

July 23, 2021

Sponsored Programs and Research Compliance  
RE: SPaRC Outstanding Service Award

Dear Awards Committee:

It is my sincere honor to nominate Ashley Trimmell for the 2021 SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. In addition to efficiently managing the day-to-day needs of ca. 35 students and postdocs in the AMS Research Groups at Beckman for Professors Nancy Sottos and Jeff Moore, Ashley has proven herself a tremendous asset to the Beckman Institute administrative team. For example, because of her reliability and attention to detail, Ashley was chosen to work on a major inventory improvement project for the institute's expansive equipment list. Similarly, she assisted with fiscal year-end review during a time when the Beckman Business Affairs office needed help. These are just two examples that demonstrate her versatility and that she is our "go-to person" when important jobs need to be done well and independently.

Let me begin by explaining more about the Business Process Improvement project for inventory. This was a comprehensive project that included personnel from the [Business Process Improvement Shared Service office](#) and personnel from across the institute and campus who had expertise and/or some involvement with the Beckman inventory. This project evaluated all aspects of the inventory life cycle from procurement of an asset to removal of the asset from inventory. It proved to be a significant commitment of Ashley's time with over 40 hours of in-person meetings and additional work to be done in between meetings. Ashley served an invaluable role in seeing this project completed in a timely manner. Her expertise and commitment to improving the process and the Beckman Institute was invaluable.

In addition, Ashley took on a short-term assignment (about two months) to help the Beckman Business Affairs office. The business office was short staffed during fiscal year end and was in danger of not being able to process all the necessary transitions by the stated deadlines. Associate Director for Administration Kara Johnson wrote, "Ashley's experience and knowledge made her a natural choice to request help from as the business office knew that she would be able to jump right in and would ensure that the work was done correctly. Ashley readily accepted this challenge and did a great job." Fiscal year end is a very stressful time and Ashley handled this wonderfully. This is a tremendous example of Ashley's job knowledge, skillset, adaptability, and desire to help others.

Another key project where the Beckman Institute benefitted from Ashley's involvement was in producing a winning proposal from the NIH in support of construction of the new Tissue Engineering and Phenotyping Core Facility. Beckman Institute and Cancer Center at Illinois leaders and staff teamed up to develop this proposal, and it received a perfect score from the review team. Ashley created and reviewed several of the proposal documents. The total award to Beckman

and CCIL is \$3.3M, and construction is set to begin this month. It is efforts like this that show her tremendous versatility.

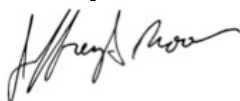
For nearly a decade Ashley has reliably and efficiently met the demands of two very large research groups. This has included research groups directed by Professors Scott White (dec), me, and most recently, Nancy Sottos. The total annual research expenditures of these groups exceed \$3.5M. Many of the tasks Ashley handles – from budgeting and managing research funds to preparing proposals and reports – are the same that would be done by an assistant professor, and she consistently executes them efficiently and quite independently. I have come to trust Ashley's judgement and seek her advice and input.

Her role as Sr. Coordinator of Research Programs also requires that she handle the daily needs of students and postdocs in the large, research-active groups of Professors Sottos and Moore, and formerly White. She is responsible for managing appointments, procurements, travel, calendar, scheduling of visitors and postdoc candidates, shipping, grant applications, sponsored research awards including reporting requirements, patents, manuscripts, and hundreds of recommendation letters annually (most postdocs apply to >50 academic positions). She takes care of all group members from the undergraduate researchers to the senior postdocs – and they appreciate her! Whenever group members give talks, Ashley is always acknowledged in recognition of her patronage for the services she provides on their behalf.

Ashley's service is constantly evolving, and she does not resist assignments that are handed to her. In 2020, she stepped in and helped with Professor Charles Schroeder's huge NSF STC proposal. Few others could have reliably helped orchestrate that huge project as well as Ashley did. It is a pleasure to see her accept these requests that are challenging and respond with the highest level of professionalism and work quality. She has a team-oriented attitude and accepts assignments with a determination to do her absolute best. For all the work that she has been tasked, I have never once heard her complain or stress out. She is a professional and she acts like one in every experience. Ashley's talents position her well to serve new roles in the coming years because she continues to seek ways to learn new skills and constantly improve.

I am grateful to have such a skilled and productive individual as Ashley as part of the Moore Group and Beckman Institute team. It is no understatement to say that the tremendous research achievements of the Moore Group and my own professional accomplishments during this highly productive decade would never have occurred without Ashley's dedicated and expert talents. Day-in and day-out, her work churns on behind the scenes with little recognition. Awarding her the 2021 SPaRC Outstanding Service Award would bring Ashley the honor and recognition she never seeks but genuinely deserves.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey S. Moore

Director, Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology