

## Professional Staff Leadership Academy Class of 2024

### *Urbana-Champaign*



**Greg Anderson** is the Assistant Dean of Budget and Resource Administration for the College of Fine and Applied Arts at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. In this role, Greg serves as the Chief Budget Officer for the college and oversees administrative functions including business operations and financial reporting, information technology, human resources, and facilities operations.

Greg has been at the University for over 20 years working in business and administrative operations in a number of different roles with units including Materials Research Laboratory, Grants & Contracts (now known as Sponsored Programs Administration), Engineering Administration, and Fine and Applied Arts, where he has been for the last nine years. He also serves as chair of the Business Affairs Committee within the Business Managers Group. He received a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Illinois State University.



**Robbie Bauer** has been designing metering systems and analyzing energy consumption data for Utility and Energy Services (UES) and all energy conservation programs at the University of Illinois-Champaign/Urbana (UIUC) for more than 15 years. Robbie started his career as a field engineer for Northrop Grumman working on automation equipment that reads and sorts the USPS mail. In 2008, Robbie joined UIUC as a DDC Specialist. Robbie's focus now is on designing, maintaining, and expanding real time metering systems on campus and managing the utility distribution systems for Chilled Water, Steam, Domestic Water, Sanitary, and Storm systems. Robbie manages the installation and operation of hundreds of real time metering systems in +175 buildings for campus chilled water for air conditioning, steam systems for heating, hot water for heating, domestic water, and electricity for power. As a manager, Robbie has overseen real time metering

upgrades in all the campus buildings with UIUC provided steam, chilled water, domestic water, and natural gas service entrances. Robbie's goal is to keep UIUC on the bleeding edge of technology for real time metering to create high integrity and high accuracy data for billing and analysis purposes.

Robbie earned a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Illinois-Champaign/Urbana.



**Angie Coy** serves as the Assistant Director of External Relations at the Prairie Research Institute (PRI), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Ms. Coy both oversees and actively engages with a diverse array of stakeholders, including elected officials, local and state agencies, industry leaders, non-governmental organizations, and the university community. Her focus is to enhance awareness of and support for PRI's mission, which involves conducting applied and fundamental research to steward natural and cultural resources for the benefit of Illinois citizens and beyond.

Ms. Coy joined PRI in 2008, when the scientific surveys transferred from state government to the University. Before joining PRI, she provided administrative support to various offices, including the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation, Office of the Chancellor, and Office of Sponsored Programs Administration.

Ms. Coy's commitment to professional development is shown in her membership of the Illinois Administrative Professionals (IAP) for over two decades. During this time, she has served on numerous IAP committees and held elected positions such as Treasurer and President.

Ms. Coy holds a Bachelor of Science in Organizational and Professional Development from Eastern Illinois University.



**Jonathan Elugbadebo** is the Director of Outreach, Recruitment, and Admissions in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences (LAS) at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Playing a pivotal role in shaping the student body, Jonathan serves as the lead LAS outreach, recruitment, and admissions officer for undergraduate enrollment, working closely with LAS academic departments and units, as well as the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, to strategically engage, recruit, and enroll a diverse cohort of high-achieving students. He also oversees high-level projects and leads new initiatives, providing strategic leadership within the LAS Student Academic Affairs Office.

Before joining LAS in 2015, Jonathan held positions in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, representing UIUC at hundreds of high schools and college fairs across the nation and overseas, as well as the Office of New Student & Family Experiences, developing and implementing registration and orientation programming for new students and their families.

With over 18 years of experience on campus, Jonathan has developed a diverse skill set and broadened his knowledge of resources, processes, and initiatives that benefit the student body. He is committed to the broader goals of UIUC's mission and strives to identify and develop pipelines that promote educational opportunities, transformative experiences, and student success. He also enjoys providing mentoring in the local community to help individuals grow and accomplish goals.

Jonathan holds both a Master of Education (Ed.M.) in Education Policy, Organization, and Leadership, and a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.



**Shawna Graddy** is the Associate Director for Administration at the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. There she provides leadership to Beckman's core administrative functions (finance, grants & contracts, human resources, information technology services, café, and facilities & operations) and acts as its Chief Financial Officer. She sets strategy for resource management and execution as well as climate improvement, equity, and inclusion efforts.

Shawna has worked on the Urbana-Champaign campus for almost 10 years and spent time in the Industrial & Enterprise Systems Engineering and Crop Sciences Departments. Before her time at the University, she spent three years at Booz Allen Hamilton providing technical expertise to the United States Air Force Human Performance Directorate and six and a half years as an officer in the United States Air Force. While in the Air Force, Shawna was an Airfield Operations Officer overseeing air traffic control and airfield management operations, a physical education instructor at the United States Air Force Academy, and a program manager and coach for the United States Air Force Academy's NCAA Division I women's basketball team. She is an alumna of the United States Air Force Academy, where she met her husband, played Division I basketball, and earned a B.S. in Behavioral Sciences. She subsequently earned an MBA from Trident University International. In her free time, she enjoys being outside, reading, and attending her children's many activities.



**Amanda Lombardo** is the Director for Strategic Research Planning in the College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences (ACES) Office of Research at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. In this role, she oversees the research planning, administration, and operations of the College. She manages a talented team of staff with expertise in research development and education, proposal and grant management, and information technology. She also provides strategic support to the ACES Plant Care Facility. She currently serves as the co-chair of the UIUC Research Development Community's subcommittee for Strategic Research Support which seeks to develop or identify resources to strengthen research development efforts. Amanda is dedicated to modernizing and advancing the research enterprise and enjoys collaborating with colleagues across campus to collectively work towards this goal.

Amanda has spent eight years on campus, several of those with the National Center for Supercomputing Applications. Prior to joining the University of Illinois, she worked as a research associate with the National Research Council's Aeronautics and Space Engineering Board. She holds a B.S. from Creighton University and an M.S. from Texas Tech University, both in Atmospheric Science.



**Wyatt Martin** is the Director of Budget & Resource Planning for the School of Labor & Employment Relations (LER) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has been with the university for 17 years in research administration and financial leadership roles and has spent the past 6 years in LER serving as the unit's Chief Financial Officer.

In his current role, Wyatt is responsible for overseeing the business and financial operations of LER to ensure the optimal use of financial resources. Other responsibilities include advising the Dean and Executive Committee regarding the financial state of the school and implications for planning, assisting with the annual budget process, designing policies and monitoring the School's financial health, and managing the use of the School's funds. He supervises the business office staff, providing expertise and guidance in areas related to budgeting, human resources, strategic planning, and resource allocation. Wyatt also acts as his unit's financial liaison with the Provost Office and other key administrative units on campus. Wyatt has served on several campus committees throughout his tenure, including acting as chair for both the Business Manager's Group and Administrative Budget Committee.

Wyatt has a BS in Finance and an MBA, both from Eastern Illinois University. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with his family and friends, traveling, and is an avid tennis player.



**Anna Simon** is Senior Associate Director of Special Events for the Office of the Chancellor at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. There, she assists in managing a diverse event portfolio ranging from small private dinners to large-scale, highly produced events, including the University-wide Commencement Ceremony with 30,000 attendees. Planning over 100 events each year that cater to diverse audiences including families, students, donors, alumni, and dignitaries, Anna provides protocol and organizational support to unit convocation coordinators and university special event coordinators. In addition, she serves on the Communications Committee for the North American Association of Commencement Planners. Anna has worked on campus for fifteen years, with prior roles in University Housing and on the inaugural staff at the I Hotel and Conference Center. She is a troop leader for Girl Scouts of

America, a merit badge counselor for Scouts BSA, a volunteer for Edison PTSA and Central High School Band. Anna is an alumna of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville where she received her bachelor's and master's degrees.

Anna is an alumna of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville where she received her bachelor's and master's degrees. She holds a certificate in Academic Ceremonies. Outside of the office, Anna is a troop leader for Girl Scouts of America, a merit badge counselor for Scouts BSA, a volunteer for Edison PTSA and Central High School Band.



**Candice Solomon-Strutz** is a collaborator, educator, and innovator. Her interests are promoting a culture of collaboration, inclusion, and innovation in higher education across functional areas. At the University of Illinois, she serves on the leadership team for the Women in Technology group and Black Faculty and Professionals Alliance and as a Racial Justice Ally and IT Leadership Workshop facilitator.

Candice has over twenty years of experience in Alpha Phi Omega in various roles ranging from chapter advisor and section chair to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Program Chair and now serving on the National Board of Directors.

Candice has twenty years of experience in various technology roles, from workstation support and server administration to leading shared governance efforts and IT project management. Currently, as Director of IT Partners for the College of Applied Health Sciences, Candice provides leadership in designing an overall IT services strategy.

## *Springfield*



**Craig McFarland** has worked as an Online Coordinator/ Academic Advisor for UIS since 2017. In that time, he worked with hundreds of students from nine different academic programs. Currently, he advises Elementary Education students as well as graduate students in Educational Leadership and through the Master's in Education for the School of Education. He has been part of the Academic Professional Advisory Committee since 2018, serving as chair for the last four years. Craig is also an alumnus of UIS having earned both his BA and MA in political science. He teaches first year seminar, this past year the course focused on understanding political media. Outside of work, he is involved in local Springfield community theatre, recently playing LeFou in a production of Beauty and the Beast. He also hosts several podcasts in conjunction with NPR Illinois, including a Disney podcast called "Beyond the Mouse" and a Ted Lasso podcast called "Peanut Butter and Biscuits." Through these shows he has interviewed several creatives including Idina

Menzel, Yvette Nicole Brown, Alan Menken and others. He also loves playing with his eight-year-old son.



**Lea Smith** is the Director of Records and Registration/Registrar at the University of Illinois Springfield. Lea oversees the Office of Records and Registration consisting of a number of areas including catalog, course scheduling, degree audits, grading, student records, transcripts, registration, tuition and fees, transfer articulation, and graduation.

Lea brings a wealth of experience to her role as a higher education professional, drawing from her multifaceted background in retail management, team leadership, customer service, and operational efficiency. Her career at UIS began in the fall of 2018 in Admissions, then transitioned to Records and Registration and she was recently named as the Director of Records and Registration/Registrar. Lea is a proud University of Illinois Springfield alumna, earning her Bachelor of Business

Administration and her Master of Business Administration degrees at the university.



**Aaron Stewart** has served as the Business Manager for Facilities and Services at UIS since May 1, 2022, following six exemplary years as the Business Administrative Associate for the College of Education & Human Services. Aaron has been repeatedly recognized for his diligent work to streamline processes, ensuring accuracy and fostering transparency, and for his demonstrated willingness and commitment to tackle any project or challenge.

During his tenure at UIS, Aaron has served in various leadership roles outside of his daily responsibilities. Highlighted by his current role as President of the Civil Service Advisory Council and his third consecutive year on the Senate Executive Committee, Aaron has participated in various capacities on the Campus Senate, the University Planning and Budget Committee, the State Employee's Combined

Appeal (SECA) Advisory Board, and numerous advisory, focus, and hiring committees.

When asked, Aaron will tell you that the best thing to bring to a team is a sense of humor. He prides himself on creating a work environment that is both productive and pleasant. Although he avoids accolades, when possible, he admittedly appreciates that his colleagues consider him in high regard, and he strives to continue to earn their praise.

Outside of the office, Aaron can most likely be found with his dog, watching the St. Louis Cardinals, or working on a renovation project.

## *Chicago*



**Faizan H. Abid, MPA**, is the Assistant Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs in the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs at UIC. He has been with the office for a total of 14 years in various roles, beginning as a student employee. In his role, he oversees the promotion and tenure process for the university, administers senior level administrative searches for the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, having coordinated more than 20 Dean/Vice Provost level searches, serves in the Vice Provost's leadership team, and is responsible for various other management duties and projects in the office. He has been responsible for several other functions in Faculty Affairs during times of turnover and transition, including organizing the New Faculty Orientation and New Deans, Heads and Chairs Orientation for several years. Faizan is passionate about working at UIC

and is dedicated to process improvement in order to provide better and more efficient services to the faculty and other university constituencies.

Faizan completed his Master's in Public Administration and a bachelor's degree in Political Science, both from UIC. He views his career at UIC as service back to his beloved alma mater. He resides in the southwest suburbs of Chicago with his beloved wife, son, and daughter. In his free time, he volunteers for various community service-related activities and initiatives, and holds multiple volunteer leadership positions.



**Charity Ball, DNP, RN** serves as Director of Research Education and Co-Director of Research Operations at the Clinical Research Center within UIC's Center for Clinical and Translational Science (CCTS). The CCTS helps UIC researchers bring health breakthroughs into the world faster. There, she provides strategic oversight of the research clinic program operations and designs and develops research staff educational programing.

Dr. Ball is passionate about ensuring the research workforce is prepared to support clinical research through training, she recently developed a mentorship for research nurses. For the past five years, she has served on the advisory board for Enhancing Quality in the Translational Research Workforce Conference (EQuaTR), which offers the opportunity for clinical research staff to learn from leaders in the field, gaining practical knowledge on current trends and issues in clinical research.

Dr. Ball has been with the University for nine years and is a 2022 recipient of the Chancellor's Academic Professional Excellence Award (CAPE Award). She holds a bachelor's degree of Nursing Science from Prairie View A&M University, a master's degree of Nursing Science from Saint Xavier University, and Doctor of Nursing Practice in Healthcare Systems Leadership from University of Illinois at Chicago.



**Nicolas Bernal** is a results-oriented academic professional who strategically employs his knowledge of relevant industry sectors, innovation trends, and business development processes. As the Director of Innovation and Talent Development, he identifies, cultivates, solicits, and stewards strategic corporate prospects and provides specialized support for high-priority programs and projects. Nicolas is dedicated to fostering UIC's market reputation as a leading education provider at target companies and plays a pivotal role in increasing UIC enrollment among working professionals.

A skilled relationship builder, Nicolas establishes strategic connections with senior-level executives. He works closely with these influential decision-makers to develop and deliver programming to their companies while marketing UIC's educational offerings that meet their company's goals. In addition to his corporate engagement efforts, Nicolas builds strong relationships within the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Innovation, college partners, and university cross-functional teams to ensure seamless coordination and support for UIC's online programs.

With a keen focus on project management, Nicolas manages high-priority programs, develops project timelines, and leads large cross-functional teams to meet deadlines and key project milestones. His ability to develop and present budget models highlighting the return on investment underscores his commitment to delivering measurable outcomes.

Nicolas's proactive approach extends to planning and executing events and meetings at companies, including lunch and learns and guest speaker sessions. Through these initiatives, he raises awareness for UIC, showcasing the university's expertise and offerings while building long-term relationships. Nicolas also cultivates relationships with UIC alumni working at target companies, identifying strategic opportunities.

Nicolas has worked at UIC for over 18 years. Prior to joining the Office of Vice Chancellor for Innovation's Extended Campus, Nicolas worked in student and career services for UIC's College of Business. Nicolas is a passionate lifelong learner who earned his Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts and Science, Economics from the

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and most recently his Master of Business Administration, Finance from the University of Illinois Chicago.



**Rodney Chambers** serves as the University Library Director of Business & Financial Operations. He joined UIC in 2012 and is responsible for overseeing the financial health and operational efficiency of four Library sites across the state. Bringing over 20 years of experience in higher education, he has become a respected member of the UIC business community and has steadily increased his knowledge of university policies as well as his contributions to the effectiveness and efficiency of the library's financial activities.

Fortunate to hold this unique business role, Rodney has firsthand impact on the education of UIC students and faculty whose educational exploration sits at the forefront of research and innovation in the United States. As the Business Office leader, he participates in the library's policymaking Steering Committee, providing measured perspectives on how the library can support students and faculty with financially sustainable information resources.

In addition to earning a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and English from the University of Iowa, Rodney holds a Master's in Public Administration from Governors State University and is certified in Project Management by the Project Management Institute (PMI). These credentials give him a foundation and understanding of how governance, finance and ethics affect the day-to-day operations of a public university. His skills and leadership enable the library to provide impactful services to students and faculty while ensuring the library maintains financial stability. He is a member and has completed development programs with the National and Central Associations of College and University Business Officers.



**Hélène Gussin, Ph.D.**, has worked at the University of Illinois Chicago College of Medicine since 1999 and currently serves as the Director of Administrative Operations of the Department of Pediatrics. She oversees the operational, financial, regulatory, research, human resources, and business activities of one of UICCOM's largest departments.

As part of the departmental leadership team, Hélène collaborates with multiple internal and external stakeholders, contributes to strategic planning, and leads a professional administrative team supporting faculty, staff, and learners. While at Pediatrics, she has successfully implemented changes in processes, resulting in streamlined operations, reduced duplication of efforts, increased faculty satisfaction, cost savings and improved finances.

An experienced biomedical researcher with over 27 publications in peer-reviewed journals, Hélène's extensive background includes research on autoimmunity, prenatal diagnosis, vision, pulmonology, population health and mental health. Her research activity has focused on improving health in underserved populations, children, people with disabilities, and those with chronic diseases.

Hélène holds a Magistère in Chemistry from Ecole Normale Supérieure (Paris, France), an MS in Microbiology/Immunology from UIC, a PhD in Pharmacology from the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle (Paris, France), MBA/MPH joint degrees from the UIC Liautaud School of Business / School of Public Health (May 2024), and French degrees in science and law. She also holds a Project Management Certificate from the



UIC College of Business Administration School of Continuing Studies and a Certified Research Administrator (CRA) Certificate from the Research Administration Certification Council. She is an active member of the Association of Administrators in Academic Pediatrics (AAAP).



**Nicholas Kane, MBA** serves as Assistant Dean for Finance & Business Planning for the Executive Dean's Office in the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Chicago. In his current capacity, Mr. Kane is responsible for organizing the medical school's finances and oversees many of the day-to-day activities to support the \$750 million annual operation which includes a \$190 million research portfolio, a \$300 million clinical practice plan, and a high-fidelity curricular program for one of the country's largest medical schools.

Most of Kane's 28 years of professional experience have revolved around higher education. During his 22 years within the College of Medicine, he has developed a keen understanding of the public institution's educational, research and service missions and forged an ability to facilitate a wide range of mission critical projects. In addition to his experience at UIC, Kane previously worked at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine as well in the private sector at Askesis Development, Inc., a healthcare software development.

Kane obtained a B.A. from Indiana University and an M.B.A. at the UIC Liautaud Graduate School of Business. Kane was born and raised in Chicago and currently resides on the northside of the city with his wife who is a public elementary school teacher and their two teenage children.



**Dr. Tanya Merritt** currently serves in the role of Nurse Manager of Clinical Operations for Ambulatory Services at UI Health. As a Board-Certified Nurse Executive, she is responsible for managing the supplemental staffing team of outpatient RN's and MA's. She also provides support to outpatient Clinic Directors, Assistant Directors, and Nurse Managers, on clinical operations such as staffing, clinical workflows, policy development, fiscal management, and quality improvement.

Dr. Merritt began her nursing career in 2008, as a Clinical Nurse for a small community hospital. Prior to her current role, she served as Staff Nurse, Core Charge Nurse, and Nurse Manager for UI Health's Center for Women's Health.

Dr. Merritt's nursing education began at the City Colleges of Chicago, where she earned her Associate Degree in Nursing from Olive Harvey College in 2008. She later obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Purdue University in 2011, and her Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree in Health Systems Leadership from the University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Nursing in 2019.

Dr. Merritt enjoys sharing her story of professional growth with all who aspire for each day to be greater than the last. She professes that her path to success was paved with many obstacles, but through hard work and perseverance she has been able to achieve her goals. She shares her story to inspire others to never give up on the pursuit of their dreams.



**Rachel L. Morrow** has worked in higher education for over 20 years and is a highly skilled and effective administrator with a breadth of knowledge including student and faculty affairs, human resources, budget and grant management, and finance.

In her current role, Rachel serves as the Director of Business Affairs for the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences (PSCI), College of Pharmacy. Rachel oversees office and business operations including contract management, departmental facilities management, biennial inventory, visitor travel, procurement, and departmental IT. Rachel works closely with the department's finance director on budget oversight, reconciliation, and compliance. Rachel is also the business and sponsored project manager for the Analytical Forensic Testing Laboratory (AFTL) in PSCI, which provides professional equine and clinical drug testing services to State agencies.

Prior to joining the College of Pharmacy, Rachel worked as Assistant Director of Budget in the Department of Information and Decision Sciences (IDS), College of Business Administration where she managed finance, procurement, administrative operations, grants, and human resources for the department and affiliated centers.

Rachel earned a BA in Journalism from Columbia College Chicago, and a Master's in Public Administration (MPA) from Governors State University in University Park, Illinois.

Rachel is a native of Michigan and enjoys traveling, volunteering, cooking, blogging, and true crime podcasts. Rachel volunteers for various non-profits and is currently pursuing volunteer opportunities related to wrongful convictions, which is one of her greatest passions.



**Jerisha S. Mack** is the Director of Community Engagement in the department of the Office of Community Engagement and Neighborhood Health Partnerships (OCEAN-HP) that is under the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Health Affairs. She is an innovative thinker with comprehensive experience in public and population health. She earned her BA from Governor State University and her Master of Public Health (MPH) from Benedictine University. She is also a Certified National Diabetes Prevention Program Lifestyle Coach. She serves as member of Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Ambassadors Program and serves as a Board Member of Noble Network of Charter Schools.

In her role as the Director of Community Engagement, she has been instrumental in building and sustaining OCEAN-HP internal partnerships within UIC and external partnerships with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and networking partners. She is dedicated to reciprocating and adding value to the community by joining community coalitions and task force committees to represent and communicate opportunities of collaboration.

Her career goal is to transform her accountability in leadership. She desires to deepen her knowledge of the university system, build internal and external networks, gain the opportunity to join and collaborate with internal and external committees, develop change capabilities to effectively manage evolving internal and external innovations, and help advance her impact as a leader through emotional intelligence.

Jerisha cherishes her time reading, spending time with family, and working with her husband, an award-winning filmmaker.

## System Offices



**Brad Edwards** serves as the Assistant Director for Patent Operations and Senior Technology Manager at the Office of Technology Management (OTM). He joined the OTM in 2007 and is currently responsible for managing the activities of the patent offices and for marketing, protecting and licensing portfolios of technologies coming from the Colleges of Veterinary Medicine; Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences; and Liberal Arts and Sciences. Brad works closely with OTM's Federal Compliance Officer ensuring compliance with the statutes and regulations under the Bayh-Dole Act with Sponsored Programs Administration on managing the intellectual property language in various agreements used to facilitate research on the Urbana-Champaign campus. Prior to joining the OTM, Brad served as a senior chemist and patent coordinator at Chemtura Corporation. He is a named inventor on six U.S. patents and is registered to practice before the United States Patent and Trademark Office. He holds a MS in Crop Science and a BS in Microbiology.



**Cassandra Staudacher** is the Human Resources Policy and Project Coordinator in System Human Resource Services. In this role Cassandra serves as a key team member by supporting the Senior Associate Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer. She leads and facilitates numerous system-wide human resource committees, collects and compiles data for a wide variety of projects, and assists with a multitude of time and content-sensitive projects. She is dedicated to finding creative problem-solving solutions and strives to do so in a collaborative, transparent, and friendly manner.

Cassandra has worked at the University of Illinois for 24 years. She began in the Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies at UIC and then transitioned to Human Resources, where she has remained for the last 20 years. She earned a Bachelor of Sciences in Advertising from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is also a Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Certified Professional. In her free time, Cassandra spends many hours traveling to her three teenagers' sporting events (including tennis, bowling, baseball, hockey, volleyball, and soccer). When she is not doing laundry, she enjoys reading, traveling, and hiking.



**Bridget A. To** is an Assistant Director within the University Accounting Services division within University Accounting and Financial Reporting (UAFR). UAFR is a system-wide service center that supports the accounting and financial reporting needs of the University of Illinois System. Bridget leads a small accounting staff in providing a variety of back-office operations and customer service to the University community, with a focus on matters related to state funds.

Bridget oversees issues related to Banner account codes to ensure compliance with state reporting requirements and accuracy of financial statement reporting. She monitors transfers between income fund and plant funds, watches questionable transfers and journal vouchers. She also prepares various complex audit schedules and annual financial reports while also collaborating on various business and



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accounting issues to ensure compliance with good business practices as well as policies and procedures. Bridget is also the liaison between University Accounting and Singapore Programs.

Bridget graduated from Illinois State University in 2001 with a BS in Accountancy and from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2017 with a Master of Business Administration and is a Certified Business Administrator. Bridget has worked for Archer Daniels Midland, CliftonLarsonAllen formerly Clifton Gunderson, LLP, The High School of Saint Thomas More, and The Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club prior to joining the University in 2013 as a Financial Accounting & Reporting Analyst.

In her free time, she enjoys adventures with her husband Anh and their three children and granddaughter camping, boating, and watching their daughter play golf.