

2016 DELTA Recipients



Mark Anderson

One of Mark's most notable qualities is his ability to understand markedly different databases within Banner and elsewhere, to grasp problems, and to take positive action toward solutions. For example, a little over a decade ago, the University Office of Planning and Budgeting (UOPB) had forty-three staff after a merger with the University Office for Academic Policy Analysis. Its staffing is now down to nineteen, and still shrinking. The only way UOPB has been able to manage many of the required and desired tasks is by using

technology effectively. Mark's work has allowed UA to be able to move forward on several important initiatives while still providing the continued data that it has for over thirty years.

As a software developer, Mark creates, prepares, and maintains supporting materials related to elements of the University's annual data submissions, both required and desired. Mark created graphical interface into a web page that illustrates the state's counties. When rolling the cursor over each county, a display shows recent graduation data, and other information about the University. Mark has been instrumental in efforts to help people at other higher education institutions create similar functionality.

Mark is an excellent listener, often asking questions to see whether he can create software solutions to make work processes more efficient. He works well with a variety of clients in collecting and analyzing data, identifying creative solutions and implementing data platforms for his clients. Mark's calm demeanor and willingness to assist others in accomplishing their tasks has resulted in his being sought out to provide help to others. You will often find him with a smile.

Working with the Office of Government Relations, Mark created a software legislative search engine which not only tracks legislation, but also keeps comments per each piece of legislation or topic in a single site. This tool integrates the impacts and comments in a usable and efficient manner, making it quite important.

In UOPB we are strong believers in continuing education and Mark is no exception. He has pursued additional formal education completing a certificate program in Business Intelligence through Vanderbilt University. He has facilitated multiple in-service seminars for us.

Mark works very well across offices and campuses. I have heard only positive comments both about how he works with multiple units on multiple projects and about the quality of the output. He is what you want as a subject matter expert that works within a service center for many units. His personal motivation and attitude are outstanding.



Shannon F. Dwyer

In the nine years she was with AITS, Shannon Dwyer has displayed the highest level of professionalism, technical achievement, collaboration, and innovation in her work. Our AITS Enterprise Systems Coordination (ESC) Student team provides technical support, coordination, and expertise to the three campuses and Shannon excels in all aspects of our responsibilities.

What makes Shannon so valuable to the AITS organization is her ability to look at problems creatively, perform research and analysis on new technologies, and ultimately bring about solutions that fulfill (and often exceed) client requirements, all the while working within our existing set of available applications and tools.

Other members of our team regularly seek Shannon's advice and assistance on projects and work issues. Her ability to listen, provide multiple options for solutions, and work effectively with people at all technical levels makes her an invaluable resource.

Along with regularly providing technical support and information sharing Shannon has created a number of solutions that we use on a regular basis to perform our ongoing maintenance and support activities. These solutions have improved efficiency for both our team and our clients submitting requests and have overall had a very positive outcome for our daily work.

The following quote from our UIC Office of Admissions customers characterizes Shannon's work and the true appreciation our customers have for her excellent contributions:

"Shannon has exceptional technical and functional knowledgeable of student systems especially in the Admissions and Recruiting areas. She is always receptive to the needs of the users. She is exceptionally organized and always follows up on important dates and deadlines. She is phenomenal to work with. It would not have been possible to achieve the upgrades to admissions processes and document management, especially incorporating document collection, posting, and review into the daily admissions application evaluation process without her involvement and leadership."



Tadi Kumar

Tadi is known as the “go-to person.” He has a wealth of knowledge, and if by chance he cannot answer a question immediately, he researches it and replies back quickly. Tadi is constantly on the lookout for ways to improve processes....it’s his passion and where he excels. Every solution he’s devised to improve operating efficiency has yield superior results.” He consistently exceeds expectations.

Here is an example where Tadi saved a project from missing its start-up. The UIUC Identity Access Management (IAM) project was a major release and a high profile project, with a hard implementation date in October. The deadline was in jeopardy due to poor database performance issues that the IAM vendor couldn’t resolve. Tadi worked with the vendor and AITS staff throughout the weekend prior to go-live, to dramatically improve the product’s performance. His leadership and expertise enabled AITS to deliver IAM on time and avoid significant service issues for campus users. He increased productivity by reducing database copy process from two hours to two minutes, a savings of \$72,000.00 per event. Virtually every solution Tadi devises results in ongoing savings for the University.

Tadi’s is never too busy to work with anyone, at any skill level. He has that rare combination of being an expert in his area, and yet he remains approachable. He’s just really easy to work with. It seems that the only time Tadi gets remotely upset is when the Detroit Lions lose or his AITS bowling team gets knocked out of first place!

Tadi is a self-starter. He learned how to tune an SQL server and he used that knowledge to help teach others. He completed training in Oracle Real Application Clusters (RAC) and has presented twice at Ellucian (our Banner system vendor) conferences.

I end with a quote from one of his colleagues; “[Tadi] is self-motivated, reliable, efficient, approachable, helpful and knowledgeable, and goes about his work with a smile and a positive attitude.” “Its citizens like Tadi who are the bedrock of our nation’s success.” Every ship needs a rudder and it’s our belief that Tadi is that guy.



Kunal R. Shah

Kunal leveraged the IT background he acquired while working here in the University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences System (UIHSS) prior to his current position to become a technology lead for us in UIC Purchasing on various software and other IT contracts. By combining his hands-on procurement knowledge with his background and organizational skills, he quickly identifies, address and recommends appropriate solutions. Kunal is recognized

by his internal and external customers as an effective project expediter and “go-to” person. He is doggedly persistent in making sure that the Hospital’s purchasing and contract management systems are addressed.

Kunal led the development of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Information Technology Personnel and Consulting Services which is directed to a sheltered market whereby only minority and female-owned companies certified under the State Business Enterprise for Minorities, Females and Persons with Disabilities Act may submit proposals. The University is conducting this RFP as a result of the Business Enterprise Program Council passing a resolution that a sheltered market set-aside is needed to remedy the disparity of Illinois State agencies in contracting for certain IT and telecommunications supplies and services. This proposal is ground-breaking in that no other State agency or public university has undertaken this path, and the success of this effort could serve as an entrée for similar RFP’s.

The congenial and supportive attitude that Kunal brings to his assignments is contagious and makes him a person that all department managers and co-workers genuinely appreciate working with, and in that way the example that he sets contributes to overall team morale and effort. Kunal is often requested by campus departments or units to be assigned to conduct their competitive procurements because of his outgoing style and willingness to take on all projects as new opportunities to help those customers achieve their procurement objectives. He has also provided mentoring and assistance to his teammates and as such has garnered the respect of co-workers, students and clients.

Kunal’s excellent work at UIC has been rewarding and effective for our team for several reasons; his professionalism, his initiative to take on challenging projects, and his technology and purchasing knowledge.



Daniel Pelayo

Daniel Pelayo's unwavering commitment to his job and the University, his exemplary work ethic, and his respected leadership within Student Loans and Collections (SLC) make him an excellent candidate for DELTA. Throughout his nine years with the University, Daniel has continued to grow as both a team member, and leader through his daily work, contributions to and implementation of new ideas for the benefit staff members, and initiative on projects outside of his normal job duties.

Empty cubicles were left as a consequence of staff reductions. Daniel re-evaluated this additional workspace and proposed the idea of creating a Student Center in our Chicago office. In addition to giving students a useful, organized workspace in which to complete their required paperwork for loans and payment agreements, this Student Center also helps change the paradigm from the "big bad billing office" by letting students see they Student Loans and Collections are there to help and empower them. Creating the Student Center also saved the department money, because it was no cost to create, and saved on the cost for dismantling the cubicles.

We have seen Daniel demonstrate excellent mentoring of his team. He is often training or coaching, treating every situation as a learning opportunity. He is never too busy for his team members. He travels monthly to Urbana to provide one on one time with his staff. We have seen him raise morale by accepting, implementing and publically recognizing their new ideas. He also conscientiously celebrates special events in their lives (such as birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, new baby).

Daniel actively promotes the professional development of his team by encouraging them to attend webinars, training sessions, and conferences when budget permits. Daniel is the President of and hosts the annual Illinois Student Loan and Receivable Administrators (ISLA) conference. It is a one-day conference in the Chicago area that enables attendees to share best practices and network with each other for the purpose of more effectively serving their students and institutions. Under Daniel's leadership, ISLA attendance has grown significantly, and drawn nationally renowned presenters on topics of vital importance to the community.



Arlene L. Shorter

Arlene manages the team responsible for Competitive Procurements and Solicitations, which are the more complex procurement transactions. Arlene is conversant with the State procurement requirements and is invested in UIC Purchasing's ability to define and process competitive procurements on behalf of its campus customers in a precise and timely way; effectively directs a team of Purchasing professionals to competently and diligently complete purchasing activities; and

is engaging and focused on delivering excellent customer service to meet our campus customers' purchasing needs.

Arlene's interpersonal skills and emphasis on efficiency has made UIC Purchasing more productive than before. For example, she and her team member saved hundreds of thousands of dollars to various research departments by issuing a procurement and awarding a contract for gas cylinders and liquid gas products, equating to a cost savings of approximately \$832,406 in the initial three-year period. To maintain control of inventory and give the researchers autonomy in ordering their products, the procurement utilized the iBuy System, which allows the departments to simply place an order in iBuy and the product is delivered to them within 24 hours, without the need to engage with UIC Purchasing on their individual purchases. In FY15 Arlene and her team were responsible for 400% increase of completion of competitive procurement transactions (52 in FY15 compared to 17 for FY14).

Honesty and integrity are clearly demonstrated in her relationships and conduct of purchasing transactions. She is very conscious of compliance requirements and fiscal concerns for the University, and consistently reminds purchasing team members and campus customers about the need to be attentive to and produce legally-compliant and cost-effective purchasing solutions. Arlene is a key asset to UIC Purchasing and the University. Her initiative, approach, professional demeanor, and unwavering commitment to getting the job done is much appreciated.

Arlene is a certified Procurement Professional with National Institute of Governmental Purchasing and National Association of Educational Procurement. Arlene and her team deliver presentations and Purchasing training to campus departments. Arlene's team not only works with UIC departments, they also extend their services to UIUC and UIS.



Mary White

Mary coordinates contract awards for professional and construction services at the University with the State Procurement Officer and the Procurement Policy Board. She is often the first point of contact for questions and issues. The University has over \$1 billion of work in a variety of stages.

Mary is like an orchestra conductor, she expertly deploys employees and financial resources based on her knowledge of staff skills and expertise and on her awareness of our office budget, expenses and payment procedures. She is the point of contact for maintenance contracts and office equipment. As back-up for the office's business manager, Mary also understands and can perform accounting and payment functions as needed.

Coaching and mentoring are Mary's strengths that she provides to support and professional staff. The systems used in capital delivery are very specific, which means that virtually every new employee needs to be trained. Mary steps into the training role effortlessly and efficiently. She encourages questions and never makes anyone feel inadequate by the questions they may ask. When new computer systems and software are introduced to the office as when the UPSIDE contract system was introduced, Mary has been quick and diligent to tackle the challenge of learning new ways to operate. Mary is also quick to share knowledge and skills with others.

She recently served on a University committee to adopt electronic signatures on contract documents. The ability to sign documents electronically will greatly expedite the contract routing process and enable construction to start at the soonest possible date. Mary was instrumental in the training and coordination of the campus construction units and served as a liaison with OBFS and the Chancellors' offices to allow this effort to proceed. As a member of the University's committee for Continuity Planning to ensure how operations could continue in spite of adverse events, Mary offered many appropriate suggestions and carried the campus plan back to UOCP&RES for implementation. Mary is a key member of the State's Illinois Public Higher Education Procurement Bulletin Committee that addresses issues with the posting of contract advertisements, awards, and amendments.

Motivation and rewards in the office often come through Mary's congratulations on accomplishments to her coworkers, her quick praise for coworkers when difficult tasks are performed well, and her frequent acknowledgment of coworker's skills and talents. Our staff meetings start out with stating our accomplishments for the month. As we sometimes struggle to recall, Mary often reminds us what we have done and what a great accomplishment it is.



One ID/One Password Project Team

Giving access to the right resources to the right people at the right time is the goal of the University's Identity and Access Management (IAM) project. Lead by AITS, IAM is an outstanding and successful example of a UA team leading a cross-university project with input and assistance from campus-based IT professionals.

Because campus IT units were instrumental in the project success the AITS team members regularly communicated with their campus peers on all three campuses via email, lync/skype calls, and in-person meetings. The team used effective project and meeting management techniques (e.g., timelines, assignment grids) throughout the Springfield and Urbana implementations. These tools made expectations clear and documented progress.

IAM communications staff assembled a university-wide advisory group of more than 70 stakeholders who were invited to participate because of the direct impact on their functional areas (human resources, admissions, IT). They provided useful on-the-ground knowledge. Because IAM's single ID and password is a comprehensive change, it was vital for as many impacted offices to participate and be heard as possible. Likewise, it was important for campus staff to hear the concerns of their peers, which sparked discussions and highlighted differing processes across the University.

Kara McElwrath, Assistant Director of Client Services at UIS and key stakeholder stated: "Since 'Go Live' day, I have received countless thank you's for this greatly improved system for setting passwords – from users who previously had to enter social security numbers and gender to reset their password to retirees and emeriti faculty who had to come to campus or call us to reset their password." Lessons learned from the UIS go-live implementation helped to modify the implementation in Urbana.

The IAM Project team provided monthly updates via conference calls to different groups of stakeholders, including representatives from public affairs, human resources, business and finance, and IT professionals across all three campuses. Communications were frequent and targeted. The communications plan was shared on a regular basis and the communications coordinators were outstanding.

Units are receiving better services because of improved single sign-on and reduced time spent on identity management. Central IT units are saving time and money because of reduced costs for password reset, greater consistency in identity data across the University, and reduced workload through automated security access provisioning and de-provisioning. The University benefits from reduced risk, better control and auditing, and better enforcement of access policies. And, in some ways most importantly, individuals with a University of Illinois NetID are benefitting from the more efficient single password system and the easier to use way to manage that aspect of their professional lives.

The team members responsible for this good work are:

• Stephen M. Barker	• Michael E. Keck
• Todd Bickers	• Marla McKinney
• Cynthia Cobb	• Stacey Neil
• Deborah L. Coggins	• Mark E. Pollard
• Jared M. Crowe	• Rod Schaefer
• Susan H. Flanagan	• Patrick E. Schlehuber
• Daryl Fritchey	• Michael Sharp
• Eric George Matthew Hansen	• Christina Vann
• Peter Herrig	• Suzanne Elise Zelle
• Jun Huang	• Butch Zurich