

# NCURA Honors Mike Varney

By Bill Sharp

NCURA recently presented Mike Varney, Assistant Director of Information Systems at Health Research Incorporated (HRI), with a commemorative plaque to honor his many years of ongoing service to the research administration community through his attentive oversight of the ever-useful *Research Administration Listserv* (RESADM-L). NCURA Treasurer Shannon Sutton and NCURA's Tara Bishop were on hand at the HRI offices in Menands, New York, on May 8th to make the presentation, attended by many of Mike's colleagues who joined in the celebration.

**R**ESADM-L is of course the e-mail list used by *many* research administrators nationally (and sometimes internationally) to pose questions, compare notes, post position announcements, and generally to provide an easy-access forum for research administrators to share information and insights.

The list was first established on November 22, 1993, by Liz Mazzella, then Assistant Director of Technology Transfer and Sponsored Programs at HRI. The list began with just under twenty members. (The original e-mail posted to the list, as well as every other e-mail sent during the past twenty-four years, is still accessible in the list's public archives.) Mike became caretaker of the list and its associated hardware and software beginning in 1997. Since then, RESADM-L has grown to roughly 5,277 subscribers and averages between 15 to 20 e-mails a day (although Mike notes that this is an overall average—for instance mileage tends to vary on days that GRANTS.GOV is having issues!).

In addition to his oversight of RESADM-L and his other duties as assistant director, Mike also serves as a database administrator, report writer, and server administrator. Since Mike provides his support of the list from an IT perspective and not from one of the other research administration content areas, he only occasionally posts to the list himself on IT-related topics or on the rare occasion when he needs to step in to take care of a runaway conversation, address out-of-office replies inadvertently posted to the entire list, or otherwise do what is necessary to keep the list running smoothly. Mike does note that it is a testament to the list membership that he does not have to moderate the list; by and large the research administration community has behaved responsibly and collaboratively to use the resource effectively without the need for constant oversight of the content of postings.

Mike appreciates that HRI recognizes the value of supporting the list from a technical and managerial perspective and its administrators often find answers in the list postings just like everyone else. HRI covers the annual software licensing fees, equipment maintenance costs, and of course Mike's time and salary. RESADM-L is currently run off of an "antiquated" (in computer years) Sun server (pictured at right) in the HRI corporate offices in Menands, but there are plans to implement a major software and hardware upgrade in the near future.

Instructions for subscribing to RESADM-L and other information about the list can be found at: <http://lists.healthresearch.org/instructions-resadm-l.html>



Congratulations Mike, and thanks from NCURA for keeping this resource going. ■



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