



Paul G. Allen School for Global Health

April 2, 2025

AP Contribution Award Committee

RE: Karen (Kay) Hecox 2025 AP Contribution Award nomination

Dear Award Committee,

I am writing to nominate Karen (Kay) Hecox for the 2025 AP Contribution Award in recognition of her outstanding contributions as the Research Operations Manager at the Office of Research Support & Operations. Throughout her career, Kay has demonstrated unparalleled dedication, innovative thinking, and a commitment to excellence that sets her apart from her peers.

Recently our university received several requests from funding agencies to answer specific funding related queries resulting from several executive orders signed by the current presidential administration. The requests came in on a weekend with a turnaround time by Monday. Kay spent her time compiling the information, gathering pertinent policy points, and drafting answers that demonstrated our position while staying consistent across all agencies. I was grateful I was able to call on her when it was found that our answers were subject to a character limit that was not stated in the information request. She spent time revising the information to fit the limitation and the request was still submitted on time. Her dedication has made a huge difference to several employees, and she does this with little to no recognition.

In addition, Kay has spent many hours training the research community on how to use the ORSO database for grant proposal reporting. She has a thoughtful training style and provides many insightful tips so that our reports are accurate and thorough. She also takes time to troubleshoot any issues, even going so far as helping to modify the queries so the information is exactly what is needed. Kay even agreed to meet after Pullman work hours to train my group of new grant administrators from Nairobi, Kenya. They have mentioned several times how Kay made them feel a part of the research community by tailoring the training information to their specific needs and concerns. Kay builds a positive experience with all that she works with.

Given Kay's exceptional track record and unwavering commitment to productivity, innovative problem-solving, positive working relationships, university service, and extraordinary job performance, I wholeheartedly believe that she is a deserving candidate for the 2025 AP Contribution Award. Please see included support letters from Dan Nordquist and Derek Brown.

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Thank you for considering this nomination. Please feel free to contact me if you require any additional information.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amanda Yager".

Amanda Yager
Associate Director of Research Services
Paul G. Allen School for Global Health
College of Veterinary Medicine
Washington State University
Email: ayager@wsu.edu

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Administrative Professional Advisory Council

Awards Committee – 2025 AP Contribution Award Nomination

RE: Karen (Kay) Hecox, Research Operations Manager, Office of Research Support and Operations

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter to recommend Karen (Kay) Hecox for the WSU AP Contribution award. Having had the privilege of working closely with her for many years, I can confidently attest to her readiness, responsiveness, and resourcefulness—qualities that make her an exceptional candidate and a standout professional.

Kay brings an unparalleled level of expertise to the realm of financial conflict of interest (COI), skillfully navigating its myriad complexities with precision and foresight. Her leadership in coordinating the COI committee is nothing short of outstanding, ensuring compliance, fostering collaboration, and addressing challenges with a proactive and informed approach. Similarly, her oversight of the Faculty Senate's Research and Arts Committee has been stellar, marked by strategic vision and a commitment to advancing institutional goals.

Beyond her specialized knowledge, Kay excels in IT project management, particularly when working with stakeholders apprehensive about change. She approaches these situations with patience, clear communication, and a knack for alleviating concerns, ensuring smooth transitions and successful outcomes. Her technology savvy shines through in her ability to generate insightful reports from the MyResearch database and WorkDay—an efficiency that not only reduces the burden on leadership but also inspires confidence in her competence and reliability.

What truly sets Kay apart is her dedication to service. She consistently goes above and beyond, willingly working after hours and investing additional time to ensure that faculty and staff receive the support they need, including across international time zones. This commitment is matched by her ability to respond promptly to unexpected demands from both her direct supervisor and senior leadership, demonstrating adaptability and a strong sense of responsibility.

Equally impressive is Kay's interpersonal finesse. She brings a great sense of humor to the workplace, fostering a positive and collaborative environment. Her friendly demeanor and attentive listening skills enable her to connect with colleagues, understand their needs, and deliver tailored solutions effectively.

In summary, Kay is a highly capable, dependable, and personable professional whose expertise, work ethic, and interpersonal strengths make her an invaluable asset. I wholeheartedly recommend her for WSU AP Contribution award, confident that she has exceeded expectations and contributions to your team. Please feel free to contact me at should you have any questions or require further insight.

Regards,

Dan Nordquist

AVP/DVP, Office of Research

Nomination for the 2025 Administrative Professional Contribution Award

Nominee: Karen (Kay) Hecox, Research Operations Manager, Office of Research Support and Operations (ORSO)

Dear Selection Committee,

Kay Hecox is an exceptional Administrative Professional whose contributions to Washington State University (WSU) have been outstanding and noteworthy. From 2019 to 2023, I worked with Kay as she played a crucial role in managing a wide range of responsibilities within the Office of Research (OR). From the moment she joined, she consistently exceeded expectations, demonstrating exceptional problem-solving skills, a strong work ethic, and a dedication to WSU's mission, all while bringing positivity and humor to the workplace. Hiring Kay was the best decision I ever made as a manager, and WSU is truly fortunate to have her.

Kay played a critical role in managing and streamlining an enormous range of responsibilities at WSU. She took on overseeing Financial Conflict of Interest for the entire university, handling all the calls and emails, meetings, policy updates, and compliance requirements that come along with that. She also provided support for the Research and Arts Committee and managed the registration of official Centers, Institutes, and Collaborative Units (CICUs) at WSU. Additionally, she took on the complex task of overseeing the administration and budget management of the Center for Cannabis Policy, Research, and Outreach in the OR, ensuring seamless operations in a new area for us, while navigating the challenges of a sensitive subject area.

Kay's expertise extends to IT system development and management, where she has conceptualized and launched many OR projects while effectively prioritizing our programmer resources, to enhance efficiencies for WSU. She also maintained and administered the MyResearch database which is a feat in and of itself. Further, she helped lead the management of WSU's Section 117 reporting efforts, a major effort to ensure compliance with institutional and federal requirements.

Beyond her technical knowledge, Kay is a foundational support system for the OR. She has helped with communication efforts, drafting content for the OR newsletter and other key initiatives. She also supported the OR Admin Team and helped with Research Misconduct administrative efforts. Her leadership support extends to coordinating meetings and setting agendas for the WSU Research Council, Associate Dean for Research and Vice Chancellor for

Research Leadership meetings, and ORSO, Office of Research Assurances, and Office of Commercialization Leadership meetings. She also took on responsibilities in survey management at WSU and Qualtrics use, a great deal of website management, and even some event coordination. Regardless of the challenge, Kay was always ready to step in and deliver.

Kay's ability to manage high-level projects, drive operational efficiency, and provide support to many units within the OR is nothing short of remarkable. Her contributions have had a lasting impact across WSU, improving processes, ensuring compliance, and fostering collaboration across units and all WSU campuses. Her proactive approach, problem-solving skills, and commitment to excellence make her an invaluable asset.

Beyond her technical and administrative expertise, Kay's camaraderie and positive energy have made the workplace better for everyone around her. Her ability to not only meet but exceed expectations made my role as a manager significantly easier, and I had complete confidence in her abilities. WSU is incredibly lucky to have her, and I can think of no one more deserving of the 2025 Administrative Professional Contribution Award.

Sincerely,



Derek Brown

Conflict of Interest and Commitment and Export Control Manager

Dean's Office, School of Humanities and Sciences

Stanford University