

July 29, 2022

Re: Nomination for SPaRC Outstanding Service Award, Haruka Brown

Dear Selection Committee,

When I started my position as the Assistant Head for Administration in the Mechanical Science and Engineering Department in FY20, the department was significantly short staffed at the time. The Research Administration area had experienced two failed searches and had been operating at a 50% staffing capacity for over eight months. As a high-volume department, it is due to Haruka Brown's efforts and extreme dedication to her position that MechSE's research administration area was able to not only continue functioning, but also maintain previous service levels during this stressful period. She played a vital role in ensuring that all funding agency and university requirements were fulfilled to meet department and faculty needs. Proposal submission levels remained consistent, and Haruka's commitment to the research administration area was and continues to be highly admirable.

Haruka Brown has served the MechSE Research Administration area for over nine years and has quickly been promoted during this time from a Grants and Contracts Specialist through the ranks to her current role as the Research Administration Manager. In the past two years, she has brought on two Grants and Contracts Specialists/Coordinators new to the field and has continuously mentored them, most notably remotely through COVID-19 right after they were hired. I routinely receive praise and gratitude from faculty for Haruka's high level of service, guidance on proposal submission, and tireless commitment to her work.

Outside of the department, Haruka also routinely demonstrates her commitment to the UIUC research administration community. She is multi-time presenter for SPaRC'Ed, and this past year she presented on the NSF lifecycle. She routinely serves on outside search committees for research administration positions, most recently for the Engineering Shared Services Department. Haruka has also recently lent staff to the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department to help train new research administration hires there.

MechSE's Research Administration area is highly successful under Haruka Brown's leadership, and her outstanding service to the field, both departmentally and community wide are exemplary. I am truly grateful to have Haruka as part of the MechSE management team, and I cannot support her enough for this SPaRC Award Nomination for Outstanding Service.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Seymour

Assistant Head for Administration

July 18, 2022

Dear SPaRC Awards Committee:

It is with my full and genuine support that I write this letter to nominate Ms. Haruka Brown for the 2022 SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. I have known Haruka since March of 2012 when she started in the Mechanical Science and Engineering's business office. From her first date of employment, she exhibited the highest levels of customer service to all who needed her assistance. It was quickly recognized that these skills would be best deployed in a research administration capacity of the department, so she moved from the business office to the grants office. Haruka adapted quickly to the face-paced, meticulous role of research administrator.

In the 7 years I worked side-by-side with Haruka, I experienced having the best co-worker. She is always compassionate, kind, reasonable, helpful, and upbeat. Haruka never hesitates to offer her help if she sees someone in need of it. She puts in long hours and sacrifices personal time to make sure that her customers were taken care of. Haruka uses her resources in order to provide the best services.

Haruka is an asset to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign research community. Not only does she strive for perfection in her own work, but she also coaches her staff to do the same. Haruka leads by example, guiding the other research administrators in her department to hold themselves to as high of standard as Haruka's accustomed to keeping. Haruka has also taught SPaRC'Ed classes and served on committees, which expands her impact on research administrators throughout our campus.

It is for these reasons and many more that I strongly recommend Ms. Haruka Brown for the 2022 SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. I would be delighted to discuss Ms. Brown further if you feel the need to do so.

Respectfully,



Yvonne Shaw
Assistant Director of Finance
Email: shaw14@illinois.edu
Phone: 217.244.2220

July 29th, 2022

Dear SPaRC Awards Committee:

I am pleased to provide this letter of support of Haruka Brown's nomination for the 2022 SPaRC Outstanding Service Award, in recognition for her outstanding service in support in research administration at Illinois.

I have been the Proposal Coordinator for Mechanical Science and Engineering have been working with Haruka regularly for over 7 years. During our time working on proposal submissions together, Haruka ensures that we work collaboratively together especially when there are unique and complex scenarios that we run into time and time again. She has an eye for detail and is always willing to listen to feedback. Haruka strives to send proposals to SPA that have been reviewed thoroughly and are as clean as possible. She handles the demands of the heavy volume and deadlines with such a great attitude.

Haruka is a caring, kind, and helpful individual. I know that she is someone that will put you in a good mood just by speaking with her. She never hesitates to offer help to others and takes the time to really dig into a situation to confirm a proposal is going in the right direction.

In summary, Haruka is very deserving of this award and I am grateful to get to work with her. She has a true dedication to her work and is an asset to research administration. For these reasons and others, I strongly recommend Haruka Brown for the 2022 SPaRC Outstanding Service Award.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Fellmann

Stephanie Fellmann
Assistant Director, Proposals
Sponsored Programs Administration

July 27, 2022

Dear SPaRC Awards Committee:

It is with full support that I write this letter to nominate Ms. Haruka Brown for the 2022 SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. Haruka has 9 years in research administration and has become the Manager of the MechSE Research Administration Office within the last three years, which has led to extensive research administration experience.

While I was at SPA Post-Award, I worked with Haruka several times. I always knew I would have no problem reviewing her assigned awards as she had proven to be very knowledgeable and thorough. In fact, when we had close-out days, we would often look for MechSE awards for easy closeouts.

Haruka was a big factor in my decision to move from SPA to MechSE. I knew I would continue to gain a wealth of knowledge from someone that seemed to know the ins and outs of research administration. And boy, was I right! Even after three years of working with Haruka, I am still surprised at all the knowledge Haruka has retained over the years. In fact, I can bring a unique situation to her, and she would immediately remember that a particular faculty member had a similar situation 4 years ago!

Like Haruka's knowledge, her grace, patience, calmness, customer service, and dedication are always top notch. While she leads by example by providing excellent customer service and strives for her staff to provide the same level of assistance, accuracy, and dependability for our assigned faculty, she also instills the needed calmness when last minute proposals appear on our desk, patience when explaining policies to faculty, and the ability to have fun while doing our job.

Faculty that are no longer assigned to Haruka and other employees throughout campus continue to reach out to Haruka because they know they will receive accurate information and the best customer service. Whether Haruka has a full plate or an overflowing plate of tasks, you will always receive a kind, responsive, and thoroughly thought-out response.

Although this letter provides some insight to how Haruka is deserving of the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award, the letter does not scratch the surface of how great Haruka truly is.

Respectfully,



Holly Pankow

Senior Research Administration Coordinator

Mechanical Science and Engineering

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Professor Tonghun Lee

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27th June, 2022

Outstanding Service Award Selection Committee

To the Award Selection Committee,

It is with great pleasure to be recommending Ms. Haruka Brown for the Outstanding Service Award. Over the years, she has shown competence and dedication at the highest level and I strongly support her for the award. I consider Haruka to be an absolutely invaluable asset for our department and her duties to be intricately linked with our national standing in engineering as one of the top mechanical engineering departments in the world. In so doing, she supports our entire school of engineering in maintaining its stellar reputation.

Needless to say that her job entails exactitude and responsibilities that are incredibly demanding and which can be incredibly stressful. She has to deal with constant deadlines and ever increasing number of proposals while also managing ongoing accounts and faculty spending. There is always large sums of money at stake and no mistake can be tolerated in her sphere. In this kind of climate, I consider three attributes of Haruka which stand out. They are as follows:

1. **Competence in her work:** In my personal interactions with her and in executing very complex center type proposals, she has never failed to deliver in time or compromise on quality, ever. Some of these proposals required execution at the last minute with complicated instructions. They all came through within the required timeframe as needed in her hands and with the highest quality. Furthermore, once the grants were in place there were many other complications such as cost share management, re-budgeting, change of scope, change of deliverables etc. which required competent interaction with the funding agencies. I have come to trust her judgement and her expertise to know that she will always come through and that kind of competency is at the foundation of not only my research program but for many others in our department.
2. **Attention to Detail:** I have always been surprised and grateful for her attention to detail in all my research grants and relevant efforts... and I am only a small fraction of people she manages. My grants often intertwine with each other and have vastly different and complex requirements. It would have been near impossible to care for all the details had I not had help from Haruka in managing the grants and reminders on many tasks in the management of the research program. With so many things to keep track of, I rely on Haruka to ensure that spending stays on track. In

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so doing, I have really appreciated her interest and understanding of all the details in my grants that make all the difference.

3. **Positive Attitude and Helpfulness:** Perhaps her most outstanding character is that she is able to accomplish all the difficult aspects of her work with a really positive attitude and eagerness to help beyond what is asked of her. This enables not just a better environment but also the foundation for us (her and PI) to creatively look for solutions in difficult situations which increases efficiency in our work. In many occasions when I thought the situation was very tough, Haruka has exemplified a calm and focused attitude in trying to find a solution that will work. She is always engaged in this manner and it is what makes her extremely effective in her work and such a pleasure to work with.

In short, I think Haruka is an incredible asset for our campus in her ability, attention to detail, and a positive attitude to make sure things are resolved. I am grateful that she is part of the MECHSE team and strong support her candidacy for this award in showing our appreciation and support of her excellent work.

Thank you very much,

Please reach out to me for further information if needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tonghun Lee', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tonghun Lee

Professor

Department of Mechanical Science and Engineering

College of Engineering, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign