

## Celebrating the First Forty Years of the Society of Research Administrators International

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### Author's Note

This article celebrates the Society of Research International's fortieth anniversary with the membership of over 4,000 research administrators throughout the world against the background of important developments in research administration since the founding of the Society in 1967. It is fitting that a number of past presidents submitted information that was nonexistent elsewhere. This article could not have been completed without them, and I have identified them with their comments. Any errors in my interpretation of their comments are mine alone. My appreciation goes out to past presidents Ken Beasley (1971-72), Ruth Poole (1993-94), James L. Pyle (1994-95), Donald C. Clark (1996-97), William F. Schweri (1997-98), Lynne Chronister (1998-99), Elliott C. Kulakowski (2000-01), Pearl Bigfeather (2002-03), Michael Owen (2003-04), Michael McCallister (2004-05), and current president Phil Spina (2006-08). My thanks also are extended to Terry Manns, SRA International Secretary, and Arminda Valles-Hall, Education Officer, for providing factual information as the article neared completion.

### Abstract

Throughout its forty-year history the Society of Research Administrators International (SRA) has provided education and professional development through its annual meetings, sections, chapters, certificate programs, and, more recently, executive institutes. The society has remained in the forefront of professional development challenges for research administrators throughout the world. Today, SRA boasts a membership of over 4,000 research administrators from universities, hospitals, clinics, and institutes. It continues to offer robust networking and educational opportunities, and rewards for its volunteers. Diversity in offerings and membership remains a capstone mission for the organization. This article explores the evolution of SRA as the profession of research administration has grown with the demands of researchers for thoughtful, efficient and flexible services. Through the eyes of past presidents, the article will examine how SRA has kept up with the flood of new challenges that threatened its existence in early years and continue to face the profession. In surmounting the internal structural and financial issues, and in meeting the new demands of the profession promptly and creatively, SRA remains true to its Mission and Vision: "The society is an international organization dedicated to the education and professional development of research administrators, as well as the enhancement of public understanding of the importance of research and its administration."

*Key Words:* research administration, fortieth anniversary, past presidents

## Introduction: Important Developments, 1967-2007

Four business managers in science departments at Yale University founded what would become the Society of Research Administrators International because they discovered the need to discuss how to resolve mutual problems. Letters of inquiry to expand the group poured in as research administration became more complicated. In response, in 1966 Ken Hartford, president from 1967-70; Jack Stacey of the Midwest Research Institute in Kansas City; David Meyer, Business Manager of the Botany Department at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and Richard Nichol森, Research Center Business Manager at Archer Daniels Midland, met to discuss a research administration professional organization. These founders represented a diverse group of institutions in higher education and industry, and a for-profit research laboratory. Their collaboration marked the first society with membership from all four quarters of research administration (Beasley, 1988).

One hundred people attended the first meeting of the Society at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst on June 23 and 24, 1967, and, under the leadership of Ken Hartford and Dick Nichol森, charter documents were created. The latter created the bylaws and debated the purposes, the name, the membership requirements, and dues. The 100 attendees closed the meeting with the unanimous vote that, "We, the research administrators present, hereby constitute ourselves into an organization." These decisions were formally ratified at the second annual meeting in Houston in March, 1968 (Beasley, 1988).

Led by the formation of the West Coast and Northeastern Sections in 1968, the central organization was strengthened and membership began to grow. Other sections were created within a couple of years. At the third annual meeting in San Francisco in July 1969, the leaders of the West Coast, Treasurer Paul Davis

of the University of California-Berkeley and Rod Rose of Irvine, proposed a national office at Irvine under Rose's direction. The proposal was accepted by the Board and the office was established on August 1, 1969 as a distribution point for communications, the official mailing office for SRA and the sections, to publish a journal, newsletter, and directory, and to maintain the archives (Beasley, 1988).

The networking and the growing membership wanted professional development in two broad areas. First, they wanted lectures on how to do their jobs, and second, they wanted to increase the status of research administrators. Thus, early sessions reflected the vision of the founders and the membership. Sessions included personnel management, facilities planning, purchasing, organization and structure of research administration offices, project management, and accounting (Beasley, 1988). These were historic sessions, and many of our sessions and certification programs today reflect the foresight of the early membership about the concerns and professional advancement needs of research administrators.

To provide outlets for the centrality of the networking function, publications quickly ensued. The *SRA Newsletter* was published with the inception of the Society in August 1968. It included information about the formation of sections, plans for the next annual meeting and a request for members to pay their dues of \$15. For a formal exchange of ideas, the *Journal of the Society of Research Administrators* was first published in July 1969. The lead article, "Profile of a Research Administrator," reflected the need of members for professional recognition. With this launch, the *SRA Journal* became the first broad-based scholarly periodical for research administrators (Beasley, 1988).

As one would suppose, the 1970s brought many challenges that new organizations face. Dr. Ken Beasley, one of the founders and president during 1971-72, recalled the issues. First, after four years of development the Society had

not established a strong administrative core. Second, there was a shortage of administrative information on membership and services. Third, there was a persistent need for money to carry out services for the nearly 550 members. And, it was difficult to tell who the true members were because members joined and left after a year or two so the real number of paying members was not accurate.

There were other pressures. At the end of the annual meeting preceding Dr. Beasley's presidency, the business/industry division called to say more sessions were needed to comprehend that interest group. Second, only about 60 people attended Dr. Beasley's annual meeting in Minneapolis in July 1972. Third, the Placement Committee submitted a budget request that was more than the Society's annual income. President Beasley rightfully decided that "SRA needed a shove and I would be the change agent."

He decided to develop programs, to provide better administrative support, and to build pride in SRA as a professional organization. Out of these three ideas came a number of objectives. First, it was important for someone representing the Society to attend all section meetings during the year. There were no travel funds available from SRA, but Dr. Beasley was fortunate because his institution, Northern Illinois University, covered the costs of travel. Second, he started a series of articles named "A Dialogue for Research Administrators" in the Newsletter to discuss professionalism in research administration. For example, Dialogue number 3 related to the importance of communication both within and outside of research institutions. Third, the improvement of SRA's own management to evoke a professional image to the membership brought about the Long Range Planning Committee to look at the future and the needs of the Society and then make recommendations to the Board. Fourth, during Dr. Beasley's visits to section meetings, many new members expressed the need for information to help them in their work. Consequently, President Beasley started the SRA Research Administrators Notebook to

provide information, such as the administrative structure of the National Science Foundation (NSF) or how to obtain a research application form from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Fifth, he tried to solve the Society's financial problems by increasing annual membership dues to \$20, creating an Institutional Membership category (which survives still), under which institutions could pay a fee to cover several research administrators' dues. This move increased both members and income.

He rounded out his program by developing a central office. Rod Rose was the original Executive Director of SRA. He, along with two other administrators at the University of California at Irvine ably managed the Society from 1968 to 1972; but by then the Society had grown too large for a volunteer administration. Mr. Rose decided to step down in the latter part of President Beasley's term and Jack Balderston, the incoming president, was appointed to oversee the central office and to hire a full-time staff person. This was the beginning of a professional staff for SRA.

But SRA did not stop there. Two grant applications were started during Dr. Beasley's presidency and completed after he left office. The first application resulted in a grant from the NSF of \$18,400 to help improve the *SRA Journal*. The second was a grant of \$99,221 from what was then the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) to set up an advisory service to assist HEW grantees in completing programs and submitting final reports. This award was made, but later rescinded by the Nixon administration.

All of these objectives were accomplished and changed SRA. President Beasley's final report at Seattle in 1972 summarized the changes and encouraged the membership to participate in an improved organization. The title of the report was *YOU'RE OK SRA*. It was an upbeat message to celebrate the changes and encourage improvement. The increase in SRA activities and communications started a period of new directions for SRA as it rose to the forefront

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of professional organizations. From 1972-76, membership increased from 537 to 1,007. In addition to the program and management changes, there was an attitudinal change that research administration was a profession, and that SRA was critical to perpetuating professionalism.

Membership continued to increase. Ruth Poole, who was president in 1993-94, saw the membership jump to 2,700. The Canadian Section remained a robust part of SRA, which began to attract members from countries in Europe and elsewhere.

That spirit continued. Under Dr. James Pyle's presidency in 1994-95, membership increases continued, the organization's headquarters moved from Chicago to Washington, D.C., and programs were begun in response to electronic administration of the society's business. The concept that providing professional opportunities for the membership was the principal reason for the existence of the society continued to emerge as the society offered diverse services to research administrators in many different settings. By the mid-1990s SRA was poised to emphasize international research administration.

During Donald Clark's presidency in 1996-97, SRA celebrated its thirtieth anniversary. President Clark addressed electronic research administration with new workshops that improved professional knowledge and provided income. The international initiative continued, especially with the European group. President Clark began the Extramural Associates Program, in which SRA members provided training to inexperienced institutions. Under the University of Kentucky Model (which still exists), and with NIH support, William Schweri coordinated SRA members to work with institutions in Puerto Rico. As a result, a strong chapter was formed in Puerto Rico.

Donald's presidency revealed The Body of Knowledge, and related grants training projects provided inexpensive, real-time professional

development for members. These activities were refined in later years and have now become staples of SRA's educational programs.

During the 1990s SRA continued to create goals to remain forward-looking and innovative. It was time to compact and determine how to market the educational programs to the membership through strategic planning. When William Schweri became president in October 1997, he sought to use strategic planning to mold the goals defined by past presidencies and the membership into a strategic plan. William points out that Donald Clark, Lynne Chronister, and he were active in the development of the new strategic plan. Two excellent leaders, Diane Watson and Sharon Sumpter, kept the executives on track by heading up the strategic planning effort. President Schweri tasked them with evaluating activities and making sure that they were making investments of SRA resources consistent with the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan enabled identification of leaders to increase membership and revenue.

These important developments transcended Lynne Chronister's presidency in 1998-99, when the word "international" was added to the Society's name. This culminated hard work to include international members in the Society and demonstrated how far SRA International had evolved as a professional society.

By Dr. Elliott Kulakowski's presidency in 2000-01, there was no question that SRA was an international organization. Representatives from Australia, Canada, and Europe chaired the International Committee. SRA International Europe was established to make SRA known in the United Kingdom and the European Union. An International Scholarship Program was implemented to provide support for research managers from less developed nations to attend the SRA international meeting. Discussions took place with representatives from Puerto Rico and other Latin American countries about the establishment of an Hispanic Interest Group to make SRA International known in Mexico and

Central and South America. The International Network of Research Management Societies (INORMS) was established to add more breadth to internationalism. Dr. Kulakowski convened a meeting of representatives from research management societies from around the world in Vancouver at the annual SRA International meeting to discuss how the worldwide societies could more effectively work together. The unanimous consensus was that, with the internationalization of research activities, the various Societies needed to work together. This meeting became the inaugural meeting of INORMS. Dr. Michael Owen, president in 2003-04, observed that this INORMS Agreement with the Association of Commonwealth Universities headquartered in London, has a prominent journal that characterizes the Global Research Management Network. *Research Global: The Magazine of the Global Research Management Network* is an international clearinghouse for the latest in research administration improvements. This magazine captures the professional development of SRA International and its partners. Now in its sixth year, INORMS held its first international meeting in Australia in 2006; its next meeting is scheduled for England in 2008.

Pearl Bigfeather, the SRA President in 2002-03, found a strong nucleus of volunteers to help her carry on the traditions. She points out that the developments were the work of many volunteers who responded to the strategic plans. Like her predecessors, she saw that SRA had a multitude of members with special talents to change and transform research administration. Her continuation of the vision of her predecessors ensured that priorities remained the review of membership services, improved communication, self-management, and international expansion.

During President Bigfeather's term there was a concerted effort by many members to attend foreign meetings and summits in Australia, England, and China. To support internationalization, grant money was sought from and awarded by the Carnegie Foundation

to fund the first SRA-Carnegie US-Africa Pilot Training Project. SRA was able to bring nine African Vice Chancellors to the United States for a two-week research management study tour. The tour began in New York City and continued to an SRA meeting in Providence, Rhode Island, where the vice chancellors attended special workshops. The tour continued on to Boston and culminated in Washington, D.C. SRA members delivered programs and workshops at universities in many countries in Africa such as Nigeria, Uganda, and Ghana; Pearl Bigfeather journeyed to Ghana in March of 2005. That program continued with a visit of an SRA team to Nigeria in May, 2007 to identify two universities to improve their stature in the research arena and have teams from those universities visit universities in the United States and to attend SRA's annual meeting.

## Internal and External Developments

In 1993-94, SRA came of age as an international organization. The society began to attract members from countries in Europe and elsewhere, while the Canadian Section remained a robust entity within the organization. As James Pyle points out, "what was happening is that the profession was becoming much more diverse and SRA chose to do that rather than hold on to the old ways."

Strategic planning continued to provide critical professional development sessions and programs. Dr. Pyle inherited the need for more attention to compliance "no matter what kind of institution you were in." Training had to be increased on intellectual property issues and technology, because these were no longer confined to the domain of large research institutions. As a result, more diverse services were presented because of the rapid changes in regulations and the spread of research administration to a host of new or emerging institutions that saw the need for such offices.

Under Donald Clark's presidency, internal management advances enabled the Executive Director of SRA to attend section meetings

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and other workshops to interact with members and to improve the database and provide financial information. SRA's successful eRA initiative promised a new area of professional development activities, and attempts were made to develop a collaborative and cooperative relationship with the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA). SRA approached NCURA about collaborating to reach more research administrators. However, NCURA decided to mount its own program and SRA continued to do the same.

William Schweri's presidency in 1997-98 focused on increasing membership, revenue, efficiency, and communications. Strategic partnering opportunities were explored. New training programs met the continuing pressure of electronic commerce and the need to respond to other opportunities as they presented themselves.

SRA remained innovative in the best interests of professional development programs. Lynne Chronister points out that the addition of "International" to the organization's name was by consensus of the membership. Lynne remarks: "The outcome of that change has been the evolution of research administration around the globe. SRA has supported new organizations in third world developing countries as well and new European organizations. International research is beginning to flourish and will, in part, be successful because SRA became SRA International and [continues to be] a strong proponent of global research standards and procedures."

## More New Developments

During Ruth Poole's year as president in the early 1990s, compliance became a key professional issue, and SRA worked to provide the best in instruction. Increased regulation and oversight moved from the government to grantee institutions in the areas of conflict of interest and research misconduct.

During Lynne Chronister's term as president in 1998-99, government agencies and research universities were beginning to enlarge the focus on international cooperation in research. Many of the developments focused on promotion and support of collaboration.

William F. Schweri's presidency not only provided the Strategic Plan, but his administration's strategic partnering achieved success with NCURA in the RAPID (Research Administration Professional Information Development) partnership. In this endeavor, Donald Clark, Lynne Chronister and William Schweri were very active in developing other contacts and expanding external networks. RAPID also put the Essentials Elements of Research Administration on both the NCURA and SRA International websites.

William Schweri succeeded in arranging a partnership with the Office of Naval Research to develop the ONR/SRA meeting, "Leveraging Research," in Biloxi, which was an excellent outcome of this partnership. President Schweri and Lynne Chronister used their relationship with RDML Paul Gaffney (then head of ONR) to develop this first for ONR. The all-day program involved almost 100 speakers from ONR and provided participants with a clear understanding of current priorities and how to work with ONR. The coordinators of the meeting were Julie Cole, Marcia Weis, Pearl Bigfeather and the SRA Executive Office. It was a huge success. It introduced SRA to 465 potential members, gave it high visibility nationally and allowed the Society to meet revenue for the year.

President Schweri and volunteers developed excellent contacts with the Council on Competitiveness, the University/Industry Roundtable, National Academy of Science, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), and other national associations. SRA was well represented at events in Washington. President Schweri had the opportunity to get SRA's message out to colleagues in Europe at the European Managers

As we are all aware, research regulations and rules are ever changing and evolving.

of Research Administrators (EARMA) meeting at Trinity College in Dublin, and at meetings in Australia. The European Study tour hosted by SRA was also useful in expanding the network and profiling capabilities for the cooperating federal agencies and the visitors. SRA offered a very high quality professional education experience to European colleagues that they could not find elsewhere.

President Schweri's tenure as president brought emphasis on best practices and committee structural changes. Paul Waugaman agreed to chair the SRA Best Practices Taskforce. This group developed a plan for SRA to meet Strategic Plan Objective IV: To identify, collect and disseminate "best practices" in research administration. The Taskforce had a working session in Philadelphia and delivered a report in 1998 while Lynne Chronister was president. Paul Waugaman and William Kirby took the initiative in this area for several years, presenting workshops and concurrent sessions and publishing several reports on best practices.

In the area of committee structural change, President Schweri asked Dr. Victoria Molfese of the University of Louisville to chair the SRA Committee Structure Task Force. This group reviewed the committee structure and made recommendations to improve communication, efficiency and effectiveness among our committees. Dr. Molfese's group made a number of recommendations on restructuring SRA committees to provide more synergy and eliminate duplication.

Finally, SRA leaders continued to meet challenges in electronic commerce to benefit members and worked with federal agencies and the Federal Demonstration Project to provide appropriate comment and update members on new developments. The first SRA Electronic Research Administration workshop was held in Chicago. It was a success thanks to the hard work of Pamela Krauser, Lawrie Robertson and other volunteers who made presentations and assisted with logistics. A new session was

presented in which vendors explained how clients should select systems for their specific needs. The presenters from InfoEd International, Inc. and RAMS gave insider advice on what system shoppers should look for and how to approach the process of purchasing systems.

Farther abroad, research administrators from Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Europe were interested in SRA because they recognized the need for professional development and education for themselves and their colleagues that was the hallmark of SRA. This was largely not available anywhere but in the United States and Canada. When they attended annual meetings, they immediately recognized the benefits of the professional organization.

President Elliott Kulakowski continued the work of internationalization activities of Lynne Chronister and her predecessors by expanding SRA's educational programs. During his administration SRA expanded the Departmental Administrators Training (DA 101). The first DA 101 workshop was held in July 2001 in North Carolina, during the presidency of Elliott Kulakowski while Julie Cole was President-Elect. Both were active in the preparations for this inaugural session (Manns, 2007). With an idea that evolved during the presidency of Dr. Molfese, Dr. Kulakowski's administration further developed and approved the Distinguished Faculty Award, which was instituted during the presidency of Julie B. Cole, his successor, in 2001-02 (Manns, 2007). The Senior Leadership meetings and the satellite video teleconference and interest group on Responsible Conduct of Research were created to facilitate leadership values and the ever-growing importance of RCR.

### **Presidential Accomplishments**

Each of the presidents accomplished real-time goals depending on the previous and contemporary developments in the profession. The value of diversity was affirmed and reaffirmed. The society's leadership was consistent with strategic planning. The budget

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was balanced to keep the society solvent and best positioned to service the membership. As the 1990s continued amid new pressures, the society identified more revenue-generating items, one of which was a constant drive for increased membership.

Ruth Poole's presidency reflected significant outcomes of this drive, as seen in the record attendance at the annual meeting in Seattle in October 1994. Another important step during her presidency was taken when the society moved its offices from Chicago to Washington, D.C. In addition, to offer time-sensitive education issues, the society founded the Education Division. What had been the Board of Advisors was formalized into the Executive Committee to clearly define leadership tasks. Moreover, new chapters and interest groups were added, a dynamic activity that has made SRA a grassroots organization with a multitude of professional development activities as near to where members reside as possible. President Poole and her board also saw to it that, because of their work for the society, past presidents were given lifetime membership letters to continue SRA's emphasis on rewarding and celebrating its membership.

Past president James Pyle observes that, since the early 1990s, the Society has become less parochial, focusing more on the greater good rather than special interest groups. All of the various subsets of SRA are important, but the board reflects the greater good. Many new people join with different backgrounds and needs; SRA offers them certifications and learning opportunities to do their work more effectively.

Lynne Chronister's presidency highlighted two major accomplishments as the new century approached: the internationalization of research administration (by sponsoring the name change to Society of Research Administrators International) and additional resources for international members. Previous presidents, especially her immediate predecessor, William Schweri, had laid the groundwork for expansion of the international activities; Lynne built upon

this success. In addition, President Chronister spent a good deal of effort to create and expand collaborations with other related professional societies such as the National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA), the National Association of University and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC), and the Association of Clinical Research Professionals (ACRP).

In addition to establishing contacts in the United Kingdom, Europe and Australia, in 1996-97 William Schweri worked closely with Richard Tomlin to develop the international research administrator study tour, coordinated by Tomlin, then Co-Chair of the SRA International Committee and active SRA member from the University of Newcastle, UK. He surveyed the group to investigate those issues of most interest. His knowledge of the visitors' interests and a warm welcome by American hosts insured the success of the visit. The group attended the Northeast Section meeting and traveled to Boston, where visits were hosted by three institutions. They had a meeting in SRA headquarters and heard presentations from Scott Morris (Committee for Economic Development), a panel from the National Academy of Science and National Research Council (including William Colglazier, Jerry Stuck, Anne-Marie Mazza, Allison Rosenberg, Amar Bhat, and Carol Alderson from the NIH, and Joanna Rom and Robert Hardy from the NSF). The last session of the day was an overview of the Office of Naval Research International Field Office activities. Joining Mr. William McClusky and Dr. Alan Weinstein by teleconference from London were Captain Dennis Ryan and Dr. William Weldon.

Moreover, President Schweri's administration found a niche for senior research administrators. Responding to a major objective in the new SRA Strategic Plan, Lynne Chronister took the leadership role in developing an outstanding executive retreat for senior research administrators in Midway, Utah, entitled, "The Business of Strategic R&D Alliances:

Developing an Infrastructure for Successful Research Collaborations.” William Schweri worked closely with Lynne on this because, “I saw it as a very important move in the right direction for SRA.” The retreat was developed by a committee of senior research administrators and focused on the underlying business practices and legal and regulatory variances among government, universities, non-profit entities, industry, and consortia. It created an open forum for discussion of the barriers to creating collaboration agreements. The retreat began the process of developing appropriate mechanisms for facilitating R&D alliances and ways to circumvent barriers. In what has been an SRA model, this meeting was highly participatory, with adequate time for group brainstorming and substantive exchange among the participants. It was a major success.

As change became pervasive in research administration, the Essential Elements of Research Administration remained a skeleton for the actions that research administrators take. The 227 Elements existed as lines on paper without the addition of substantive knowledge until just recently, when they were integrated into the Body of Knowledge (BoK) on the SRA International website. The BoK project has added definition to the Essential Elements to promote real-time education with volunteers appointed as contributing and associate editors working with editors Phil Myers and Sandra Nordahl. President McCallister revived the BoK at the board meeting in Milwaukee in January 2005. The BoK is a living educational document and can be added to and edited by the membership.

President McCallister’s term also witnessed significant structural changes to the Board of Directors to improve the Society’s management and to be responsive to the needs of the membership, especially in new programming. During Lynne’s Chronister’s consultancy with the larger board in June of 2004 in Milwaukee, the consensus was to decrease the size of the board and increase the president’s term to two years to provide heightened continuity. The

board now consists of the executive committee, six members-at-large and an ex officio member representing the sections and interests. In addition, the president selects one board member to provide liaison with the sections and the interest groups. The new structure enables the board to be more responsive to the membership and to have better continuity in senior leadership, which enables implementation of strategic planning outcomes during the presidential term in which the action was approved. The year that the President-Elect spends with the board encourages productivity at the outset of the presidential term. After serving for two years, the president leaves office to become the Immediate Past President to provide continuity during the new succession.

### Conclusion: To be Accomplished

SRA’s past presidents have helped the membership to accomplish a great deal through our fortieth anniversary. The past presidents have remained a strong motivational group to provide continuity and fabric to improve and increase educational offerings, suggest new strategic partnerships, and maintain international relations for professional development opportunities.

In his Presidential Address on October 14, 2001 Elliott Kulakowski noted an important symptom of the growth of the Society. Early in his remarks he said that 350 volunteers had been responsible for the developments of his administration, and “this is the true spirit of SRA.” One of these developments was the creation of membership cards, a membership brochure, and exhibits at the annual meetings of the Association of Clinical Research Professionals (ACRP) and the European Association of Research Managers and Administrators (EARMA). Tying the membership closer together was the inauguration of an electronic membership directory. Co-sponsoring organizations became important to the services and funding of SRA to improve upon previous annual meetings. At the turn of the century the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO),

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KPMG Consulting, and SRA International co-sponsored the research administration Benchmarking Project. The NIH awarded a contract to SRA International to conduct a series of focus groups to determine what principal investigators, departmental administrators, sponsored program officials and various NIH administrators thought about its Just-In-Time and Modular Grant Programs. In addition, SRA entered into a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA) with the Navy Medical Research Center to develop ethics education and training videotapes in human subjects for investigators and Institutional Review Board (IRB) members and administrators from presentations recorded at the meeting in Vancouver (Gabriele, 2007).

Dr. Kulakowski further noted that the Society had more than come of age with its services and reach in North America and abroad. With representatives from over 18 different countries, SRA pursues collaborative and outreach activities. Research administrators from abroad are fully involved as chairs of the International Committee. Furthermore, SRA International Europe identifies opportunities for closer work with research managers and administrators in Europe. An International Scholarship Program was established in 2001 to support research administrators and managers from third-world countries to attend the meeting in Vancouver. At the Annual Meeting in Vancouver, SRA met with representatives from the Australian Research Managers Society and the EARMA to discuss international collaborations. As a result of these outreach activities, the Vancouver meeting hosted the largest number of international attendees outside of North America in SRA history.

Interest groups have been a long-standing component of SRA International. In 2002 there were discussions about the increasing membership in SRA International from hospitals and academic medical centers, and whether these should become a division or if a new designation of focus group should be established.

In addition, an Academic Health Center Working Group was established that currently meets at the Drug Information Association Meeting each summer; discussions are underway to have this group meet at the annual SRA meeting. SRA has saved groups the expense of creating a new organization. Several of these key groups are our Historically Black Colleges and Universities and the Veteran's Affairs Foundation. Threads and tracks have been exclusively designed to accommodate the needs of these groups and provide volunteer opportunities.

The activities such as these were achieved while building the administrative infrastructure for the Executive Office after the move to the new location in Rosslyn, Virginia. This move to independent management strengthened the financial stability of SRA. These changes enabled President Kulakowski to report, under the guidance of treasurer Fred Mesler, that SRA was able to add \$130,000 to its strategic reserve. This amount brought the strategic reserve to over \$500,000 for the first time in SRA's history. SRA completed its first year as an independent organization, and new Bylaws were implemented at the 2002 Annual Meeting. New Policies and Procedures and a Human Resources Manual for operating as an independent organization were developed.

SRA International has come a long way since its inception in 1967. Since the early 1990s membership has increased from 2,700 to over 4,000 research administrators. We all know and are proud of the increase in strategic services to meet the endless requirements of professional demands upon our time, our leadership, our personnel actions, and the need for professional knowledge. In that regard, SRA has remained the home of practical, real-time professional education and is superior in the volume and frequency of its certificate program offerings.

Many of us know that research administrators and SRA International will continue to grow and remain progressive as it moves aggressively on behalf of its membership beyond its first

40 years. An active international research administration network, publications of the Society, and teleconferences provide educational activities for professional development in keeping with the founders' vision (Beasley, 2006).

SRA will continue to be challenged as Federal spending for research continues to increase, as reflected in the 5.5 percent average yearly increase from 1982-2006 after adjusting for inflation. Funds from industry that have to be managed by service-oriented research administrators increased 5.8 percent in 2006 (Brainer, 2007). The growth of Federal spending for research raises an incontestable and concluding point.

Research administration and the Society need to continue to embrace the uniqueness and reach of SRA and provide the membership with a better appreciation of this uniqueness to provide the best in professional development. Celebrating the vision of SRA's founders and the diversity of educational programs enables recollections of the Society's advancement over 40 years. SRA's first era has helped our researchers move closer to the truth they are seeking as research administrators have done the same. This era of professional and educational advancement in a just international society has occurred through the earnest efforts of thousands of members. As with our researchers, research administrators' efforts are for the public good, and we can hope for, as Lynne Chronister reminds us, "world peace!" to continue with our mission and values.

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# Contributing Authors

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Editor of the American Journal of Infection Control since 1994 and has published more than 200 journal articles, four books and a number of book chapters in the areas of infection prevention, epidemiology, and clinical research.

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**Dr. Pamela F. Miller** is Director of the Office of Sponsored Projects at the University of San Francisco with over 20 years of experience as a research administrator in both research extensive and research intensive institutions. She has made extensive and many contributions to the study and practice of research administration for which she has been awarded many times over. She served as the Editor of The Journal of Research Administration from 1995 to 2001.

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**Dr. Robert Porter** is Director of the Proposal Development Team in the Research Division at Virginia Tech. He has more than thirty years' experience as a tenured professor, private consultant and research administrator. He has published extensively and has provided workshops and educational sessions in research administration at diverse conferences. Dr. Porter

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