

# THE RSA CONNECTION



*Issue No. 8 February 2006*

## ***ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS OF NIH AND AHRQ GRANT APPLICATIONS***

by Joseph Wilson, Assistant Director of Research Administration

Big changes are coming to grants submission at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). Both NIH and AHRQ will soon *require* all competing research grant applications submitted *electronically* via the web portal of Grants.gov on the new SF 424 Research and Related (R&R) application.

The NIH is phasing in the changes by type of grant program (mechanism), beginning with the Dec. 1, 2005 submission date for small business (SBIR/STTR) applicants. The transition will culminate in January 2008 when all grant programs will be submitted electronically on the new form. An abbreviated Transition Plan is listed below:

<b>Type of Grant</b>	<b>Non-AIDS</b>	<b>AIDS</b>
Small Grant Programs (R03)	6/1/06	9/1/06
Exploratory/Development Research Grants (R21/R33)	6/1/06	9/1/06
Research Project Grant Program (R01)	2/1/07	5/1/07
Career Development (K)	6/1/07	9/1/07
Fellowship (F)	8/5/07	9/1/07
Training (T)	9/10/07	1/2/08
Research Program Projects and Centers (P)	10/1/07	1/2/08
Research Projects Cooperative Agreements (U01)	10/1/07	1/2/08

Applicants should carefully note the transition date for the grant mechanism they wish to apply. See Transition Plan for target submission dates for all types of grants. Once a grant mechanism goes electronic, paper applications will not be accepted.

### **Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) through Grants.gov**

As grant mechanisms are transitioned, FOAs (also known as Request for Applications and Program Announcements) will be issued in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts and posted in Grants.gov. NIH will usually post a grant opportunity for a minimum of 60 days before the submission date, just as it does today. What's new about FOAs? A new requirement resulting from submission through Grants.gov is that all grant applications must be submitted in response to an FOA. *Therefore, applications that were previously considered "unsolicited" or "investigator-initiated" by the NIH will be submitted in response to a "generic" FOA for the specific grant mechanism.*

### **Preparing for Electronic Submission**

Applicants are required to complete registration processes in the Electronic Research Administration (eRA) Commons and Grants.gov prior to submission. If an applicant has started the registration process at least 2 weeks in advance of the submission date, NIH will consider it a "good faith" effort to prepare for electronic submission and the applicant will not be penalized for any NIH-caused registration processing delays.

### **Training**

For those applicants who would like to familiarize themselves with the new SF-424

# THE RSA CONNECTION



*Issue No. 8 February 2006*

---

(R&R) form and with submitting an application package to NIH via Grants.gov, the NIH offers a number of tools on their website (below). UCSF OSR has not yet announced their plans for training regarding the new procedures.

<http://era.nih.gov/ElectronicReceipt/training.htm>

## **UCSF OSR Update eRA**

Complete details regarding electronic submission at UCSF can be found via the link below. Please note that the due date for R01s has been changed (see above) since this communication was published.

<http://www.ucsf.edu/its/listserv/cgannounce/>

## ***SOCIETY OF RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING October 15–19, 2005, Milwaukee, WI***

by Kathryn Judd, Research Administration Manager, SFGH

At the SRAI meeting, I was amazed to learn that in addition to courses for educational credit, there were certificate programs for Departmental Administrators and Clinical Trials Research Administration and a Research Administration graduate certificate program. There was even an advertisement for a graduate certificate program at Cleveland State University. At San Diego State University, a course was offered for Training in Research Ethics and Standards. Comparing the course descriptions with the UCSF training via the RAP program, and with individual courses like training grants and K awards, I realized that the UCSF opportunities we have match or exceed what was being offered at the SRAI conference.

We at UCSF have the opportunity of extensive hands-on experience and access to many people who are great resources. All we need now is the “graduate certificate.”

Speakers at the sessions came from a variety of sources, such as NIH and NSF, UCSF and other universities, and industry. However, the sessions predominantly were focused on undergraduate institutions, which meant that many of the presentations were fairly general. Perhaps, if your division has extra funding, signing up for the pre-conference half-day workshops would give more in-depth training.

I was very impressed with the large number of international attendees. There were participants from Australia, Canada, England, Puerto Rico, South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Brazil. Colleagues from UCSF sponsored their collaborators from Zimbabwe. After the conference, these collaborators traveled to San Francisco for meetings. Wouldn't it be great to have more training in international issues and smoother administrative systems for those international projects we already manage?

A few of the international sessions I attended dealt with the legal issues of setting up international contracts. One South African attendee mentioned that there was so much turnover at her university that she was the fifth person in 2 years to handle a contract. As you can imagine, she had a difficult time finding documents and tracing the funds. She was absorbing all the information, resource links, and contacts possible at the conference so that she could go back and set up systems to support the local investigators. She was instrumental in

# THE RSA CONNECTION



*Issue No. 8 February 2006*

---

organizing a local South African support group that will develop into an SRAI chapter.

There were lots of vendors of software for grants management. I just learned that one of the vendors, RAMS (Research and Management Systems), was selected for the UARP–UCOP 2006 call for proposals. Check the link below for copies of the Call for Applications and Application Instructions.

<http://uarp.ucop.edu>

The next SRAI Annual Conference will be held in Quebec City, October 14–18, 2006.

## ***POLICY/PROGRAM UPDATES***

### **NIH Announcement on Stipend Levels on Training Grants**

The NIH Guide (below) dated January 9, 2006 has published the Kirschstein-NRSA FY 2006 stipend levels and institutional allowance- and training-related expense levels for awards made after October 1, 2005.

<http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-06-026.html>

### **Retirement Contributions in Proposals**

The employee benefit rate used in proposals for academic personnel and staff personnel will change on the following dates:

July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2009: academic personnel increases from 17% to 20% and career staff personnel increases from 22% to 25%

July 1, 2009 and thereafter: academic personnel increases from 20% to 22% and career staff personnel increases from 25% to 27%

All other benefit rates remain the same, since they are not in the UC retirement plan. Please note that these are escalating rates; therefore, if a budget proposal period covers 2 UC fiscal years (e.g., 10/1/06 – 9/30/07), a combination of the two benefit rates should be used in proposals (e.g., 9 months at 17% for academic benefits and 3 months at 20%). All proposals being submitted should immediately reflect these new rates. These expenses will be charged automatically to your grants and contracts.

### **NIH, SAMHSA and AHRQ have announced new Salary Cap Rates for FY 2006.**

The FY 2006 awards for budget period January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005 is **\$180,100**. For January 1, 2006 and beyond, the salary cap is **\$183,500**. Additional details can be found below.

<http://www.ucsf.edu/its/listserv/cganounce/0139.html>

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HS-06-033.html>.

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-06-031.html>

# THE RSA CONNECTION



*Issue No. 8 February 2006*

---

## ***LIFE AS A RESEARCH ANALYST***

by Christianmichael Dutton, Research Service Analyst, DGIM

I never would have thought of myself working in the medical and education industry (I don't like hospitals and I have to be coerced or in serious pain to go). I had quickly realized that the Dot Com Era was coming to a fiery end at my previous job. I made like a rat and jumped the sinking ship, so I called the temporary agency and took the very first assignment they could give me. That was 5 years ago and I've been here ever since.

At first, I thought that soon I would get back into "the game" and be swimming with the sharks in the finance industry. However, with the economy puttering out and 9/11, these hopes were dashed as 2001 became 2002, then '03, and then '04. I finally decided to stay at UCSF and build a new career.

I've only been an Analyst for just over a year, but my education in this field has grown by leaps and bounds. I wear so many hats in my division that my entire perception in my career has changed—for the better, too.

I can say my experiences as an Analyst are maddening, fun, hectic, overwhelming, painful, and oftentimes the proof of Chaos Theory at work. And the work only gets better (or worse, depending upon my mood). A typical day for me begins with the realization that faculty must not sleep much, since I receive 50–60 new e-mails during the night. I get another 50–60 for the day (at the time of this writing, I got 50 in 15 minutes). After dealing with e-mails, I deal with the other

aspects of my job—pre-award, post-award, training, providing advice, looking up policies and rules, work on special projects, and attending meetings, more meetings, and a third helping of meetings. I find myself spending more time on my calendar filling in meeting times these days.

The work is challenging and often involves time management skills that are critical to the job. Given that things often get dropped in my lap at the last minute and that people are struggling to get my attention for everything, it pays to be a quick thinker and know how to approach a problem, identify the solution, and get it done. Delegation is critical for assigning tasks to an administrative assistant so that one can focus on putting together budgets, tackling overdrafts, or getting proposals out the door. Most of all, being able to do these things without being overwhelmed is important; otherwise, my initial reaction would be just to curl up in a ball and crawl under my desk hoping the Bad Stuff would go away.

To do this work well, it's important to acknowledge that I can't do it alone. I would say that I am only able to do this job because of the foundation of support that is critical for any Analyst to handle the workload. Without these levels of support, the work I do would be impossible; the stress-levels would get too high and my new desk would be in Langely Porter, covered with bottles of medication to help me cope. The support levels are: 1) support from the Division Chief, who helps faculty to get their proposals in on time, 2) support from the Division Administrator in providing academic staff to assist with tasks such as keeping copies of biosketches, CV's, and

# THE RSA CONNECTION



*Issue No. 8 February 2006*

OS's, and 3) support from the Research Manager. Without any one of these support levels, my work would become like the boulder trap in Raiders of the Lost Ark, but with me getting crushed in the end.

So what's in the future for me? Well, I'm the pre-award manager for my division now and we are organizing to become an electronic office. We bought a heavy duty scanner with a feeder and we're in the process of converting all our paper into electronic files and storing them on the servers and disks. Should auditors come, they would get a CD.

## ***BEST IN RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION OF GRANTS (BRAG) AWARD***



The Research Administration Unit is proud to announce that **Criselda (Precy) Cruz** is the February 2006 BRAG Awardee. Precy is a Research Services Analyst at the Centers for AIDS Prevention Studies, which has the largest portfolio of extramural funding of any division in the Department. Due to her outstanding financial and interpersonal skills and expert knowledge of campus processes,

Precy was recently promoted at the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies (CAPS) to Accounting/Recharge Manager. She has been awarded the BRAG Award because she submitted the highest percentage of grants on time with the fewest mistakes and contributed to the reduction of CAPS's overdraft balance by 35% between October and December 2005.

***MEET LYNÆE DARBES, PhD***  
***Assistant Adjunct Professor, CAPS***  
by Theresa Ly, Research Assistant



(L-R): Sibongile Dladla, Dr. Lynae Darbes, Thomas Mogale (two interviewers from her project in South Africa)

### **TL: Why did you pursue your PhD in Clinical Psychology?**

LD: I majored in Psychology as an undergraduate because I found the study of human behavior quite interesting, and I chose to focus on it as a career because it was a versatile field in which I could do research, clinical work, and teaching. My first position after I got my PhD was in the research field (actually here at CAPS!).

# THE RSA CONNECTION



*Issue No. 8 February 2006*

---

**TL: What does your research focus on now?**

LD: I'm working on HIV research here in CAPS. I look at the role that relationships play in HIV risk behavior. Specifically, I'm looking at how factors such as intimacy and communication affect the risk of HIV within couples.

**TL: What are you hoping to find from your studies?**

LD: I am involved in two studies right now. One is in South Africa studying heterosexual couples, and the other is here in San Francisco studying gay male couples. Overall, I'm trying to examine how relationship dynamics influence the risk of HIV in these couples. For example, I'm looking at whether couples who communicate better about HIV have less risk behavior. In South Africa, we're working on a study which is examining both how relationship dynamics predict HIV risk behavior and what barriers and facilitators exist around couples-based Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) for HIV. In South Africa, especially, there is a huge stigma against people with HIV, especially for women. Through this study, we're trying to examine how to get couples to come in for testing, not just individuals. We're trying to see what barriers might be in place that are preventing couples from getting tested together, and how we can change programs to increase their chances of doing so.

**TL: How did you become a faculty member here at UCSF?**

LD: After working at UCSF as a Research Specialist for a few years, I received a K08 award in July 2004 from the NIMH (National Institute of Mental Health) branch of the NIH. This grant is still being used for my South

Africa study. One of the requirements to be a faculty member at CAPS is to have federal funding, so that was the first step!

**TL: What's a typical workday like for you?**

LD: I do a lot of things—team meetings on my different projects, data analysis, writing papers, meeting with RSAs and my colleagues, and teaching. I am currently teaching a class called “Foundations of Patient Care” for UCSF's first-year medical students. I'm really enjoying that. I also travel a lot, since I have to go to South Africa for my project. I actually just came back a couple of days ago, so I'm a little jetlagged. I spent approximately 3 to 4 months of the past year there.

**TL: What are the most rewarding aspects of your job?**

LD: I feel that the HIV epidemic in South Africa and San Francisco are both challenging situations, and it's rewarding to be able to work on something this compelling. I enjoy working with my colleagues and discussing with them what needs to be done about the HIV epidemic. Also, going to South Africa is rewarding for me because even though it is a stressful environment to be in because of HIV, the entire community is involved in HIV work and people are really trying to help one another. I get energy and inspiration from them, even though the work can be really tiring.

**TL: On the flipside, what are some of the challenges of your job?**

LD: Traveling is difficult! And with HIV, there are always both challenges and rewards. It's challenging and overwhelming

# THE RSA CONNECTION



*Issue No. 8 February 2006*

---

to think about the scope of the epidemic, but it's also inspiring to see what is being done to fight it.

**TL: How are RSAs helping you in your position, and what kinds of skills do RSAs need to have to do well in their position in CAPS?**

LD: I really appreciate the RSAs knowledge—especially in the really complicated issues like international subcontracts! I'm constantly calling and emailing my RSAs, Lourdes Ocbena and Kitty O'Connor, with questions. RSAs have to be incredibly organized, attentive to detail, and aware of the policies and structure of other, often foreign, institutions.

**TL: Outside of work, what do you like to do?**

LD: I really enjoy spending time with my partner, Mark, outdoor activities, eating out at restaurants, and hanging out with friends and family.

## ***MEET MARIA NOVELERO*** ***Division Administrator, Hospitalist*** ***Division***

by Steve Glotzbach, Grants Development  
Coordinator



**SG: How long have you been at UCSF? Can you tell me a little bit about your administrative background and what led you to your current position?**

MN: I've been at UCSF for almost 4 years now. Before then, I served as a financial analyst for Mitsubishi Bank in New York, and was the manager of business operations for an import-export company in Osaka, Japan. In the Department of Medicine, I've worked as RSA and as Assistant Director of Research Administration. After being in Research Administration for 3 years, I wanted to explore other career paths and work directly with physicians in a more patient-centered arena. My current position provides me that opportunity, as well as the privilege of belonging to a group that has great vision and exemplary leadership, faculty, and staff.

**SG: How has your RSA background helped you in your new role?**

MN: My experience as an RSA has increased my understanding of the administrative processes that encompass the development and management of research projects and programs. As an RSA, one becomes familiar with the responsibilities, time constraints, and habits of faculty, as well as working around various bottlenecks in the system.

**SG: What are some of the challenges that you encounter in your day-to-day work as Division Administrator?**

MN: Balancing big picture projects with detail-oriented tasks, the steady stream of work, and matching individual faculty's needs and priorities with the Division's and Department's missions.

# THE RSA CONNECTION



*Issue No. 8 February 2006*

---

**SG: What ways do you think would help improve collaboration among members of the Research Administration team?**

MN: I am certain any work unit, not just the Research Administration team, finds it productive to acknowledge the contributions, large and small, of its members. Soliciting and listening to individual opinions helps everyone feel valued. Supporting personal career development goals also contributes to a strong feeling of collaboration.

**SG: What new projects or processes are on the horizon for the Hospitalist group in the coming year?**

MN: The Hospitalist group is expanding. In July 2005, we started a Hospitalist-based service at Mt. Zion hospital. With the early success of the program, we have been asked to provide a 24/7 on-site presence beginning in February 2006 and additional hospitalist coverage starting in July 2006. As a group, we continue to strengthen our role in systems improvement and to promote quality improvement and patient safety throughout the Medical Center.

**SG: What are the most rewarding aspects of your new position?**

MN: Mainly two things: the opportunity to work with amazing individuals and the immeasurable worth of what we all do. I enjoy working with Dr. Bob Wachter and Martha Hooven, who are great mentors, and with the Hospitalist faculty and staff, who are all team players with an unfailing sense of humor. I feel as if I am a collaborator in decisions and hardly ever find myself wanting in laughter. I also believe in what I do, which is to enable administrative processes and make them work for my faculty members so

that they can focus on patient care, research, and teaching.

**SG: How does it feel to be at the Parnassus campus after your time at Laurel Heights?**

MN: It's invigorating to be at Parnassus. The campus exudes dynamic energy with so much activity in every corner. My office is somewhat isolated, so I can have peace and quiet when in there, and then stimulation when I step outside.

**SG: What advice can you offer to RSAs wishing to take on a management position?**

MN: Absorb as much knowledge as possible while an RSA—the nuts and bolts of research administration, post-award management, how the accounting office works—tools to ensure success and sanity. In addition, embrace and conquer challenging situations such as dealing with different personalities and prioritizing conflicting demands. The skills and lessons that can be learned from these experiences will be useful not only professionally, but also personally.

**SG: Outside of your position in the Department of Medicine, what activities do you enjoy?**

MN: I like traveling, biking, hiking, kickboxing, reading, and meditating.

**SG: Rumor has it that you are a rabid football fan. Any advice to the head coach of the 49ers as the team struggles to rebuild?**

MN: Pray for a miracle! Better yet, poach Peyton Manning so that I don't have to

# THE RSA CONNECTION



*Issue No. 8 February 2006*

---

subscribe to the NFL network just to watch his games!

## **STAFF NEWS**

**Alicia Forbrich** transitioned to the Division of Hematology/Oncology to become an RSA in January 2006. She had been working with the Division as a Project Analyst to provide post-award coverage on a number of urgent issues. Her work was so well received that she soon transferred to the Division from Central Administration.

**Melissa Lam** has joined the Central Administration Unit as the new Project Analyst. She will be responsible for coordinating special projects such as compliance audits, developing training curricula, and providing pre- and post-award assistance to divisions. She also will be trained to become an RSA. Melissa is a graduate of UCLA and joined the Department in February 2006.

**Linda Lew** has been promoted to the position of Analyst I effective February 2006 to provide pre- and post-grants management to the Allergy and Pulmonary divisions. Linda had been providing post-award support to the faculty in Pulmonary and Allergy for medicine research awards but will now be the central RSA for both divisions.

**Eddie Lopez** joined the Division of Cardiology effective January 2006 as the new RSA. Eddie brings extensive urban planning, program development, and management experience from her work as an independent consultant for the City of Pasadena, where she helped manage multimillion-dollar grants and contracts.