



University of Illinois  
Electrical and Computer Engineering  
3108 Micro and Nanotechnology Laboratory  
208 N. Wright Street, Urbana, IL 61801

Kent D. Choquette  
Able Bliss Professor of Engineering  
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July 15, 2019

Dear SPaRC Awards Committee:

This letter is written in support of Mr. Scott Corum for an Outstanding Service Award at the University of Illinois. Scott has the title of Sponsored Research Coordinator and works in the Business office of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department. For me, Scott is my most important partner to support my external research proposals to pursue cutting edge research to educate the next generation of engineers while insuring that all proposal requirements and regulations are obeyed. Scott's knowledge and experience, his ability to provide critical input on a wide diversity of topics, and his willingness to complete his tasks with a minimum of prior notice and often beyond the hours of a normal working day, are attributes that make Scott deserving of an Outstanding Service Award.

As a Faculty member in ECE, I have many obligations and responsibilities to my students and to the University. One of these is attracting external funding to support graduate student research. Such funding can come from a wide diversity of sources and all such funding will have detailed rules and requirements that must be fulfilled. Due to the competition for funding, often the minutia details of the rules become a "convenient" way to disqualify proposals. Thus Scott applying his knowledge and experience to insure compliance with all of the nontechnical, but absolutely critical proposal requirements, enables me to focus on the technical aspects of the proposal.

Given the many requirements that funding agencies demand, it often seems to be a complex and nearly overwhelming task to prepare a research proposal. Again, this is where Scott's efforts above and beyond the ordinary expectations have a critical impact. With his experience, I can ask for budgets, budget justifications, and many other documents that are necessary with a minimum of input; in fact, he often advises me on how to optimize proposal budgets. For example, some agencies will not allow tuition to budgeted, so Scott will find to best manner to fully support a graduate student under the program's regulations.

But perhaps the biggest contribution that Scott brings is his patience with faculty and his ability to drop what he is doing and immediately help with a proposal at the last minute. Calls for proposals can come out at any time, often have near-term deadlines (that typically happen at the busiest times or most inconvenient times!), and so Faculty are working on proposals at the same time as teaching. Thus I nearly always find myself turning to Scott with no prior warning and a lot of challenging and he happily gets right into it! His flexibility, agility, and patience with faculty are critical for the successful creation of a proposal. Scott has demonstrated repeatedly that he will work until a proposal is done before it's deadline, even if that means working past 5 pm. Finally, when a

proposal becomes a research program, he continues to provide financial and other input for program reports.

In summary, Scott Corum has made many critical contributions to my research programs through his work on proposal preparation and support. Scott's extensive knowledge of the rules and requirements of funding proposals has allowed myself and other ECE Faculty to successfully pursue funding for graduate student education and research. Scott's knowledge and experience, his ability to provide critical financial and other input, and his willingness to complete his tasks with a minimum of prior notice and often beyond the hours of a normal working day, are attributes that I feel make Scott Corum deserving of an Outstanding Service Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kent D. Choquette". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'K'.

Able Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering



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July 11, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to give my strongest possible support to Mr. Scott Corum's nomination for the Sponsored Programs and Research Compliance (SPaRC) Outstanding Service Award. I have known Scott since he joined ECE Illinois in May 2016 as a Sponsored Research Project Coordinator.

I have worked with Scott in numerous proposal submissions to government funding agencies such as NSF, DOE, and ARPA-E. Such submissions are very complex, involving multiple program investigators across several institutions, and require an incredible amount of work not just on writing the technical part of the proposal but in preparing all the ancillary documents, including the budget. In every instance Scott's assistance in preparing these documents and making sure everything was in compliance has been key; I can say that without him I would have not been able to submit many of these proposals in time. He is an extremely professional person with an incredible attention to detail. He is always very responsive and completes all his tasks to get a proposal ready for submission well in advanced of the deadline. He is also amazing at communicating with me throughout the whole process. At a personal level, Scott is also great to interact with. He is always very friendly and calm, which is something I greatly appreciate as submitting proposals is always stressful because of the obvious time constraints.

I have always believed that great things happen at the University of Illinois not just because we have brilliant students and faculty, but because the support staff is outstanding; without them we would not be able to excel the way we do. Scott is a clear example of how amazing our staff is and how dedicated they are to their work. To sum up, Scott has my strongest possible support for the SPaC award.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need for information about Scott.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A. D. Domínguez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

Dr. Alejandro D. Domínguez-García

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
Electrical and Computer Engineering Building  
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Urbana, IL 61801



Peter D. Dragic  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
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217-333-8399  
[p-dragic@illinois.edu](mailto:p-dragic@illinois.edu)

July 8, 2019

Dear SPaRC Awards Committee,

With this letter I would like to offer my full support for and nomination of Scott Corum for a SpaRC Outstanding Service Award. Scott is an irreplaceable asset to the Department of ECE, and whose selfless dedication to supporting Research Administration has been key to its continued success. I have known Scott for many years now and have worked closely with him on developing and maintaining several research projects. He has seamlessly guided me through the submission of 3 proposals (with ECE as the lead unit) just in the last few months, not to mention guiding the maintenance of currently funded projects. Scott also provided invaluable assistance with an NSF proposal I submitted through another unit in May. In the latter case, Scott stepped in to guide us through several ‘hiccups’ encountered in the submission process. Scott is key to helping ECE faculty develop budgets, plans, proposals, and upon funding, management of the program, all at a very personal level. As this is only my own experience, and given the size of the ECE Department, Scott’s impact clearly is wide-reaching. Scott has been the key to success in securing and managing funding and always is able to make the proposal preparation process very smooth and easy. I can confidently say that all of us who have worked with him owe him a deep debt of gratitude.

Awarding Scott the Outstanding Service Award would go far in recognizing and reinforcing his outstanding work, his dedicated service to ECE and the University, and his numerous achievements. I hope that Scott will continue to act in his current capacity in the future, especially since it affords an exceptionally high degree of confidence in the proposal and contract execution process. While only so much can be said in a recommendation letter such as this one, I can summarize that Scott is a glowing example of an individual that fully embodies the spirit of the

SpaRC Outstanding Service Award. As such, I very strongly support Scott Corum for the Outstanding Service Award and I invite the Committee members to contact me directly if they should have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter D. Dragic", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter D. Dragic

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
Electrical and Computer Engineering Building  
306 North Wright Street  
Urbana, IL 61801



July 11, 2019

Selection Committee  
SPaRC Career Achievement Award  
University of Illinois

Dear Selection Committee,

It is my pleasure to write to you in support of the nomination of Scott Corum for the SPaRC Career Achievement Award. Let me preface my comments below by saying that Scott's sustained level of excellence in his responsibilities, and his service to the faculty and students of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE), make him an outstanding candidate for this prestigious Award.

Before describing Scott's accomplishments and service in more detail, let me briefly introduce myself. I have been a member of the UIUC ECE faculty for 40 years and, during this time, have come to know literally hundreds of individuals who are members of our nonacademic staff. In my opinion, these individuals are the heart of our University and I am proud to be associated with each of them. Over the years, several stand out and Scott is one of them.

I met Scott approximately two years ago after he had assumed the critical role of working with faculty and the Federal agencies to prepare budgets, Statements of Work (SOWs), proposals, spending schedules, and numerous other documents necessary for obtaining funding from the government. Let me say at this point that Scott is also responsible for interfacing with companies as well, but my experience in working with him has involved seeking Federal support. It was evident immediately that Scott is a person who consistently works at a level "above and beyond the call of duty". As one example, my students and I had been (and are) conducting work for NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in California and, for various reasons, budgeting and scheduling with JPL's Contracts Office was problematic to the point that the program might fail. I was thrilled when Scott took the initiative to contact the Head of the JPL contracting office and worked collaboratively in providing all of the required information. I cannot express to you the impact that he has had on the success of this program. He continues to this day in proactively working with not only JPL but other sponsors as well to ensure that all budgetary and technical information is supplied to the sponsor. This level of effort and his concern for serving faculty and students are extraordinary- rarely have I seen an individual work "outside the box" to this degree, to the benefit of others in the Department.

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I could mention other specific instances in which Scott has served the ECE Department in a way that is well above the norm, but suffice it to say that we are fortunate to have him, and others like him, at UIUC. I urge you to recognize his efforts, attitude, and initiative by naming him to the next class of SPaRC Career Achievement Award recipients. Many thanks for your time and best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. G. Eden'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

J. G. Eden  
Intel Alumni Endowed Chair Emeritus  
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
University of Illinois

July 13, 2019

Dear SPaRC Outstanding Service Award Committee:

I write this letter to offer my strongest support for Mr. Scott Corum's nomination for the SPARC Outstanding Service Award. I have known Scott for about 5 years now. During this period I have been impressed with how dedicated and professional he is, representing some of the best service that I have encountered at Illinois.

My first interactions with Scott occurred even prior to his move to ECE, when he was with the University's OSP. For a faculty member, dealing with the campus-wide OSP office could be quite daunting, especially when working on quick turn-around proposals. Whenever we reached out to him, Scott was always ready to help and was singularly responsible for facilitating several last minute submissions. His pleasant disposition, in addition to his expert handling of the various processes, quickly made him the goto person for us. So when we heard he was moving to the ECE Business Office, we were thrilled.

Over the last three years that he has been with the department I, and several of my colleagues in the power group, have worked very closely with Scott on a number of significant projects. In all these projects Scott has always stepped up to do more than what is required, making us feel like he was personally invested in our success. Whenever we alerted him to a potential opportunity, he would quickly distill down the major requirements from the call for proposals and share with the team. He would also tap into his experience from his OSP days to share best practices and tips. He deftly turned around budgets, and helped with cost justifications and other supporting documents. In multi-PI proposals, he communicated effectively with all relevant parties, pulled together the various pieces required from everyone and diligently went through a checklist of all requirements helping to catch potential issues with our proposals in a timely manner. I have to say Scott has been instrumental in us winning a number of impactful grants, contributing substantially to our group's research productivity. In fact, he has helped relieve us of so much of the burden of preparing large proposals that we are now submitting more of these. I firmly believe that this will result in a significant uptick in research funding for the department.

I know Scott's work is demanding since he serves a large number of faculty in the Department, but you couldn't tell this based on the calm and professional manner in which he responds to all queries. I have also observed how well he works with his colleagues in the business office, making what could be messy workflow seem flawless and invisible to us, his clients. Scott represents the kind of support that every faculty wishes to have. Therefore, I wholeheartedly support Scott's nomination for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. I would be happy to share more details about how Scott has helped our group and why I think he is the ideal candidate for this recognition if the committee would like to contact me directly.

Sincerely yours,



Kiruba S. Haran, Associate Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering



## Bioacoustics Research Laboratory

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BRL Web Site: www.brl.uiuc.edu

July 12, 2019

RE: Support letter of Scott Corum for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my great pleasure and honor to provide this supporting letter about Scott Corum for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. Scott serves as the Sponsored Research Coordinator in the ECE Business Office and has been a necessary, productive and dependable asset for my research activities over the years. The development of a research application requires two key components, both of which must receive high evaluation scores by the funding agency's review process to stand a chance to be ultimately funded. Those key components are the research problem being proposed and the business arguments needed to support the complexities of the proposed research.

For those of us who actively write research proposals to Federal agencies (like NIH, NSF, Army, etc), it goes without saying that our attention is not towards the business intricacies of what each funding agency requires, and much more recently the business intricacies of what University requires. This is particularly true during the time when we are developing the research specific aims and supportive text for the application. Over the past more that four decades (I started as a Faculty member in 1975) of being an active Faculty member of the ECE Department, I have depended enormously on the smart, competent and dedicated ECE Business Office staff to guide me with the budgetary intricacies for each of my application. In my opinion, Scott is the 'crème de la crème' of the outstanding folks who have come before him.

Currently I view myself successful with research funding (3 NIH R01 grants and an Army STTR) because Scott knowledgably dealt with the business intricacies in a professional and open manor. I judge Scott to be a member of our successfully funded team. His outstanding service to us Faculty that I have personally witnessed has made Scott the "go-to" person with virtually any grant related question. I find him always willing to assist with a smile and often goes that next step so that I can understand why that particular intricate process is needed and/or required, thus making me a member of the informed team that then helps me frame the text of an application appropriately, likely one of the important reasons for the successful funding record.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'W. D. O'Brien, Jr.'.

William D. O'Brien, Jr., PhD  
Donald Biggar Willet Professor Emeritus in Electrical and Computer Engineering  
Research Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
Research Professor of Bioengineering  
Director, Bioacoustics Research Laboratory



## COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

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2120 Electrical and Computer Engineering Building, MC-702  
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Urbana, IL 61801-2991

**Michael Oelze**  
Associate Head for Graduate Affairs

June 26, 2019

**Re: SPARC Outstanding Service Award recommendation: Scott Corum**

Dear Awards Committee,

It is my great pleasure to recommend Mr. Scott Corum to receive the SPARC Outstanding Service Award. I have worked with Scott over the last several years in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE). Scott has to deal with a large number of faculty from diverse backgrounds submitting proposals to a diverse group of institutions. This is done successfully and with great efficiency on a constant and consistent basis due to the professionalism that Scott exhibits every single day. The success of our programs here in ECE depend on folks like Scott and we would undoubtedly be less successful without a person of Scott's caliber.

Scott has helped me with a large number of proposals submitted through ECE. Some of these proposals had to be submitted at the last second, but Scott was able to pull everything together to successfully make things happen. Last year, I submitted a proposal to the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) that was a large collaborative effort between Illinois, the University of California at San Diego and the University of California at San Francisco. This was a large effort with a lot of moving pieces and a short time frame. Illinois was the primary lead on the proposal. I never had a single concern about getting the proposal through because I knew that Scott was working with me and knowing his abilities and professionalism gave me the confidence to attempt such a large proposal. While the proposal did not make it to the final round of funding, Scott was instrumental in facilitating the successful submission of the application. I feel more confident in putting together large interdisciplinary proposal in the future, knowing that I have Scott in my corner.

In summary, it is evident that Scott has made essential contributions to the ECE department and many have grown to rely on him. He is well-deserving of the recognition that the SPARC Outstanding Service Award would provide. I am pleased to give Mr. Scott Corum my highest recommendation for this award.

Sincerely,



Michael L. Oelze  
Professor and Associate Head for Graduate Affairs,  
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
Professor, Carle-Illinois College of Medicine  
Beckman Institute of Advanced Science and Technology  
The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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Peter W. Sauer  
Grainger Chair Professor  
217-333-0394, 217-333-1162 fax  
psauer@illinois.edu

July 2, 2019

To: 2019 UIUC SPaRC Awards Committee

On behalf of the Power and Energy Systems Area of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, I am very pleased to provide this letter of support and recommendation of Mr. Scott Corum for your use in considering him for a SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. Scott stands out as a person of high integrity, superb performance, and pleasant personality. In over 40 years of my working with UIUC staff, few have been as responsive, punctual and accurate in the management of the financial accounts associated with our grants, gifts, and contracts. What is remarkable is that he has left this same impression with faculty that have only been here for six months!

His knowledge of the differences in processing and managing gift funds versus contract research funds is profoundly important in our area. In the gift area, he has responded to requests in our Power Affiliates Program, our Grainger CEME effort, and our Power Systems Engineering Research Center (PSERC) programs. This last program is complicated because it involves corporate gift accounts, which are used as seed funding to obtain much larger federal contract grants. Scott has also facilitated our awards with the DOE, ARPA-E, NSF, NASA, and other sources managed by the Information Trust Institute (ITI).

In many cases Scott has responded with very short deadlines and complex situations. He has produced project budgets, with appropriate matching and cost sharing funds as required and helped us be competitive in each case. Most importantly, he has also kept us within federal, state, and university requirements in the budget specification and spending limitations. His intimate knowledge of the grants and contracts processes and requirements helps us to be productive and able to obtain major funding support for research and education.

Scott is especially patient with new faculty members who have just started their jobs. He guides them through any particular requirements stated in the guidelines and offers his past experiences with the various agencies. Considering how new PIs sometimes have little or no exposure to some funding agencies, his service is absolutely crucial for them to secure their first few grants.

In fact, among all the administrative staff members with whom we have interacted at Illinois, Scott stands out for the efficiency, effectiveness and diligence in his work. He is clearly within the top 1% of these staff personnel. Scott's outstanding performance richly deserves the recognition given by the UIUC SPaRC Award. We enthusiastically give him our highest recommendation for this recognition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Peter W. Sauer'.

Peter W. Sauer

Grainger Chair Professor of ECE and also on behalf of Professors Subhonmesh Bose, Philip T. Krein, George Gross, Kiruba Haran, Alejandro Dominguez-Garcia, and Arijit Banerjee plus the staff, visitors, and students of the Power and Energy Systems Area

## **COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING**

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**José E. Schutt-Ainé**  
Professor  
Tel: 217 244-7279  
e-mail: [jesa@illinois.edu](mailto:jesa@illinois.edu)

July 10, 2019

Dear Award Committee,

It is my pleasure to support the nomination of **Scott Corum** for the *SParc Outstanding Service Award*. I have worked with Scott during the past few years and can attest to his high level of professionalism and efficiency. The preparation of proposals is a central and important task for ECE faculty which requires substantial planning in data collection and guideline awareness. Assistance from an expert is not only welcome but regarded as a necessity. As a sponsored Research Coordinator, Scott has demonstrated an outstanding level of awareness of proposal guidelines as well as consistency in the high quality of preparation of the proposals. From my perspective, his involvement in the process has made proposal writing a much more pleasant experience. His efforts have been an important contribution to my research and to the ECE Department. I thus fully support his nomination for the *Sparc Award*.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,



Jose E. Schutt-Aine  
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

July 15, 2019

Dear SPaRC Outstanding Service Award Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and its faculty and staff to nominate Scott Corum for the 2019 SPaRC Outstanding Service Award.

Scott joined the University in August of 2010 as an Academic Hourly. In November of 2011 he became a Visiting Specialist. This position transitioned into a permanent position in May of 2012. In September of 2013 Scott was hired by SPA as a Proposal Coordinator, and I was lucky enough to bring him into the ECE department in May of 2016. Scott's current position is that of the department's Sponsored Research Coordinator.

Scott's main function in the department is that of coordinating proposal submissions. Scott submits approximately 90 proposals per year, totaling approximately \$50 million dollars. These figures don't include budget modifications, NDA's, AOR's, TTA's etc. However, it isn't the quantity of the proposals that Scott submits that stands out, it is the quality. Scott's work is impeccable. Scott came to the department with much knowledge of proposal submissions due to his Coordinator position at SPA. He brought to the department an up close and personal view of proposal requirements, sponsor systems, and potential issues with submissions.

In addition to the objective knowledge that Scott has, he also truly cares that a submission is in the absolute best shape it can be in before submission. He truly wants the PI's to succeed. ECE currently manages \$36.2 million in anticipated dollars, and Scott is a huge contributor to that success.

What I would like to point out to the committee is that Scott's Coordinator position is extremely broad. Scott's duties don't stop at proposal submissions. Scott updates the departmental web page with funding opportunities, is our go-to for pulling extremely useful reports from Web-Intelligence, manages the faculty unrestricted gifts, performs budget transfers, cost transfers, and labor redistributions, and maintains the department's revolving fund.

As Scott's direct supervisor, I have great confidence that I can rely on Scott to work efficiently and effectively with the faculty and sponsored research administration to solve any issues that arise. Scott is responsible, reliable, approachable, and has great patience when needed. These attributes, and others, make him an extremely strong candidate for this award.

Also included in this submission are letters of support for Scott from many of the faculty members with whom he works. Their testimonies support my opinion that Scott is most deserving of the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Christina Wilson  
Assistant Director, Sponsored Project Administration

