



## Celebrate National Research Administrator Day! September 25



### **Bryan Sweet, CRA & Katie Mueller, CRA**

Although the field of research administration has been recognized as a profession for more than 50 years, **Friday, September 25** marks only the **Eighth Annual National Research Administrator Day**. The holiday was established by the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) as a way to recognize and celebrate the enormous and valuable contributions administrators make each day as we support research advancement and discovery.

This day celebrates us. For all the hard work, dedication, late nights, last minute submissions; each time a new lab member arrives without us being notified of the hire; the deep dives down the Google rabbit hole in persistent search of an obscure sponsor notice from ten years ago which is still somehow relevant; for the late cost transfers, mysterious invoices from the vendor who won't use email, surprise decisions to apply for an award at the last minute even though

In recognition of RA Day and the important contributions we make to the tens of thousands of projects all over the world, we asked a few Research Administrators to tell us what it means to be a Research Administrator, why we do what we do, why we keep coming back, and what they would tell someone who is looking to enter the field.

#### **What does it mean to you to be a Research Administrator?**

"It means pride, in helping to better our understanding of science and human health in my own small way."  
*Mark Lucas, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA*

#### **Why do we do what we do?**

"...to keep our faculty out of trouble!"  
*Amy Brooks, CRA, U. of Michigan*

"The research enterprise is complex, with programmatic, financial, and regulatory elements. Only the technical experts can do the first one, and there are not very many of these folks out there. As research administrators, we take on the financial and regulatory elements of the research enterprise so that the experts can focus on what only they can do." *Liz Haney, Sc.M., MSM, CRA, Ball State U.*

it had previously been ruled out; for the premature aging our roles can at times impose. Many of us continue in this field for decades, excited by the constant learning and growth. And we do challenging, essential work, which is worth celebrating!

Funded research, scholarship, and creative endeavor impacts and benefits everyone in society. From cancer research and vaccines, to educational training, academic scholarship, and the fine arts, Research Administrators are a vital part of the success of these efforts.

Research Administrators serve multiple roles: we promote compliance to protect the institutions or organizations; we provide customer service to faculty and researchers; we safeguard human subject participants by supporting ethical conduct of research; and we assure sound stewardship by managing sponsored research dollars.

Our management allows researchers to focus on their science and move research forward.

So be sure to take a minute today to celebrate your hard work and essential contributions to research. Whether it's an e-card to your RA colleagues, taking a dance break for your favorite song, or a shout-out to your fellow Research Administrators on Facebook or LinkedIn, let us know how you're celebrating! Take photos and share on social media using [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

Appreciation and thanks go out to NCURA who established National Research Administrator Day to recognize the

### **What do you like most about being a Research Administrator?**

"Everyday is a new adventure as you never know what challenges each day will bring, and along the way, you get to meet interesting people working on projects to make the world a better place to live." *Joel Fritzler, Coconino Community College*

"I like the constant growth and learning! I like knowing that I'm making a contribution to ground breaking research! I love that it gives me opportunities to explore new arenas for research administration – departments, central offices, service centers, and compliance units!" *Betty Ann Morgan, CRA, RAA, Duke*

### **What would you tell someone looking to get into the field?**

"To have patience and give yourself grace as you learn. The world of research administration is so vast and it takes years and years to get familiar with the rules, regulations, sponsors, etc. and you'll still never know everything. Also, use your resources. Research administration can be very gray and "depends on the situation". You may be new to a situation, but someone else might not be." *Kira Harvath, CRA, The Buck Institute.*

"Take advantage of the vast amount of information available to you as a research administrator. Attend trainings and workshops offered through your institution and various professional organizations. Be sure to join relevant professional organizations and network!" *Tasha-Gilson-Durham, MBA, CRA, Indiana U.*

"Do it! You will grow as a person, gain tons of knowledge, build relationships, and continually learn. This is not a "monotonous pencil pusher" job as there are so many facets to help you find your perfect niche. The resources and support available from others in the field is mind-blowing. Just reach out to others in the uncertain or overwhelming moments and you will be amazed on the amount of

professionals that work every day to ensure research projects move forward.

support." *Joanne Palmer, Texas State U.*

**Thank you to all those who responded to our questions on the Research Admin Listserv! We apologize that we could not use all responses. There were so many excellent contributions. Our readers never disappoint!**

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