



Roy J. Carver Biotechnology Center
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
340 Edward R. Madigan Laboratory
1201 West Gregory Drive
Urbana, IL 61801

July 26, 2021

To the SPaRC Outsanding Service Award selection committee:

I am writing this letter in strong support of Matthew Feely's nomination for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. Matt is most deserving of this award. I have been working with Matt for over 4 years since he was assigned as the award coordinator of our campus unit.

I am the Director of the DNA Sequencing Service Laboratory, a unit of the Roy J. Carver Biotechnology Center (CBC). We offer state-of-the-art genomics services and equipment to campus researchers as well as public and private collaborators from all over the US and many other countries. As an example, every week we sequence dozens of genomes from plants, animals, microbes and viruses from researchers from all over the globe. The UIUC has an outstanding reputation in Genome Biology and our lab generates a significant portion of the raw data to investigators in this field. As a large share of our work is with outside collaborating researchers or institutions, a Technical Testing Agreement (TTA) needs to be set up when the work performed goes over a certain dollar amount. This is where Matt comes in, he is the person that negotiates these TTAs with prospective external users of ours and other facilities of the CBC. Many of these TTAs undergo a long process, as some institutions include strange requirements and conditions to the contract that must be negotiated in the best interest of the UIUC. Matt has always been able to negotiate these contracts with a mastery we have not seen from previous award negotiators. He communicates with the Legal Department from the external institutions and works tirelessly and methodically negotiating every single issue, always keeping the perspective of protecting us and the UIUC as a whole. Some of these contracts are for hundreds or thousands of dollars, and with private companies that require strong Non-Disclosure Agreements. In the over 4 years that Matt has been our award negotiator, we have not had a single legal issue with any of these companies or with any other institution. A major reason for this is that Matt always considers all contingencies needed to protect us and the UIUC.

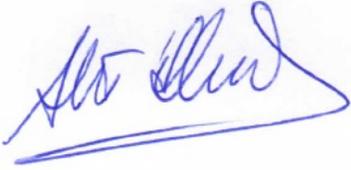
Matt often requests our opinion on contingencies being requested by companies. In these emails, he typically adds his opinion regarding potential positive or negative consequences of each contingency. This helps us a lot in making sound decisions on whether we want to proceed with a contract or a change of course is required.

Another thing that Matt keeps in mind is timing: many of our potential users have research deadlines. If contract negotiation takes longer than they expect, we may lose the ability to perform the work. Matt is very conscious of this timing and gets the negotiations done in the minimum amount of time possible. We see his emails with the institutions, he is always requesting follow up and, if responses are delayed, he again asks if anything is needed on our part. This willingness to keep things on target is highly appreciated by us as it gives us a reputation that we are a good institution to collaborate with.

In summary, Matt Feely has been and is a person that performs his duties with excellence and is dedicated to the success of research at the UIUC. Because of this, he is one of the reasons for our success as collaborators and service providers in ground-breaking, high profile, and

expensive research. Setting up contracts with us is not an issue, not something that prevents companies and institutions from all over the world from working with us. For this reason, I strongly believe that Matt's dedication to the UIUC is impactful and he deserves recognition through this award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alvaro Hernandez", with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Alvaro G. Hernandez, Ph.D.
Director of DNA Services
Roy J. Carver Biotechnology Center
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Phone: (217) 244-3480
Email: aghernan@illinois.edu

Dear SPaRC Awards Committee,

It is my great pleasure to nominate Matt Feely for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. I base my nomination on Matt's strong support and dedicated assistance to the Roy J. Carver Biotechnology Centers (CBC) with external projects using TTAs, USDA SCAs, USDA RSAs, routing Vendor forms, NDAs, negotiating contracts written by other institutions, and the CBC's Off Campus User Forms for the past four years. Matt's has been involved with routing, proofing, troubleshooting and negotiating several hundred agreements for the CBC. Needless to say, my interaction with Matt is nearly daily with communication of the various complex processing steps.

I am pleased to have Matt's service and support, and especially to have Matt assigned by SPA as point person for processing CBC agreements with external users of our services. Sometimes the agreements submitted fly through processing with little difficulty. Most often, there are glitches induced by the CBC or Sponsor seeking revision of the template. Matt is incredibly skillful, organized, and patient in finding solution and negotiating with the Sponsor. Agreements for the CBC can (frequently are) be challenging to negotiate as they span the globe from a variety of institutions that include University, US Federal or State Govt., Foreign Govt., non-profit Foundation and Institution, and Industry. The volume and complexity of these agreements mean that Matt is juggling processing and negotiating multiple agreements concurrently. His incredible patience, knowledge, and organizational skills lead to seamless multi-tasking and timely success! There have been several agreements that have come back with heavy revision and I naively gave up on finding contractual solution, but Matt is able to pull a rabbit out of his hat and get the agreement executed!

As I have worked closely with Matt for 4 years, I frequently bounce those unusual requests for future projects with Matt to find the best solution before beginning the paperwork. Sometimes just to see if it was possible, or what the accepted overhead rate is for a specific project from a non-profit or work for an external customer using a federal grant with overhead limits. Quite frankly, I and my colleagues at the CBC barrage Matt with an incredible spectrum of questions, and with his deep knowledge and patience gives us the clarity and path forward that we need, or in those rare circumstances where Matt doesn't know, he consults within SPA or UI legal and gets back to us with the correct solution. I am always confident that during negotiation Matt is the advocate of the University of Illinois and the CBC, and will not agree to anything that would put us in jeopardy.

Matt Feely is an incredible resource, helper, and negotiator the CBC collaborates with regularly and his support has greatly benefited the CBC and enabled our work with external institutions to happen. As a result, the reputation of the CBC and the University of Illinois have been enhanced by enabling world-wide collaborations and access the CBC's excellent genomics infrastructure. Matt is deserving of SPaRC recognition, and his service and support with campus units is extremely beneficial to the campus research infrastructure.

Sincerely,



Mark A. Mikel, Ph.D.
Associate Director Roy J. Carver Biotechnology Center
Asst. Prof. Crop Sciences

May 26, 2021

2021 SPaRC Retreat Committee

Sponsored Programs Administration

1901 South First Street, Suite A

Champaign, IL 61820

Dear Committee:

I would like to take this opportunity to nominate Matt Feely, Award Negotiator, Sponsored Programs Administration, for the 2021 SPaRC Award for Outstanding Service Award.

I first met Matt three years ago as an interviewee for the position of Award Negotiator. My job was to greet candidates and to inform the search committee chairperson of their arrival, and later on assist with onboarding new hires. I introduced myself and welcomed Matt to SPA. He was cordial, outgoing, friendly, and had enthusiasm that was quite refreshing; so much so, I mentioned this brief positive interaction with the search committee chair. Obviously, the search committee was impressed, since here we are now!

I have no doubt Matt's enthusiasm continues to contribute to his excellent dedication to customer service. I would like to highlight some of Matt's accomplished goals that exemplify SPA's mission, "to serve the Illinois research community".

- Consistently lead the top 2-3 Award Negotiators in completed monthly negotiations and best average monthly pending negotiation time

- Developed and created presentations, with positive feedback and surveys

- Assisted in training 6 Sponsored Programs Administration new hires

- Attended conferences, webinars, and online training

- Developed an efficient system on workflow

- Supports a diverse portfolio of departments with a wide variety of agreements

- Assisted in the creation of post Covid SPA surveys and final reports

- Active member of the SPA Personnel Management Committee

- Exceeded SPaRC'Ed recertification requirements by 30 points

- Advocate for diversity, and is a team player

As I reflect on my first meeting with Matt and subsequent interactions with him, I have no doubt he will continue to be a stellar asset to Sponsored Programs Administration with his leadership, and commitment to providing outstanding service. I am happy to nominate Matt Feely for the 2021 SPaRC Award for Outstanding Service Award.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Gloria Chattman

Business Administrative Associate

Sponsored Programs Administration

ILLINOIS FIRE SERVICE INSTITUTE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

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Champaign, IL 61820
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July 27, 2021

2021 SPaRC Retreat Committee
1901 S. First Street, Suite A
Champaign, IL 61820

RE: Matthew Feely – 2021 SPaRC Outstanding Service Award

Dear SPaRC Award Committee Members:

I am writing this letter to nominate Matthew Feely for the SPaRC Outstanding Service Award. Matt supports me and our PI's negotiating our awards and provides guidance when I call him with unusual requests. If he doesn't know the answer, he has proved that he will find the answer and responds in a timely manner. We are lucky in that Matt has connections to the fire service industry through his family, so he understands the training and research that we do.

Since Matt began his tenure with Sponsored Programs Administration, he has demonstrated the following:

- Gave three presentations
- Received positive results on surveys from presentations
- Assisted in training 6 new hires
- Consistently in the top 2-3 ANs in completed monthly negotiations
- Consistently in the top 2 ANs for best average monthly pending negotiation time
- Negotiated a wide variety of agreements
- Support a diverse portfolio of departments
- Provided excellent customer service
- Team player and help others with their volume
- Advocate for diversity
- Attended conferences and online webinars
- Exceeded SPARC'Ed recertification requirements of 30 points and completed it early
- Active member in the SPA Personnel Management Committee
- Assisted in the creation of the Post Covid SPA Surveys and final report
- Developed an efficient system on work flow
- A team player by handling a high volume of departments due to 1.5 years of being short staffed

I believe that Matt is fully deserving of this award and I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kimberly S. White

Kimberly S. White
Director of Grants & Contracts
Illinois Fire Service Institute

July 29, 2021

Dear SpaRC Awards Committee,

On behalf of the Graduate College, we are pleased to submit this letter in support of Matt Feely's nomination for the Sponsored Programs and Research Compliance Outstanding Service Award. From 2018 until 2020, Matt was the Award Negotiator within Sponsored Programs Administration assigned to the Graduate College. In that role, he guided us through the negotiation process for approximately 45 contracts with external funders, all of whom were offering fellowships to graduate students. These contracts differed from each other significantly -- they included contracts with state and federal entities, with private corporations and non-profits, and with foreign governments. Contracts with corporate, non-profit, and foreign entities were particularly challenging, for they often had no standard terms to follow but instead required negotiation more-or-less from scratch. This is where Matt's broad experience, especially that from his years as a Financial Aid Counselor, was particularly helpful. He understood the challenges that graduate students face, and this informed his guidance on the terms and conditions that should factor into our contracts. As well, his experience working with private industry, in particular his experience as the Operations Manager at Amazon@Illinois, helped him to see agreements from the funder's perspective, and this too allowed us to craft contracts that were win-win for all involved.

In short, Matt brought the needs of graduate students, the Graduate College, the University, and the funder together as we attempted to forge fellowship agreements that benefitted all participants. Such an effort requires expertise in legal and policy issues, sensitivity to the needs of students, appreciation of the norms of graduate education, persistence with the oftentimes slow back-and-forth communication with funders, and respect for the funders' goals. We in the Graduate College realized Matt's multifaceted skills set, and we came to rely heavily on his guidance. This was especially the case given that the Graduate College does not have a large business office, which means that Matt oftentimes assisted us with steps that other units with larger offices could handle on their own. Matt was forever generous and patient with us, essentially operating as an adjunct business officer for the Graduate College whenever needed.

The most representative example of Matt's exemplary service to the Graduate College was his steering us through our negotiations last year with VinUniversity, a recently founded university in Vietnam. VinUniversity initiated a strategy whereby it would offer fellowships to Vietnamese students to earn graduate degrees at top universities around the world, with the hope that many of those students would return to Vietnam after graduation to join VinUniversity's faculty. VinUniversity sought out the University of Illinois and proposed that we follow the fellowship agreement model that had already been established with other universities. Unfortunately, that model did not fit our operations, and the result was months of negotiation in search of a model that would satisfy both organizations' needs. With Matt's guidance at every step of the way, and with input from the Office of the Provost for International Affairs & Global Strategies, the Office of Business & Financial Services, and International Student & Scholar Services, we finally signed a Memorandum of Understanding that will provide full funding for up to ten Vietnamese students per year for the next five years (and hopefully many years

thereafter). With this agreement, we aim to bring some of Vietnam's most promising students to campus, and we hope to forge a stronger relationship with Vietnam's higher education system.

Matt was central to the VinUniversity MOA. He ensured soundness of the financial arrangements, adherence to applicable laws, compliance with campus administrative policies, clarity of the text, and efficiency of the pre-award and post-award processes. He has contributed this to all of the contracts we have created with him.

In sum, Matt embodies the qualities we most value in a colleague: expertise, energy, creativity, determination, compassion, friendliness, reliability, and straightforwardness. We know that the Graduate College and graduate students all over campus are better off as a result of Matt's efforts, and therefore we heartily endorse his nomination for the SPaRC award.

Sincerely,

Catherine Ocen

Catherine Ocen
Assistant Dean for Administration & Budget



Ken Vickery
Director of Fellowships

July 30, 2021

From: Nandini Topudurti, Associate Director of Financial Operations, HMNTL

To: The SPaRC Award Review Committee

Regarding: Matt Feely Nomination – 2021 Collaboration SPaRC Award

I am writing to strongly nominate Matt Feely for the 2021 Collaboration SPaRC Award. As the Associate Director of Financial Operations at HMNTL, I have worked with several colleagues in SPA; Matt has consistently stood out among his peers. Matt has not only been extremely consistent and reliable in delivering high quality work to ensure the department is successful in obtaining awards, but he has also demonstrated a willingness to tackle more complex requests with a problem-solving and can-do attitude. His contributions have directly impacted our department's ability to advance critical research and serve as a great example of what excellence looks like in research administration.

In Matt's most recent role as an awards negotiator, it's critical to have both attention to detail when reviewing terms and the ability to put in context the larger picture and focus on relationship building between the sponsor and department to ensure the awards are ultimately granted. Our team unequivocally trusts Matt's wealth of knowledge to run this process efficiently. To date, he has assisted us with over 100 awards. His track record speaks for itself – he is consistently in the top 2-3 Award Negotiators (Ans) in completed monthly negotiations and consistently in the top 2 Ans for best average monthly pending negotiation time. In addition, he has developed an efficient system to improve workflows. In research administration, dependability and professionalism is critical, particularly across all stakeholders at the university and sponsor. Matt is viewed as a teammate who can get the job done well, even under tight timelines and high-pressure situations. Since the HMNTL team has been short staffed for 1.5 years, he regularly steps in to handle higher volumes and helps others along the way.

During Matt's tenure, he has tackled a large range of agreements and projects. Of late, HMNTL has been receiving several complex requests and Matt has taken the lead to simplify the process and ensure that the grants are executed seamlessly. His work across a range of negotiation types and sponsors has helped to establish a playbook for future work. His interest in and ability to go above and beyond to ensure the research administration community is successful has also been exemplified in his desire to learn and give back.

As described above, Matt has been an exemplary long-term member of the research administration community, executing high volumes of complex grants successfully while also advancing the team's internal processes to ensure efficiency and excellent customer service. For HMNTL alone, his contributions have yielded tremendous opportunities for our faculty to collaborate and conduct world-class research. Please feel free to reach out to me directly for additional questions on my nomination for Matt.