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RA Spotlight: Rosaleah Brown Gresham

Interview by Ian Cariolo

One reason Rosaleah Brown Gresham was selected for our spotlight is because of her dogged determination and dominance of that most dreaded topic – under-recovery! More on that later...

Rosaleah is a relative newcomer to MIT, getting her start in the Physics department just over two years ago. She brings 5 years of college program administration experience and a Masters in Higher Education – both earned at Boston College. Like many people, she was unaware of the career possibilities in research administration until a professor/mentor advised her to broaden her search beyond her focus of Student Affairs. That advice led her to apply for the Financial Coordinator position, and applying and receiving a promotion to Financial Officer when that position became available. Rosaleah now manages the pre-, and post-award administration for the department, and is a go-to resource for her skills with Foundation submissions due to the volume of those applications that cross her desk.

When asked about what has been challenging for her in her job, she said it was getting up to speed on the ins and outs of research administration and is quick to pass credit around to many of her regular contacts on campus like Tim Vacha at VPF/Sponsored Accounting and Michele Hudak at OSP. Rosaleah said “Michele really helped me out a LOT and kind of on-boarded me on Research Administration, And even Tim Vacha - I owe him a lot of thank-you notes! I think that it was really challenging in the beginning, such as
trying to figure out how to manage the volume, so I reached out a lot, took a lot of training, and learned to meet the day-to-day consistency of demands. It helped to take time to document and take notes.”

Rosaleah must have taken some really good notes; her most rewarding moment to date at MIT was when a proposal was submitted without any review comments. She said it felt wonderful and unsettling at the same time – but it still makes her smile when she remembers the occasion.

The RA Support team has been tapping into Rosaleah’s foundation proposal expertise, she was a panelist contributor in the November Research Administration Practices (RAP) Session, and has been very generous with her advice on dealing with the foundation-favorite submission system Proposal Central, as well as tips for preparing the under-recovery laden Simons Foundation applications.

Rosaleah’s words of advice to other research administrators is to “Keep a positive mindset, which also makes a great life lesson. I feel accomplished when I get things done, and especially with the most challenging tasks such as under-recovery and cost sharing. It was not easy for me and I knew I had to understand it to be effective. It wouldn’t help me if I thought about how hard it was, so I stayed positive. I tell myself I love cost sharing! - and I just get it done.”

And if you need help with staying positive, you may want to take another tip from Rosaleah and turn to reading sci-fi fantasy where your mind is free to roam other worlds – where the word ‘cost share’ is never uttered and ‘under-recovered F&A” doesn’t exist!

Is there a research administrator you’d like to shine the spotlight on? Send suggestions to ra-help@mit.edu with “spotlight suggestion” in the subject. Thanks!
RA-Help@mit.edu – not just for KC questions!

The RA Support Team is available to assist with any questions you may have, whether it is a KC or other research administration questions. Even if you are not sure who to ask about a particular issue, email us at ra-help@mit.edu and we will help you figure it out or who to ask. We look forward to hearing from you!

Recommended Reading: YouTube channel NCURA 1959

People learn in different ways: some people like to read, whereas others prefer to watch and listen. If you’re in the ‘watch’ camp, then you should check this out. NCURA – the National Council of University Research Administrators has a free YouTube channel (search NCURA 1959) with many quick learning options. Most of the videos are less than 3 minutes. If you want to freshen up your understanding on research administration topics, or you find that you have a few minutes to spare while you’re waiting for a meeting to start, check this resource out.

Here are a few recordings that the RA Support team identified as interesting:

This one is on making your email messages more effective:  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HF79m5KJuJg

This one takes the mystery out of NIH award numbers:  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPkkN_QORB4

And this is a quick explanation of the Bayh-Dole Act that is frequently mentioned in COI seminars:  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sloX9nXFCKY

Recent RAP Session Review
By Kim Mann

The January 10th RAP Session on Understanding the data in SAP and KC was so popular it exceeded seating capacity and generated a waiting list! Based on this popular demand, we are repeating the session on May 23rd. Why was it so popular?

When reading an SAP Statement, have you ever wondered the following: When does the information from KC “feed” to SAP, and who is notified? Do you know how to tell what indirect cost rates are charged to a particular account? Or where the “Budget” column information comes from? Do you wonder how to tell if a Sponsor has paid an invoice, or if there are different reports that can be run in SAP? These questions and more were answered in the RAP Session “Understanding the Data in SAP and KC”, presented by VPF, Sponsored Accounting and others. A copy of this presentation (and all prior RAP sessions) are available for download from the Research Administration Hub website here: http://research.mit.edu/research-administration/research-administration-practices-rap. See you on May 23rd for the repeat of this session.
Hub News flash: New ToolTime Educational Offering!
By Carol Wood

We hope you are as excited as we are for the upcoming ToolTime sessions! ToolTime provides an opportunity for DLC Administrators to showcase tools and resources they have developed to effectively meet research administration business needs. ToolTime premieres March 20th with a Poster session delivered in “speed geeking’ format. Speed geeking is a participation process used to quickly view a number of presentations within a fixed amount of time. For our event, several DLCs will exhibit tools, discuss benefits, and answer your questions. Attendees are assigned to a team and the team meets with each presenter in this fun, fast-paced format designed to ensure you get to see all the presentations. Come prepared to listen, learn and have some fun! Following the poster session, you will have the opportunity to identify those tools for which you want to hear more. Like all of these offerings, please register using the Atlas.mit.edu Learning Center Course Catalog.

RA Help Tip: Viewing the Atlas Learning Center Course Catalog
By Carole Trainor

As an instructor, I frequently access the Atlas Learning Center course catalog (http://web.mit.edu/training/catalog.html?sys=PS1 ) to view scheduled course offerings in the Administration > Sponsored Projects & Practices category. By default, the catalog view is ‘display by category’, which provides an effective way to view all related offerings, including Classroom, Web-Based resources and Learning Bundles (a variety of selected resources focused on a specific competency or skill). Classroom courses with scheduled offerings are clearly marked as Open, however this does not indicate whether there are seats available. If I am interested in the course, I need to click on the listing to view offerings and register if possible.

But of course, Research Administration encompasses skills far beyond one ‘category’, and I have come to realize that by focusing on the Administration > Sponsored Projects & Practices category exclusively, I am missing out on other training opportunities that would enhance my professional development. For that reason, I have recently opted to select ‘upcoming classes’ from the pull-down menu as my viewing option.

Viewing Upcoming Classes displays only classroom courses that are scheduled in the coming 45 days. Courses are listed under the date offered with details including, Title, Place, Instructor, and Seats Available. When viewing by upcoming classes, I find it helpful to refine the list by clicking on the All Subjects pull-down menu and selecting the checkbox for categories of interest to me. For example, I recently selected Administration, Business Skills & Knowledge, Career and Talent Development and Technology. This provides a shorter, more focused list.
It is helpful that this view displays how many seats are available without having to drill down to course details. However, if you see a course that you are interested in with **0 seats available**, you may still want to click on the listing to see if it will be offered on a future date beyond 45 days. We recommend selecting the **Add Me to the Waitlist** link, which can be helpful in the event of cancellations and in our planning for future sessions.

Finally, another feature that I like to use is **Share** a course link. This allows you to email a direct link to a specific course. For example, if I know my colleague is also interested in Goal Setting training, I will enter his/her email address and click the icon to share a direct link rather than direct them to search the catalog by category or title.

For more information on the Atlas Learning Center Course Catalog, see the MIT Knowledgebase [https://kb.mit.edu/confluence/display/rg/Learning+Center](https://kb.mit.edu/confluence/display/rg/Learning+Center)
Educational Offerings for Research Administrators
(registry via atlas.mit.edu –MIT Certificate required)

**Topics in Research Administration**

The Auditors are Coming!  
Speakers: Michael Moody, Michael Bowers, Kallie Firestone & Vesna Zaccheo  
Research Integrity

Mar 28

**RAP Sessions (Research Administration Practices)**

Reading a Solicitation  
Interactive Listening  
Managing & Preparing Large Proposals  
Financial Review (FRC) Tips and Resources  
Communicating with your PI (Webinar & Discussion)  
Understanding the data in SAP & KC

Feb 1  
Feb 14  
Mar 1  
April 5  
April 18  
May 23

**ToolTime**

Poster Session:  
DLC Solutions for Financial Reporting Tools

Mar 20

**Kuali Coeus Proposal Training**

System-To System Proposals (two 1/2-day sessions)  
Non-S2S Proposals (two 1/2-day sessions)  
System-To System Proposals (two 1/2-day sessions)

Feb 27-28  
Apr 10-11  
May 15-16

**Fundamentals of Sponsored Programs**

Intro to Unallowable Costs  
Post Award Administration  
Intro to fCOI in Research

Mar 14  
Apr 25  
May 9

**Financial Management & Post Award Administration**

Budget Training Session for FY19 Budget Cycle  
eRFP: Request for payment

Feb 2, 15  
online

Questions, email address is:  RA-Help@mit.edu  
RA Support website is:  research.mit.edu/mit-research-administration-hub