

July 10, 2017

Dear SPaRC Awards Committee:

RE: SPaRC Outstanding Service Award

Lisa Young is an outstanding member of the Prairie Research Institute Pre-Post Award Grants team and, we believe, is deserving of the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. Lisa began her career working at the Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS) in 2006 as a Grants and Contracts Specialist. She worked as a liaison between the ISGS Principal Investigators and the Office of Sponsored Programs, submitting proposals and providing grants management.

In 2010 she took a position as a Grants and Contracts Coordinator at the campus Grants and Contracts office. By accepting this position, Lisa took on sponsored research project management in a different role, advancing her knowledge of university policy and federal guidelines. She became a liaison between the departmental staff and the sponsor, reviewing awards, processing amendments and modifications, completing transaction audits and approvals, preparing sponsor invoices, and completing award closeouts.

In January of 2012, Lisa returned to the Institute as the Grants and Contracts Coordinator at the Illinois State Water Survey (ISWS). Obviously, her reputation as a knowledgeable and proficient research administrator carried forward from her previous positions, and Lisa was, and still is, well respected by the ISWS staff. She is extremely productive: from 2012-2015 ISWS annual grant expenditures totaled approximately \$8.6M per year, and Lisa submitted 73 proposals/pre-proposals in 2016 and was responsible for the management of 66 active grants in FY17. As shown by the additional letters of support, the ISWS staff appreciate all of the time and effort that she devotes to reviewing and submitting proposals and her skillful approach to grants management. In addition, in FY17, Lisa developed and delivered several well-attended PI information training sessions.

Lisa's impact is not limited to just one Survey: during the FY17 SPaRC'Ed Certification Series, she not only was a participant but was selected as a SPaRC'Ed Instructor, teaching courses on Proposal Preparation and Advanced Proposal Preparation. Lisa received her Illinois Certified Research Administration designation upon her course completion this past spring.

Last year the Prairie Research Institute initiated the reorganization of Research Administration at the Institute, including the Pre-Post Award Grants section. Lisa is a valuable asset to our Pre-Post Award team. Her knowledge of grants management and university policy and procedures is impressive along with her willingness to help others. Lisa has embraced the challenges that come with reorganization and has taken the necessary steps to learn something new and apply that knowledge to assist with the training process. Her contributions to the team have been instrumental in our reorganization efforts.

For the exemplary effort that Lisa exhibits each day and the numerous contributions that she has made to the State Surveys, Prairie Research Institute, and to the campus, it is our pleasure to nominate her for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award.

Sincerely,

*Margaret A. Morrison*

Assistant Director for Finance (PostAward)

Prairie Research Institute

*Wendy G. Harris*

Assistant Director for Administrative Services (PreAward)

Prairie Research Institute



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June 30, 2017

Office of Sponsored Programs and Research Compliance

RE: Nomination of Lisa Young for Outstanding Service Award

To whom it may concern:

Lisa Young and I have worked together since January 2012, over 5 years, at the Illinois State Water Survey (ISWS). I was on the search committee that recommended offering her the position. I have been with the ISWS since 1984 and currently am the Head of the Coordinated Hazard Assessment and Mapping Program (CHAMP) Section. The CHAMP Section typically has 5 to more than 10 active grants totaling over \$2 million. We have grants from multiple federal, state, and local agencies. One of Lisa's many duties is oversight of CHAMP grants from helping to create the budgets to close out.

Lisa reviews and interprets requests for proposals and identifies budget requirements. Lisa has excellent relations with staff at the Office of Sponsored Programs, she tracks proposal progress to make certain that proposals are submitted on time. During a project she provides oversight of expenditures and in particular she has expertise with the latest federal super circular. She monitors the accounts to ensure that principal investigators meet their obligations and advises investigators when expenditures are not keeping pace with timelines. She reviews staff salary obligations and assist with closing out accounts. She is remarkably diligent, versatile, thorough, meticulous, tactful, and informed. Lisa is by far the best grants manager I have ever working with. Lisa goes above and beyond to make sure that grants are properly set up and administered.

Lisa is always helpful, always friendly and approachable. She is well liked by staff. She goes out of her way to help coach staff who are submitting proposals and managing grants for the first time.

I highly recommend Lisa for the Outstanding Service Award.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sally McConkey".

Sally McConkey, P.E. CFM, D.WRE.  
Section Head  
Coordinated Hazard Assessment and Mapping Program  
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July 17, 2017

Dear SPaRC Outstanding Service Award Committee:

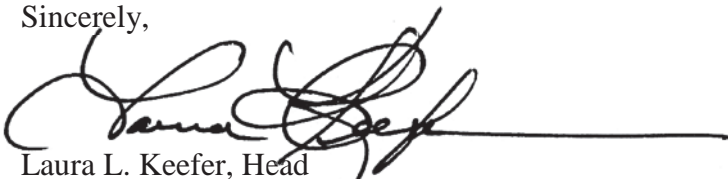
I am honored to be able to write a most heartfelt letter of support for the nomination of Lisa Young, PRI Sponsored Research Officer, to the SPaRC Committee's 2017 Outstanding Service Award. I have worked with Lisa since her arrival at the Illinois State Water Survey Division as a Principal Investigator, as well as, the last several years, Head of the Surface Water Hydrology & Hydraulics section. I learned many things from Lisa's predecessors regarding the processing and execution of grant proposals. However, her particular guidance, patience, immense knowledge and steady hand has, in my eyes, set the standard for outstanding service.

Lisa has immense knowledge through the entire grant process. Her experience in what are allowable grant expenditures has guided Water Survey principal investigators to write tighter budget justifications and better management of our successful grants. Since Lisa arrived I feel she has been running something akin to a perpetual P.I. training camp where she is also willing to answer your questions no matter how many times you've asked that same silly question. I have always appreciated how she monitors grants to be sure we're on schedule for deliverables and spending. As a section head this is invaluable information for managing staff.

Lisa is the only grants officer at the Water Survey and I can only imagine the number of grants she has shepherded, principal investigators new or experienced trained, managers notified of errant PIs, endless calls to Sponsored Research Office, coordinating multi-department proposals, staying on top of new rules or procedures, review of countless RFPs, and the list could go on and on. How she does all of this, keep her patience and professionalism is a wonder to me. But a professional she is and is the one we all run too for information, knowledge, and reassurance that we haven't completely bungled our proposals. She is one of the most dedicated people I've seen to make sure a proposal gets submitted on time in spite of ourselves. Just plain outstanding service!

I strongly urge the committee to seriously consider Lisa for this award. She has overcome serious obstacles in life and still provides us outstanding services in so many selfless ways. Her nomination by peers is great recognition of her service and my letter of support acknowledges that this service is deeply felt and recognized by the folks that have benefitted countless times. Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,



Laura L. Keefer, Head  
Surface Water Hydrology & Hydraulics Section  
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