

May 25, 2016

Dear SPaRC Outstanding Service Award Committee:

It is my pleasure to nominate Margaret Wingard for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. Margaret juggles the complex proposal needs of the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) and yet provides a quality of service most deserving of acknowledgement. In addition, she does an excellent job of making sure the PIs are well informed and armed with the necessary information for successful proposals.

Margaret started with INHS in 2001, when it was still part of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. She first became a Sponsored Research Coordinator in October 2006, working for the INHS' Division of Ecology and Conservation Science. In September 2008 the Survey joined the University of Illinois, and Margaret was called upon to help all INHS researchers adapt to a range of University policies and procedures. Since that time, she has been the sole proposal coordinator for the entire INHS, assisting with all aspects of the process. In addition, she oversees grant maintenance activities, such as fund setup, budget revisions, no cost extensions, change of PI, reporting, etc.

Margaret's financial impact on INHS is enormous. From FY12 to FY15 she guided INHS in submitting an average of 106 proposals annually. The vast majority were to various State and Federal agencies, but associations, Universities, commercial companies, and foundations also received INHS proposals. During this same period, an average of \$21.3 mil per year was requested. In a unit where only \$3.8 mil is received in State funding, the \$17.4 mil average in grant income is clearly the basis for our success. In addition to the scale of proposals, the range of funding agencies, coupled with extensive field station-based projects, makes each proposal unique in format, F&A rate, and cost-share matching requirements.

Under Margaret's oversight, the proposal process at INHS has become very streamlined and efficient. The INHS intranet has extensive information for proposal preparation and award management, including six different budget templates (representing F&A rates and cost share requirements); agency, departmental and campus forms, and step by step instructions. This year Margaret also collaborated with two other INHS team members to present two sessions to our PIs on the effects of Uniform Guidance. This presentation is also available online.

In sum, Margaret Wingard's efforts in proposal preparation and grant maintenance serve as the backbone to the success of the Illinois Natural History Survey. Her experience, coupled with the training she received as a SPaRC'ed participant, will also be a great benefit to the rest of the

Surveys, as the Prairie Research Institute reorganizes over the next year. Margaret is a valued asset and most deserving of this award. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Wendy G. Harris*

Assistant Director of Administrative Services

Illinois Natural History Survey

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May 25, 2016

RE: Nomination for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award

Dear SPaRC Committee,

I strongly recommend consideration of Margaret Wingard of the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) for the Outstanding Service Award. As an active PI with INHS I can attest that Margaret provides excellent service to myself, my staff at this field station (3 – 4 additional grant based scientists), and my colleagues. Moreover, Margaret is largely a one person show and moves a tremendous volume of grants for INHS through the application process. I do not really think we appreciate how time consuming that job is, especially in light of the large number of simultaneous RFP deadlines and with the annually varying sponsor and auditor requirements!

To emphasize the importance of Margaret's role and service for INHS it is important to remember that of the 130+ plus active scientists more than 75% are grant supported – complete and accurate budgeting and budget justifications are critical to making sure that the Survey can maintain its high quality output. Much of what Margaret has done to stream line and improve the system is relatively invisible to a client's like me. However, one aspect that is not invisible is her knowledge (and willingness to share that knowledge) about developing the budget justifications language that we PI's are not always up to date on. The advice and insight she provides into what is acceptable for one sponsor but not for another is a very valuable asset for us.

To reiterate, I nominate and strongly recommend Margaret Wingard for the Outstanding Service Award. In addition to efficiently process the waves of applications we send her, she regularly supplies important information the PI's use, much of which was gained through the SPaRC program, during the budget development and submission phases of a proposal. Aside from the sheer volume Margaret works with, the diversity of sponsors she must be familiar with (in my case 6 State, Federal, and private sources) makes her job quite complex. These proposals are the life blood of INHS and the Prairie Research Institute collaborators which makes her contributions very worthy of this award!

Thank you for your consideration,

*Andrew F. Casper*

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Director, Illinois River Biological Station  
of the Illinois Natural History Survey  
a division of the Prairie Research Institute

June 27, 2016

RE: Letter of support Margaret Wingard SPaRC Outstanding Service Award

To: Whom it may concern

I am writing this letter in support of Mrs. Margaret Wingard nomination to the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. I have known Mrs. Wingard since 2004; at the time Mrs. Wingard was a part of the Human Resource office at the Illinois Natural History Survey. Over time Margaret has demonstrated an ability and desire to undertake responsibilities that involved complicated accounting processes in the field of research administration. Today she is responsible for the coordination of grant and contract related proposals at INHS (Illinois Natural History Survey), she works with PI's (Principal Investigators), sponsors, University Office of Sponsor programs and the Grants and Contracts office to facilitate proposal submission.

Mrs. Wingard reviews and analyzes sponsored research proposals involving contracts and grants; evaluates our grant budgets for correct calculations of expenditure categories such as salaries, indirect costs fringe benefits etc.; ensures that we use the correct forms as required by the sponsor, the university and the Illinois Natural History Survey; she keeps up with the ever changing processes, rules and policies that we as PI's need to meet and she serves as a continual source of feedback and support. My research program has benefited of Margaret's dedication and detailed proposal pre-review process.

Mrs. Wingard facilitates our work in development and preparation of research proposals. She is knowledgeable, patient and has the kind personality to guide and support several stressed-out PI's trying to meet proposal submission deadlines. Margaret is an incredible effective multitasker that is always looking for ways to help. Margaret not only wants "to do a good job" but she understands that she plays a vital part in helping us to improve our ability to secure funding.

Margaret easily processes over 100 proposals in one year; she deals with a diverse source of funding agencies and helps the Illinois Natural History Survey PI's to bring over \$17 million dollars per year in grant funding. Our success rate is largely due to Margaret's efforts, the quality of her work and the detail oriented approach that she takes with each of our grant-related needs. The University of Illinois - Illinois Natural History Survey-PRI is very lucky to have such a valuable employee.

Margaret deserves this award because she is effective, efficient, dedicated and professional. Margaret helps PI's to resolve critical issues when they arise. Margaret has the experience and extensive understanding of University, State and Federal rules, regulations, policies, and procedures to interface with our sponsors and support PI needs while she oversees both pre-award and post-award activities. Margaret is the link between "writing the grant and making sure that PIs do not miss the opportunity for getting funded or receiving a fund renewal".

Mrs. Wingard has the excellent verbal written and communication skills to work with PIs and our partners at the university. I value Margaret's motivation, self-discipline, integrity, standards of behavior and work ethics. She has a unique and positive driving force that is very beneficial to the efforts of our PI's. I strongly support Mrs. Margaret Wingard nomination for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. She is a very important part of our team I am honored to support this nomination. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nohra E. Mateus-Pinilla".

**Nohra E. Mateus-Pinilla, DVM, MS, PhD**  
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Illinois Natural History Survey, Prairie Research Institute  
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