new members comes a diverse set of experiences, points of view, and institutional affiliations that bolsters NURAP's broad support from across the institution and value added to its research enterprise.

Joseph Boes (FSM), Mary Greene (WCAS), Molly Heiler (Law), Julia McPherson (FSM), and Andrea Zakrzewski (MEAS) will begin their service on the Steering Committee at the beginning of FY13. A special guide to the new committee members can be found on **page 3**.

Says Lori Palfalvi, President of NURAP, "as president of NURAP, I am delighted to welcome our new Steering Committee Members. As a grass roots organization, NURAP's lifeblood is its membership. And the people who make NURAP activities happen are the steering committee members. I, along with the other current steering committee members, look forward to working with these freshman members. We know that they will bring new insight and ideas as well as the commitment to fostering professional excellence that is NURAP's mainstay. "

In addition to adding new steering committee members, the current steering committee has conducted its annual bylaws review. The revised bylaws can be found on the NURAP website at:

http://www.research.northwestern.edu/nurap/about.html

## FROM THE EDITOR

## MEMBER RECOGNITION

I would like to introduce myself as the new co-editor for the RAP Up. I am a Senior Research Administrator in the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center. I have been with Northwestern and the Cancer Center since October 2009. Prior to coming to Northwestern I worked as a Research Administrator at the University of Chicago.

I am very excited to be working with Alden Chang on the RAP Up.

We invite our readers to submit comments and suggestions or offer any ideas that they may have for future editions of the newsletter.

I hope you enjoy this edition.

*Sara Sylvan*

**Sara Sylvan** is a Co-Editor of The RAP Up and a Research Administrator 2 in the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center

*Congratulations to the following NURAP members who recently received a length of service award.*

**Five Years of Service**

-Christine Beglinger

-Crystal Boone

-Mariela Huber

-Sara Krentz

**-**Joan Naper

-John Serafin

-Amra Skocic

**Ten Years of Service**

-Deborah Coleman

-Ellen Feldman

-Jennifer Hill

**Fifteen Years of Service**

-Donna Kwiatkowski

**Twenty Years of Service**

-Deanna Maurer

**Thirty Years of Service**

-Mary Lynne Williams

*The following members received **Service Excellence Awards** since the last issue of the RAP Up:*

-Christine Beglinger

-Eugenie Chao

-Pamela Conley

-Stephanie Logaras

-Amanda Morris

-Amra Skocic

-Barbara Sutcliffe

-Pam Watson

Congratulations to new NURAP steering committee member, **Andrea Zakrzewski**, the recipient of McCormick's STAR Award in the Winter of 2012 (pictured above, with McCormick Dean, Julio Ottino).

*If you would like to nominate someone to be recognized in the RAP Up, please contact either Alden Chang (alden-chang@northwestern.edu) or Sara Sylvan (s-sylvan@northwestern.edu).*

## GUIDE TO THE NEW STEERING COMMMITTE MEMBERS

**Joseph Boes** is the Senior Research Administrator for the Division of Fertility Preservation and the Women's Health Research Institute. Joseph holds a B.A. from the University of Iowa and an M.A. from the University of Chicago where he was exposed to the academic research environment. Joseph began his career in research administration with the Division of Organ Transplantation. Through his experience at Northwestern, Joseph has managed awards and submitted applications for a variety of funding mechanisms and has been an active NURAP member since its inception.

**Mary Greene** has been a Research Coordinator in the Department of Chemistry since 2008.   Mary has a B.A. in Communications from DePaul University and has recently completed the Master of Science in Communication program here at  Northwestern.   She's also an active member of NCURA and SRA.

**Molly Estelle Heiler** is the Associate Director of Research and Administration at Northwestern School of Law.  Molly's main responsibilities include management of dean's office support operations, administrative services support operations, and instructional support operations.  Molly is also responsible for all grant administration for the research faculty at NU Law.  Molly graduated from Michigan State University with a BA in psychology and Loyola University Chicago with a MA in Criminal Justice Administration.

**Julia McPherson**  has worked for the Northwestern University for 18 years; but currently works in the  Department of Neurology  as a Coordinator of Finance and Administration.  She manages the financial and administration aspect of the Department of Neurology .  Julia has been preparing "individual taxes" for 20 years. She is a Certified Tax Preparer with the IRS.  She has her degree in Business Administration from Robert Morris College

**Andrea Zakrzewski** has worked in Research Administration for 12 years.  She started at Northwestern five years ago as the Research Administrator for the Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Department in McCormick and recently accepted a promotion to Associate Director of Research Administration in the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science.

**DEPARTMENT DOSSIER:**
Not My Job

One Tuesday morning, a young man walked into my office and stood in front of my desk expectantly until I asked if I could help him with something. "I was told to come here for academic advising," he said. "I'm sorry, this is the wrong office," I explained. "I'm a research administrator. What department are you looking for?"

"I'm a freshman," he said. "I don't have a department. But I could have sworn the email said room 328." He continued to stare at me, as though he hoped I was actually his academic advisor playing a funny joke on him, or that I was a rogue advisor looking for confused freshmen to take under my wing.

I think we've all been there in some form or another: someone comes to you with a question, and you're pretty sure it falls in the category of Not My Job. There are two instinctive responses to this type of pressure: you can refuse to do anything that isn't spelled out in your position description, or you can try to do everything anyone asks of you. I gravitate toward the latter, but in reality, neither is a healthy or responsible approach to your work.

Attitude #1: "If I Was Supposed to be Doing That, It Would Be In My Job Description"

Job descriptions are valuable tools to guide us and our supervisors. But while setting boundaries is a critical skill for making your job manageable, if you blindly push away everything "extra", or respond to these requests rudely, you cause problems for yourself and your whole department.

**You create a burden for others.** Even if you're correct that a problem is not within your assigned duties or it's not possible or appropriate for you to take it on, the solution is not letting it wait for someone who's a bigger sucker than you are to deal with it. Don't let it become that year-old yogurt in the back of the office fridge that no one will throw out because they're not the one who left it there. Instead, talk to your supervisor. Make sure that the needs within your department are being addressed, either by assigning the right person to the task or getting the resources you need to add it to your responsibilities. If something is your department's problem, it's *your* problem, so be part of the solution.

**Your reputation with colleagues and customers will suffer.** Maybe your middle school was full of motivational posters[1] telling you how little you should care what others think of you, but in reality, none of us works in isolation. If your colleagues know that they're all busy but you're the only one who refuses to lend a hand, they'll be much less sympathetic when you're the one actually in need of some extra help. And it's much more pleasant to work in an environment where people are friendly and cooperative. Also, your department's customers (faculty and students) deserve at least a helpful handoff to the appropriate contact rather than a curt brushoff.

[1] http://despair.com/motivation.html

**You hold yourself back.** If you don't push yourself from time to time and try new things, you may never know how efficient you can be or find where your true gifts lie. Maybe it makes sense for you to swap a responsibility with someone in the department, or maybe you're ready for a promotion. Maybe what you're asking someone else to do in two hours could be done better by you in ten minutes.

Many tasks could reasonably be done by more than one person. Take the time to find the most appropriate, customer-friendly solution to a problem the next time your first instinct is to tell the person "that's not my job."

Attitude #2: "If You Want Something Done, You Gotta Do It Yourself"

On the surface, this type of "make it work" attitude seems like a good quality in an administrator, but this makes the pitfalls of consistently taking this approach even more dangerous.

**You set yourself up for mistakes.** If something isn't your area of expertise but you think you know the answer, it may seem helpful to take care of the problem yourself instead of taking the time to redirect the questioner. Unfortunately, you're more likely to inadvertently give out bad advice or misinformation. That hurts you, the person you were trying to help, and the person whose job you tried to do.

**You hold back your colleagues.** Taking on a colleague's task once is a favor. Taking it on all the time means that your colleague never has the opportunity to learn for herself. You set her up for failure if you're suddenly unable to help in the future, and you keep her from growing and challenging herself. Avoiding mistakes is an admirable goal, and delegation means being willing to let the other person make mistakes. But a better goal is building a strong team that won't fall apart if you're out of the office for an hour.

**You risk burning out.** A great RA on a bad day might be equivalent to a mediocre RA on a good day, but a fantastic RA having a meltdown isn't worth much at all. You need to take care of yourself if you want any hope of taking care of your job and your constituents. Stress and decision fatigue take a measurable toll on our performance. Even if you "can" do it and you're willing to do it, make sure you ask yourself: is this the best choice for myself and my department?

It's important to balance both the short-term and long-term benefits when choosing whether to take on something that your instincts tell you is "not your job." Be willing to push boundaries, but don't assume that you're the best (or only) person to do every job.

**Susan Morris** is the author of the *Department Dossier* column and a Research Administrator in the Department of Biomedical Engineering.

**NURAP STAR**:
Kelly Morrison

*Kelly Morrison is the new Cost Sharing Officer in the Office for Sponsored Research. Recently, NURAP Co-Editor, Alden Chang sat down with Kelly to muse over the finer points of cost sharing at Northwestern.*

**AC: How did you get to this point in your career?**
KM: I started at Northwestern in September of 2007 in the Department of Molecular Biosciences in Weinberg as a program assistant.  After a year in the position, I was promoted to research coordinator, which is when I first became involved in research administration.  After about a year in that position, I moved to a research administrator position in McCormick, first working with the Departments of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Industrial Engineering and Management Sciences, and later with the Department of Mechanical Engineering.  Most recently, I joined the Office for Sponsored Research as the Cost Share Officer in January (of 2012).

**AC: What is the most difficult part of the role so far?**
KM: I think being in a newly established position is always challenging since it's been created to do something that hasn't quite been done before – prior to the creation of this position, there was no central resource dedicated to cost sharing.  So I would say that working to create infrastructure is one of my biggest challenges right now – revising the old process for obtaining institutional cost share support, and also working to establish standard procedures in relation to the establishment and management of cost sharing on the post-award side of things.

**AC: How does your new role as cost sharing officer impact research administration at NU?**
KM: Previously, there hasn't been strong central guidance in regards to cost sharing and everyone who had to manage some piece of it was doing so on a part-time basis.  This position   represents a resource for OSR, and everyone at Northwestern, to turn to with questions about cost sharing.

I also think the significant changes to the pre-award process for ob-taining institutional support will have a positive impact.  In the revised process, the Cost Share Officer offers guidance to the departments regarding the cost sharing every step of the way, from solicitation requirements to expectations of involved schools.  The Cost Share Officer also handles commitment  requests of departments and schools on behalf of the PI, so the burden of managing cost share commitments is no longer on the department.

On the post-award side of things, managing cost sharing has been historically challenging for all those involved, so having SOPs and creating predictability will certainly be beneficial.  We're evaluating post-award processes right now, and plan to make some significant changes moving forward – I believe that will have a positive impact as well.

**AC: What should every research administrator know about cost sharing?**
KM: I think one important thing for administrators to be aware of is that if you commit to cost sharing at the proposal stage, you must be prepared to track it at the award stage.  This sounds fairly simple, but it's important to keep this in mind when a PI indicates that they want to, for example, volunteer a significant portion of their effort at the proposal stage to strengthen the proposal.  You want to keep in mind that if the project is awarded, that effort commitment represents a quantified resource that now constitutes a commitment.

Another thing everyone should remember is to include unrecovered F&A in their cost share proposals.  I notice people don't always count unrecovered F&A when they are putting together a cost share budget – when allowable direct costs are cost shared, the indirect costs associated with these should be included as well

Also– that there's now a resource for them to go to with unusual (or any) questions!

Reason / Description (200 characters allowed)

**Q: I found that my correction journals for my sponsored awards are sent back because of a poor description. What can I do to improve the description to prevent them from being sent back?**

A: Cost transfers should be considered "the exception, rather than the rule". When you've made a mistake and need to move an expense to another sponsored project, we need you to document the reason very thoroughly.

"An explanation merely stating that the transfer was made 'to correct error' or 'to transfer to correct project' **is not sufficient**." This is a quote from the NIH Grants Policy Statement and it shows that your description for the correction is just as important as the documentation you keep to justify the transaction. We need you to document exactly why the transfer is needed. Please see NU's Cost Transfer Policy that shows some questions to help you write a good explanation (website link found below).

The Reason/ Description box (see diagram, above) on your correction journal is the area where we need you to justify the correction. All cost transfers must be supported with documentation and justified.

When writing a reason for the journals, please make sure to mention…

1. Why the expense is being corrected? (what happened)

2. How does the charge you are moving to a new chart-string benefit the project?

3. If your cost transfer involves travel, please mention dates, location (should include place/conference name etc.), who traveled and why; and

4. If the expense is a pro-card transaction, state exactly what was purchased. Do not use generic names like "supplies".

Keep the journal documentation that supports the transaction with other grant documents in your file.

For journals greater than 90 days please attach the supporting documentation.

If you find your department has an unusual number of journals, take a good look at your business processes. You may be able to prevent correction journals by modifying the daily practices or perhaps providing training to staff on how to charge expenses upfront. Call ASRSP if you would like us to come in and discuss cost transfers with your staff. We are happy to assist you in any way we can.

References:

NIH guide:

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps_2011/nihgps_ch7.htm#cost_transfers_overruns_accelerated_delayed_expeditures

NU Cost Transfer Policy: http://www.northwestern.edu/coststudies/Cost_Transfers_Policy.pdf

On a side note: For Internal Sales journals… ISJ's should always state what service is provided and the dates of service. Please provide that in the Reason/Justification box. This will assist us in reporting expense properly.

**Katherine Mustea** is the author of *Kathy's Korner* and is a Contract Finance Administrator in Accounting Services for Research and Sponsored Programs.

## POST AWARD:
### Closing Transactions

Your PI just got a closing letter from ASRSP, and informed you that the award will be ending. You've just been asked to review the expenses on this Federal grant, and to determine if there are enough funds left to make it through the next three months while the research is completed. If you've been around awhile, you probably have a good idea of the next steps you need to take. But if you haven't, we'll provide you with an idea of some of the things you definitely want to consider as you come up with your own review strategy.

The first step is to respond to the letter. Really! That puts your closing on the GCFA radar screen and we really appreciate it. It gives us both time to confidently review the transactions and submit the report on time. Starting a close-out the month the report is due is not fun. Step two is to usually review the current expenses on the award using a combination of Cognos Reports, or if you have access to Query Viewer in NUFS, you can run a fantastic query that lists every expense line and provides many details. The query is named "NU_ASRSP_AUDIT_EXP_ACCOUNT". If you don't have access and wish to have it, you can request access to it by visiting the Project CAFÉ website and filling out an access form at: http://cafe.northwestern.edu/security/. GCFAs work off of queries as they are not affected by the occasional glitches in the automated processes which run overnight and affect the freshness of the Cognos report data. You can also ask your GCFA for a copy of this query while you are waiting for access from CAFÉ.

If you are using the Sponsored Project Budget Statement, you will likely need to look at many monthly GL08/GL05 reports as well. A third option is using the "Budget Overview" screen in NUFS and using the very good drill-down links to review purchase details. However you choose to do it, let's talk about the things that you should be looking for in your review.

On most awards the largest expense category will be salaries and benefits. Your main concern here is to make sure that all of the associated effort reports have been certified, and that all of your online or paper journals have processed as Intended.
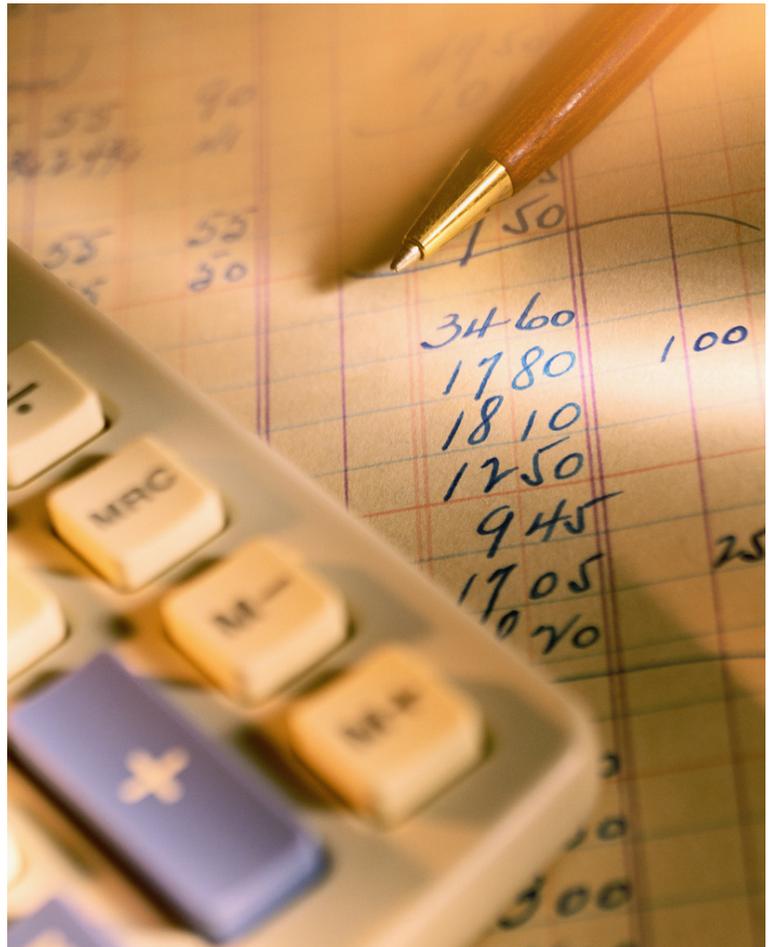
The Effort Coordinators will review the individual payroll lines and assure that all of them have been certified, but they are not aware of things which have not posted, so your review is critical. You should also promptly follow-up on any issues they may identify so as not to delay the final reporting.

Supplies and services are another large category of expenses which rollup into budget account 73000 and 73001 for the "restricted" supplies. If you have "73010 Paper and Office Supplies" open on your award, then you probably have a case of unlike circumstances perhaps due to an administrative core on a program project or something similar. Office supply charges were part of the approved budget. But if you don't, then they are not allowed and you may find them in "73475, Lab Supplies". Toner, printer paper, binders, clips and similar items should not be charged to Federal grants. Associated vendors are OfficeMax, Staples and BT. Software is another thing to review. Purchases of operating systems, MS Office, and other software are generally not allowable. Individual licenses for analytical/statistical analysis software such as MatLab are allowable on a case-by-case basis. Computer purchases are generally not allowable.

**NURAP TIP**

### NCURA YOUTUBE TUESDAYS

Don't forget to check out NCURA's free weekly programming on Tuesdays at their YouTube site: http://www.youtube.com/user/ncura1959

The clips are short and cover a variety of topics that are of interest to research administrative professionals. Previous issues addressed: • Is it a Gift or a Grant? • NSF Major Research Instrumentation • Tutorial on RSS Feeds • Indemnification

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Established 1959
NCURA

NU policy states that these purchases must adhere to the A-21 guidelines of allowability, necessity, be reasonable and allocable to the project, and also be justified in the approved budget.  In addition the department must have on file with ASRSP a justification of unlike circumstances. Please review the policy for details (http://www.research.northwestern.edu/osr/computers.html).  If a justification does not exist at the time the GCFA reviews the award, you will be contacted and will need to work with the PI to produce one.  If all the conditions stated above are not met, the charges will need to be moved off to a non-sponsored project.

Some other things you should take a moment to review are books, service contracts, restricted services, meeting registrations, professional development, and VISA fees. These may be on the appropriate expense accounts, or mistakenly charged to non-restricted accounts. In either case you need to assure they are allowable and did not just slip through the internal controls. Books, whether they are textbooks, reference books, or technical manuals are usually not allowable purchases on Federal awards. These purchases may be found on 73475 and sometimes via ProCard purchases. Service contracts are allowable, but the coverage period may not extend past the award end date.  If they are not for a full year, or are split between grants, the method you use to allocate the amounts charged to each grant is critical. Please contact a GCFA for guidance. Review each and every expense in any category under "75002, Services, Restricted". Membership dues are often mistakenly charged to Federal awards. Do not confuse Memberships with Registration Fees. Registering for a national meeting is allowable, joining NCURA, while a fantastic idea, is not. Professional development is another category which is not allowable on Federal awards except for rare cases on Individual NRSA Fellowships and Institutional Training Grants.

VISA Fees may or may not be allowable on Federal awards. NIH released new guidance in Feb 2012 allowing them as direct costs only as part of recruiting, so the initial VISA is allowable, but renewals are not. Even when allowed, not all the associated fees will be.  ASRSP has a very useful webpage at http://www.northwestern.edu/asrsp/immigration.html with more information on J-1 and H-1B VISAs.

Equipment is often purchased on larger Federal awards and is worth mentioning in terms of a closing review. There are robust internal controls on capital equipment purchases, so we can work from a position that they were allowable.

You do need to be concerned with whether the award granted NU title to the equipment or not. If you have Government-titled capital equipment, NU does not own the equipment- the sponsor does. Usually, these will be contracts and not awards, and it is not a frequently used clause. If you do find yourself closing an award with Government titled equipment, you will need to contact the Property Accountant in Accounting Services and/or your GCFA to finalize ownership of the item at closing. Similarly if you see any Fabricated Equipment charges on 77535 then steps need to be taken to close out the fabrication and transfer the expense over to capital equipment. As with capital equipment, please contact the Property Accountant, or a GCFA for assistance.

Do you have a subawardee? If so you should consider contacting them and reminding them that the award is ending and a final report will be due. ASRSP does not do this. For a federal award, NU must submit a final financial report within 90 days of the project period end date.  OSR usually passes down 60 day terms to our subawardees. We often see circumstances where the subawardee underspends the award or determines that they need additional funds. Both of these situations may affect your available balance in unexpected ways. So communication with the subawardee is important.

Do you have cost sharing? Any of it third-party, corporate in-kind match or is it all cost shared effort? Did you just say "Huh?" to yourself? Cost sharing can be very complicated to document and report so contact your GCFA early in the process to get the review going. A separate report may be required.

One final note on transaction review for those of you who are reviewing queries and not reports, is to use the search function for keywords representing unallowable items and vendors. Search for terms like: Apple, OfficeMax, Staples, Dell, IBM, Lenovo, Microsoft, laptop, desktop, Latitude, Optiplex, Thinkpad, cell phone, and subscription.

Hopefully this got you thinking about what happens in your office when you receive a closeout letter from ASRSP. Next quarter we'll talk about creating a Final Spending Plan with your PI and the associated steps to assure a smooth timely closing. You can find a copy of the ASRSP "Sample Award Closeout Checklist" on our website at: http://www.northwestern.edu/asrsp/closeout.html



**Frank Cutting** is the author of *Post Award* and is a Senior Contract Financial Administrator in Accounting Services for Research and Sponsored Programs

# Montréal

## TIPS FOR ATTENDING A RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE

Which city claims a pile of French fries, covered in cheese curds and brown gravy, as its favorite food? Montreal of course!

It's the largest Francophone city outside of France and it was the site of the Society of Research Administrators International (SRA) annual meeting last October.

I had the privilege of being able to attend the SRA annual conference in October. It was a trip that I won't soon forget. It was also attended by NURAP travel award winners, Joseph Boes and Mary Greene.

Having been to several of these large, annual meetings, I've compiled the five things you should do when you're out of town and in the midst of all of that research administration goodness:

1. **Go to the education sessions**. The programming offered at these annual conferences is meant to address the educational needs of all the attendees. These types of conferences are typically very large and offer clusters or "tracks" of sessions based on an attendee's experience or interest.

2. **Network**. There are very few instances where you'll get to interact with such a wide group of peers from across the world in such a short amount of time. Take advantage of this opportunity to raise your national or global profile.

3. **Make friends**. Large annual conferences often offer opportunities to sign up for social activities like city tours and group dinners. Use these opportunities to make a new friend or two. You never know when your new friend from State University will be able to help you with that subcontract you've been having trouble with.

4. **Explore**. During the day, you're learning, but at these conferences, your nights are often free. Explore your neighborhood; find historical points of interest, shop. Part of the experience of attending these conferences is experiencing the city the conference is in.

5. **Share your knowledge**. Prepare some notes of what you learned at the conference and share with your departmental and school colleagues. The costs of attending can be further justified when you bring knowledge and education back to NU.



*RAP Up Co-editors Alden Chang and Sara Sylvan at the SAR Annual Conference in Montreal*



*Sara Sylvan and NURAP travel award winner, Joseph Boes, in between sessions.*



*NURAP Steering Committee members, Alden Chang, Daniel Rademacher, and Sara Sylvan at the conference reception*



**Alden Chang** wrote *Tips*. He is the Co-Editor of the RAP Up and a Research Administrator 2 in the Office of Research Development.

## BEGINNER'S TRACK:
The National Science Foundation

*NSF Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia*

Are you are beginner in research administration, new to federal awards, or need a refresher of some of the basics?

This column will touch on some fundamental information that is useful to know regarding federal agencies. The current article will shed light on some of the basics of an NSF award.

The National Science Foundation funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. It does this through grants, and cooperative agreements to more than 2,000 colleges, universities, K-12 school systems, businesses, informal science organizations and other research organizations throughout the United States. The Foundation accounts for about one-fourth of federal support to academic institutions for basic research.

NSF receives approximately 40,000 proposals each year for research, education and training projects, of which approximately 11,000 are funded. In addition, the Foundation receives several thousand applications for graduate and postdoctoral fellowships.

The agency operates no laboratories itself but does support National Research Centers, user facilities, certain oceanographic vessels and Antarctic research stations. The Foundation also supports cooperative research between universities and industry, US participation in international scientific and engineering efforts, and educational activities at every academic level.

NSF is divided into the following seven directorates or program areas that support science and engineering research and education: Biological Sciences, Computer and Information Science and Engineering, Engineering, Geosciences, Mathematics and Physical Sciences, Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences, and Education and Human Resources. Each is headed by an assistant director and each is further subdivided into divisions such as materials research, ocean sciences and behavioral and cognitive sciences.

### Types of Proposals
Proposals are submitted in response to a solicitation within a directorate. NSF provides a Find Funding Opportunity Search on their website: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/ to help locate these solicitations. Many solicitations are open to submission twice per year. Some solicitations are associated with several directorates. For example, the Collaborative Research in Computational Neuroscience (CRCNS) program solicitation is under the Directorates for Computer & Information Science & Engineering, Biological Sciences, Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences, and Mathematical & Physical Sciences.

Standard proposal preparation guidelines are in the Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/gpg_index.jsp. This document provides guidance on how to submit proposals and details on the format and sections of the NSF grant proposal.

There are special guidelines for proposals that deviate from the standard proposal preparation instructions contained in the GPG. Here are a few of those special types of proposals.

**Grants for Rapid Response Research (RAPID).** The RAPID funding mechanism is used for proposals having a severe urgency with regard to availability of, or access to data, facilities or specialized equipment, including quick-response research on natural or anthropogenic disasters and similar unanticipated events. Only internal merit review is required for RAPID proposals. Requests may be for up to $200K and of one year duration.

**EArly-concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER).** The EAGER funding mechanism may be used to support exploratory work in its early stages on untested, but potentially transformative, research ideas or approaches. This work may be considered especially "high risk-high payoff" in the sense that it, for example, involves radically different approaches, applies new expertise, or engages novel disciplinary or interdisciplinary perspectives. Only internal merit review is required for EAGER proposals. Requests may be for up to $300K and of up to two years duration.

**Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program.** The Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program is a Foundation-wide activity that offers the National Science Foundation's most prestigious awards in support of junior faculty who exemplify the role of teacher-scholars through outstanding research, excellent education and the integration of education and research within the context of the mission of their organizations.

Foundation's most prestigious awards in support of junior faculty who exemplify the role of teacher-scholars through outstanding research, excellent education and the integration of education and research within the context of the mission of their organizations. Such activities should build a firm foundation for a lifetime of leadership in integrating education and research. NSF encourages submission of CAREER proposals from junior faculty members at all CAREER-eligible organizations and especially encourages women, members of underrepresented minority groups, and persons with disabilities to apply. All directorates are eligible.

**Proposals for Equipment.** Proposals for specialized equipment may be submitted by an organization for: (1) individual investigators; (2) groups of investigators within the same department; (3) several departments; (4) organization(s) participating in a collaborative or joint arrangement; (5) any components of an organization; or (6) a region. One individual must be designated as PI.
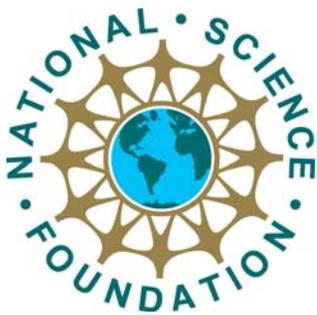
Investigators may be working in closely related areas or their research may be multidisciplinary.

**Proposals for Conferences, Symposia and Workshops**. NSF supports conferences, symposia and workshops in special areas of science and engineering that bring experts together to discuss recent research or education findings or to expose other researchers or students to new research and education techniques. NSF encourages the convening in the US of major international conferences, symposia and workshops. Conferences will be supported only if equivalent results cannot be obtained at regular meetings of professional societies. Proposals for Conferences, Symposia and Workshops should generally be made at least a year in advance of the scheduled date.

**Support for Development of NSF Centers.** NSF provides support for a variety of individual Centers and Centers programs that contribute to the Foundation's vision as outlined in the NSF Strategic Plan. Centers exploit opportunities in science, engineering and technology in which the complexity of the research problem(s) or the resources needed to solve the(se) problem(s) require the advantages of scope, scale, change, duration, equipment, facilities, and students that can only be provided by an academic research center.

They focus on investigations at the frontiers of knowledge not normally attainable through individual investigations, at the interfaces of disciplines and/or by incorporating fresh approaches to the core of disciplines. Centers focus on integrative learning and discovery and demonstrate leadership in broadening participation through focused investments in a diverse set of partner institutions and individuals.

**Award Instrument**
The NSF award identification begins with the abbreviation for the directorate. So, an award from the Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences directorate begins with the acronym BCS. A unique seven digit identifier follows this abbreviation.

The composition of an NSF award includes the award notice, including any special conditions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments. It also includes the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support, the proposal referenced in the award notice, the applicable NSF conditions referenced in the award notice, and any NSF program announcement, program solicitation or other documents or special requirements incorporated by reference in the award notice.

**NSF Award Conditions**
Grant General Terms and Conditions (GC-1) are used in most NSF grant awards. The link can be found at http://www.nsf.gov/awards/managing/general_conditions.jsp

The proposal and award policies and procedures guide is the fundamental location for award and administration information. The most recent guide became effective January 18, 2011.http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf11001/aagprint.pdf

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