What’s New in Research Administration

Furthering International Research Administration Collaborations

For many years now, faculty and investigators have been collaborating with partners far and wide. International research collaborations take place every day. Stanford has 143 active international subawards to 72 subrecipients in 30 countries on six continents! In addition, Stanford has activities in more than 120 countries.

What does this mean for OSR? Making connections and building relationships with our international research administration colleagues is more important than ever.

In August, OSR hosted Esther Kritzinger, a research administrator from Stellenbosch University in South Africa. She came to Stanford via the NCURA International Research Administration Fellowship. During her two-week visit, she met with research administrators across campus (both central and department staff), toured labs, and shared information about research administration at her University. We also learned a lot about South Africa in the process! It was exciting to host our second fellowship recipient – OSR hosted its first fellow from Sweden’s Karolinska Institute in 2009.

Also in August, OSR hosted a research administration delegation from Peking University in China. Attendees were senior administrators from the Office of Scientific Research, including its Chief for the Division of Overseas Projects. Our discussion topics ranged from day-to-day procedures to electronic systems to interdisciplinary research.

Following the visit by Peking University, OSR’s Katherine Ho, Executive Director, and Tim Reuter, Director of Post-Award, were invited to present at the International Research Administration Symposium hosted by Peking University. Many productive discussions and presentations took place about proposals and awards, financial management of sponsored research, and compliance. There were more than 100 attendees from China, the U.S., Europe and Australia. In addition to learning about the practices of institutions around the globe, Katherine and Tim made new connections with administrators with whom they will work to not only facilitate international collaborations, but also share research administration best practices with.

I used to be Snow White, but I drifted. – Mae West

I have never been hurt by what I have not said. – Calvin Coolidge

There’s nothing wrong with being shallow as long as you’re insightful about it. – Dennis Miller

Do not worry about avoiding temptation. As you get older, it will avoid you. – Joey Adams
Meet YANI ZHANG, Senior Research Accountant

If we started the clock on Yani’s “Stanford time” when she came here from China as a student’s spouse in 1989, she would almost be celebrating her silver anniversary! Her career at Stanford began in 1991 as an admin. associate in Geophysics. Before joining OSR as a research accountant in 2001, Yani also worked in Statistics, Physics – where she supported two Nobel Prize winners – and Chemical Engineering. Promoted to sr. accountant serving the School of Medicine in 2004, she’s now an OSR fixture. To balance out her analytical side, Yani flexes her creative muscles as a gifted sketch artist and painter (REALLY – stay tuned for the first Yani gallery show right here in OSR!). She’s also an avid swimmer and HIP enthusiast and loves to read and watch movies (classic dramas on both counts, please!). Yani always has a welcoming smile, so stop by and say hi when you’re in our neck of the woods.

Meet BRIAN DEL BONO, Contract and Grant Officer

As a “local boy” born and raised in San Carlos, Brian has been a die-hard Stanford fan since he was knee-high to a grasshopper, cheering on every Cardinal sports team in existence. Perhaps it was kismet, then, that he came to Stanford fresh out of college (just 3 years ago), landing in OSR as a contract and grant associate. He has quickly made his mark, having already been promoted to contract and grant officer (yeah, we think we’ll keep him). Brian lives the good life in the City with his fiancée, fully savoring an eclectic, cosmopolitan life of restaurants, festivals, street fairs, Giants games, exercising in the parks, quick jaunts to wine country…are you jealous yet? (And just so you know, he does his bit as a member of the Stanford Commute Club.) His job here must be pretty fun to compete with all that! In fact, it is! Brian really enjoys supporting H&S with its foundation and non-profit grants, and we have it on good authority that the feeling is entirely mutual!

The Last Word

A note from Russell Brewer

As you may have noticed by the articles in this quarter’s newsletter, OSR is very active internationally. It got me thinking about one of the things I love most about OSR – how diverse we are in the cultural makeup of our office. To me, this is one of the best parts about working here, and I consider it our greatest strength.

For some context, OSR staff represent more than 18 countries and speak at least 22 languages … pretty amazing considering there are only 70 of us. One of our staff is fluent in seven languages. It is not uncommon when a contract comes in written in a foreign language for us to ask, “does anyone speak German (or Chinese, or Japanese...)?” and someone comes forward. We take great pride in celebrating cultural events and taking the time to learn about the different heritages represented in OSR. Be it a celebration of the Lunar New Year or African American History Month, we go all out – and not just for the food – we celebrate our diversity!

I suppose it was therefore natural for us to host a research administrator from South Africa and a delegation from Peking University this summer. I truly believe our cultural diversity gives us that view of the world we need to constantly look for ways to innovate. With this much diversity, lots of novel ideas get thrown around, some of which have led to really great changes in OSR. Next time you call or stop by OSR, take a moment to enjoy the richness of our office. I know I do, every day.