CALS Business Operations is pleased to announce the appointment of Holly Lipkovich as CALS Director of Research Administration. Holly will join the College beginning August 16 and comes to us from Case Western Reserve University where she served as the Director of Grants and Contracts for the School of Medicine. Holly brings more than twelve (12) years of experience in research administration and financial planning. She has substantial experience overseeing both pre- and post-award functions and, in her most recent role, oversaw the research portfolio of both federal and non-federal research programs for the School of Medicine’s 70+ departments. In her previous position, Holly represented her institution and played a leadership role in Case Western Reserve’s implementation of a new research administration software system to track proposals and award information. This experience will be particularly valuable to our College as our University implements a new research administration software system over the next few years.

In her role as CALS’ Director of Research Administration, Holly succeeds Dollie Moore who retired at the beginning of April after more than 28 years of service to NC State University. Holly assumes leadership of the College’s Research Administration Office, composed of 21 full-time staff providing centralized pre- and post-award services to our faculty and staff throughout the college.

“An important goal for our College is to increase our sponsored research activities; excellence in research administration and responsive, high quality customer service to our researchers are an integral component of achieving that goal,” said Joyce Munro, Assistant Dean for Business Operations. “I am excited for Holly to join our committed research administration team in August! Throughout the recruitment process, I was impressed by Holly’s ability to listen well, engage others, think creatively and respond expertly to questions around the many different challenges that are likely to arise in this leadership role.”

Get to know CALS’ Director of Research Administration

Since Holly will play a fundamental role in the research that takes place across the CALS community, we asked her some questions to help you get to know her better and the role she will play in the CBO and CALS. Check out her responses below.

Q: Holly, you’re joining us all the way from Ohio. What attracted you to CALS and this particular area of the country?

I was drawn to CALS by the noticeable impacts the College makes within the community. CALS partners with farmers, industry, non-profits and government to develop research and technologies that are shared in real-time with those affected, having an immediate and positive impact. Having the opportunity to be a part of that difference, while leveraging my finance and research administration background, is what attracted me to CALS.

As for what attracted me to the area, North Carolina and, in particular, Raleigh are beautiful areas where you can experience all four seasons while being close to the mountains and the beach. There is a friendliness throughout this area, which makes it a wonderful place to work and raise a family.
Q: What is your customer service philosophy and vision for the CALS Office of Research Administration?

When I think of customer service I think of a team of not just Research Administrators but also CALS faculty, students and staff. Each member of the team has an important role. The role that Research Administration plays is being a resource for those we assist to help make research happen. It also means going the extra mile to get the job done.

Q: Why are you so passionate about research administration?

As with many individuals, I came to research administration by way of different career, which for me was public accounting. I had the benefit of learning research administration from the ground up, from proposal submission to set-up to closeout, and I saw first-hand the impact I had on the faculty and staff I worked with in my school. There is nothing like the feeling of seeing a faculty or staff member walk into your office confused or upset, then leave feeling relieved and reassured once you have had the chance to talk and work with them.

Q: How will your background contribute to the new leadership role you are taking on?

I have spent my career in research administration learning how to grow, change, and develop a grants and contracts office. I have gained valuable experience in the technical aspects of research administration through my amazing mentors. I have also been given the opportunity to mentor and teach those individuals who I work with, to see them have the “ah ha” moments when a new concept clicks for the first time. I understand that in order to be successful, a team needs to have focused and calm leadership.

Q: What excites you about working with CALS research administration team?

When I stepped into the conference room to meet the CALS research administration team, my first impression was that of a team, which has humor, different views and personalities, and a willingness to get the job done. I look forward to getting to know each of the individuals and seeing the things we can do together.

Q: What are your general plans for your first couple of months with the organization?

My first priority is to learn about my team, the office, the diverse research portfolios, processes, culture and interactions. While doing so, I will work to understand the expectations of senior leadership, University and College offices, CALS faculty, staff and students, and the individuals who work in the CALS Research Administration office. We would then discuss what is working and what is not working, and how we can make it better in both the short and long term. I plan on using my background and experience along with constant feedback from the team to continue the progress of the CALS Research Administration office. I look forward to the experiences the team and I will share as we move toward the future.

Please join us in welcoming Holly to the CALS community!

Special Thanks to Our Search Committee Members:

- Rick Davis, Chair of the Search Committee and Head and William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor, Entomology and Plant Pathology
- Molly Bradshaw, Business Liaison Manager, CALS Business Operations
- Alex Graves, Interim Director, CALS Office of Diversity Affairs
- Patrick Hayes, Director of Research Administration, College of Engineering
- Lee-Ann Jaykus, Williams Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor, Food Science
- Tom Mease, Business Officer, CALS Advancement
- Christy Sandy, Grant Proposal Developer, NC Agricultural Research Service
- Sherrie Settle, Director, University Sponsored Programs (SPARCS)
- Sabra Stipe, CALS Pre-Award Consultant, CALS Business Operations