

June 28, 2024

Dear Selection Committee,

It is with great pleasure that we nominate Myra Sully for the 2024 SPaRC Career Achievement Award. Throughout her distinguished career spanning nearly two decades at the University of Illinois, Myra has made substantial and sustained contributions to the field of research administration, demonstrating exceptional dedication, leadership, and an unwavering commitment to the advancement of our research community.

Myra began her journey at the University of Illinois in 2004 and has since held various pivotal roles within the Department of Animal Sciences. Her progression from Account Tech I to her current position as Assistant Head, Business & Strategic Planning, is a testament to her technical skills and unwavering dedication. Over the years, Myra has held positions such as Account Tech II, Staff Clerk, Accounting Associate, and Finance & Grants Analyst, before assuming her current role in 2020. This progression highlights her broad and deep understanding of financial and administrative operations, which has profoundly impacted research administration at Illinois. She has consistently enhanced the support structures that underpin our research endeavors in the Department of Animal Sciences.

In her role as Assistant Head, Business & Strategic Planning, Myra has excelled in administering financial, human resource, and administrative operations within the department to ensure compliance with state and federal laws as well as University policies. Myra has spearheaded the reorganization of support staff, consolidating their locations within the building and developing specialized roles tailored to meet specific requirements. This strategic restructuring has led to significant improvements in grant and procurement support, HR functions, and the overall quality of research conducted by our colleagues. Moreover, Myra successfully negotiated hybrid work arrangements for support staff, providing them with valuable focused time each week, which has enhanced their productivity and work quality.

Myra's financial acumen is particularly noteworthy. She manages the delicate balance between adhering to regulatory requirements and accommodating the dynamic needs of faculty and research programs. Her exceptional skill in financial management is evident in her oversight of all department funds, including state and federal appropriations, grants, contracts, gifts, indirect cost recovery, and self-supporting funds. Myra's proactive handling of a Federal Costing Audit exemplifies her capability to navigate complex regulatory landscapes while maintaining compliance and supporting the University's mission. Her strategic financial management has been instrumental in ensuring the success and sustainability of numerous research initiatives.

Beyond her official responsibilities, Myra's contributions to SPaRC and various campus committees have been invaluable. She has actively participated in SPaRC'ed Planning since 2019, contributed to the Campus HR Staffing Committee, and served on the Contracts & Customer Advisory Group. Her

involvement in these committees underscores her commitment to improving research administration practices and policies at the departmental, college, and University levels. Additionally, Myra has played a key role in the TEM Advisory and Source2Pay committees, further demonstrating her dedication to enhancing administrative processes and policies.

Myra's leadership extends to her role as a mentor and resource for faculty and staff. She assists faculty in identifying funding opportunities, preparing grants and contracts, and navigating post-award compliance requirements. Her ability to foster a collaborative and supportive environment has empowered many researchers to achieve their goals and advance their fields of study. This is particularly notable given the wide breadth of funding types garnered by faculty in Animal Sciences, spanning from unrestricted gifts to federal awards (e.g., NIH, NSF, DOD) and even those originating from international funding agencies. In all aspects of her position, Myra maintains a flexible mindset and uses a service-oriented approach to ensure the success of our research colleagues. In recognition of her outstanding contributions, Myra has received several awards, including the ACES Staff Award for Excellence and multiple certifications that highlight her expertise and commitment to professional development.

In conclusion, Myra Sully embodies the qualities that the SPaRC Career Achievement Award seeks to honor. Her exceptional career, characterized by significant and sustained contributions to research administration, has had a profound and lasting impact on the University of Illinois. We wholeheartedly endorse her nomination and believe she is a truly deserving candidate for this prestigious award.

Thank you for considering this nomination. Should you require any further information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Anna C. Dilger
Professor, Animal Sciences
Associate Head/Director of
Undergraduate Studies



Ryan N. Dilger
Professor, Animal Sciences
Chair/Director, Institutional Animal
Care and Use Committee



DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SCIENCES

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences
132 Animal Sciences Laboratory
1207 West Gregory Dr.
Urbana, IL 61801

July 29, 2024

Dear Selection Committee:

It is my distinct honor and privilege to nominate Myra Sully for the 2024 SPaRC Career Achievement Award. I have had the pleasure of working with Myra for the last 20 years. Myra has held several positions in our department during this time span. Although Myra has worn many hats within our department, one thing has never changed: If you need something, you go to Myra!

Myra began her employment with the Department of Animal Sciences in 2004 as extra help. Within a few months, she was hired as an Account Tech I and in the next 6 years she advanced through the roles of Account Tech II, Staff Clerk and Accounting Associate. After serving in the role of Accounting Associate for 5 years, she took on the role of Finance & Grants Analyst. In 2020, she assumed the role of Assistant Head, Business & Strategic Planning. In today's world, it is unusual for someone to begin in the role Myra did and advance all the way to the Assistant Head. This is not only a testament to her work ethic and desire to develop as a professional but also is very telling of the trust and support our department has had for her.

When Myra first began, I was a PhD student in the department. I remember her being a kind and positive person who always seemed willing to help. I was fortunate to be hired on to faculty following completion of my PhD and began to witness first hand all of the contributions Myra made towards supporting the research efforts of the department. This is when I first learned that if you needed something you go to Myra. Myra became our expert in administrative support for grant submissions before she even had the title of Finance & Grants Analyst. In 2020, Myra took assumed the duties of Assistant Head, Business & Strategic Planning. I was serving on our Departmental Faculty Advisory Committee (DFAC) at the time. It became quickly apparent that Myra had developed not only the technical and operational skillset to carry out administrative duties to facilitate research but she also had the leadership ability, vision, and personnel management skills to develop a skilled support staff team. Myra has been instrumental in developing and mentoring staff to serve in various capacities. Our department over time has transitioned from several support staff each being assigned a few faculty members to a much smaller team with centralized duties. Myra has been instrumental in providing vision for how this could happen and has been the primary point person for training the support staff in the various research supporting capacities ranging from grant submissions to purchasing to post-award support to HR support.

In June of this year, I was named the Interim Head of the Department of Animal Sciences. Once again, I was reminded: If you need something, you go to Myra! With the fiscal year coming to an end, Myra quickly got me up to speed on our department budget and helped me prepare budget documents and hiring plans for the college. Myra's knowledge of our departmental research operations is impressive. From hiring research farm managers, to allocating laboratory space, to conducting safety audits, to grant submissions, to grant expenditures, to research assistant and post-doc hires, and everything else, Myra is the go to person.

Myra has served the campus community by serving in various roles including: Campus HR Staffing Committee, SPaRC'ed Planning, TEM Advisory, Contracts & Customer Advisory, and OBFS/Cashier Cash Handling Training Group. Myra has been recognized by the College of ACES as she received the ACES Staff Award for Excellence in 2016.

In closing, I could not think of a more deserving recipient for the SPaRC Career Achievement Award than Myra Sully. She has devoted her career to serving the research efforts of the Department of Animal Sciences. Her contributions and impact on our department will be felt for many years to come.

Thank you for considering this nomination. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need any further information.

Sincerely,



Daniel W. Shike
Professor and Interim Head
Department of Animal Sciences