



# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



## Dr. Jill Sonke

Director of Research Initiatives, Center for Arts in Medicine  
University of Florida College of the Arts

**Jill Sonke, PhD, is a dynamic figure in arts and health, holding key roles at the University of Florida (UF). As the director of research initiatives at UF's Center for Arts in Medicine, director of national research for One Nation/One Project, and co-director of the EpiArts Lab, she's at the forefront of innovation. Her diverse affiliations span UF's School of Theatre & Dance, Norman Fixel Institute for Neurological Diseases, Center for African Studies, STEM Translational Communication Center, and the One Health Center.**

**Jill's influence extends globally, as she served as a senior advisor to the CDC Vaccine Confidence and Demand Team during the pandemic, and now served as a founding member of the World Health Organization's Jameel Arts and Health Lab. A seasoned dancer with training from renowned institutions, she's been a principal dancer in New York and a guest performer and choreographer elsewhere.**

**With a PhD in arts in public health, Jill's research delves into the impact of the arts on health outcomes and communication strategies. Her exceptional contributions have earned her numerous awards, including the New Forms Florida Fellowship Award and over 350 research grants.**





## Dr. David L. Reed, Ph.D.

Associate Provost for Strategic Initiatives  
Inaugural Director, AI<sup>2</sup> Center

**Dr. David Reed is the Associate Provost for Strategic Initiatives at the University of Florida. He has been a driving force in the university's AI Initiative, which began when the University was gifted academia's fastest AI supercomputer worth over \$65M. Reed has led the university's effort to expand AI throughout the university, including creating and overseeing a dozen AI working groups. UF's goal is to provide AI education to any student, regardless of their major or previous exposure to computer programming. UF also created a university-wide undergraduate certificate in AI so that students across the university can layer AI education on top of their current major. This dramatically increases the number of students getting AI experience, as well as the breadth of disciplines in which they are being trained. Reed established and currently leads the Artificial Intelligence Academic Initiative Center (AI<sup>2</sup> Center), which supports the training of AI faculty, new AI course development, and student engagement in AI. The AI<sup>2</sup> Center also oversees a five-year, multi-million-dollar project to expand AI offerings at the University of Florida. UF's model of teaching AI to everyone is called "AI Across the Curriculum." Reed and the AI<sup>2</sup> Center are taking this innovative model of AI education to K-12 districts, community and state colleges, other universities, and to existing workers through professional development courses. UF sees this broad model as the only model that can scale to meet the AI workforce needs of the nation. Before leading the AI Initiative, Reed was a National Science Foundation-funded scientist studying genomics.**





**CONNECT:**

***MORNING MINDFULNESS***

***AND WELLNESS***



## Kim Holton, Ph.D.

Instructional Assistant Professor  
Department of Health Education & Behavior

**Kim holds a PhD in Health and Human Performance, MS in Zoology, and BS in Ecology. She began studying yoga and meditation in 1998 and starting teaching in 2002. Kim holds yoga teaching certifications with Sivandanda, Nosara, Kundalini Research Institute and Amrit Yoga Institute. She is also a certified enneagram teacher in the Narrative tradition. Kim currently serves as the Associate Director of Teaching & Practice for UF Mindfulness.**



PRESENTER



## Angie Brown

Director  
Communications and Worklife, UFHR

**As director of UFHR Communications and Worklife, Angie oversees UF faculty and staff communications and work-life initiatives. She helps facilitate internal change management efforts and provides strategic communications and programming that support employee wellbeing. She has previously held positions in communications at Penn State University and Oregon Health & Science University, and has served on the Board of Directors of the National Consortium for Building Healthy Academic Communities and the Advisory Board for Mindful Leader. She is a Prosci-Certified Change Practitioner and a certified Workplace Mindfulness Facilitator through Mindful Leader.**





**DAY 1**

***CONCURRENT 1***

***SESSION PRESENTERS***

***12:00 PM - 1:00 PM***

**NOVEMBER 15, 2023**

PRESENTER



## Jennifer Leckerling

Procurement Agent IV  
Procurement Services

**Jennifer Leckerling works in Procurement Services as a Procurement Agent IV and handles UF's Service purchases (Hotel/Catering Contracts, Consulting, Janitorial etc) supplier issues and other projects. She started at UF in 2016 as the Research and Scientific team lead and transitioned into Services in 2022. Jennifer teaches Procurement 101, 102 and the Fiscal Onboard training for campus. Jennifer began her career with Fairmont Hotels in San Francisco, California. She started as Culinary Operations Manager and transition into Purchasing Manager. Jennifer holds a Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations, with a Minor in Italian from Pepperdine University in Malibu, California. She also has an associate degree in culinary arts from The Culinary Institute of America in Napa Valley, California. When not at work, Jennifer is busy running after her 17-month-old son and 5-year-old Golden Retriever.**







## Melissa Curry

Interim Vice President

University of Florida Human Resources

**A 24-year veteran at UF, Curry is the current interim vice president for Human Resources. Previously, she served as assistant vice president for Human Resources, overseeing the areas of Talent Acquisition and Onboarding, Employment Operations and Records, Immigration Services, Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance, Classification and Compensation, Workforce Analytics, and the Office of Strategic Initiatives.**

**Audrey Gainey is the director of Talent Acquisition and Onboarding and oversees UF's Strategic Talent Group, which aims to identify, attract, and engage potential and current faculty and staff and serves as a consulting group to departments throughout the university. Gainey has more than 25 years of experience in recruitment and championing various initiatives in support of best practices for recruiting, selection, and hiring.**



## Audrey Gainey

Director

Talent Acquisition and Onboarding, UFHR



## Rick Bales

Assistant Director for Creative Services

Communications and Worklife, UFHR

**As assistant director, Rick leads the design and visual communications strategy for UF Human Resources. He is responsible for the design of digital and print media as well as with broader creative direction and strategies of HR campaigns. His role includes graphic design, branding, photography, campaign development, and web design. Rick has a background working with design agencies and, prior to joining Human Resources, worked for UF Online as a Graphic Designer. He continues his professional development in the creative field.**

**As director of UFHR Communications and Worklife, Angie oversees UF faculty and staff communications and work-life initiatives. She helps facilitate internal change management efforts and provides strategic communications and programming that support employee wellbeing. She has previously held positions in communications at Penn State University and Oregon Health & Science University, and has served on the Board of Directors of the National Consortium for Building Healthy Academic Communities and the Advisory Board for Mindful Leader. A longtime meditator, she is a Certified Workplace Mindfulness Facilitator and especially enjoys sharing practices with those new to mindfulness meditation.**



## Angie Brown

Director

Communications and Worklife, UFHR



***From EVP to MVP: Leveraging Your Area's Strengths to Recruit Top Talent***



## Heather Justice

Research Administrator III  
 UF College of Pharmacy  
 Shared Service Center

**Heather is a Research Administrator III in the UF College of Pharmacy Shared Service Center. She currently handles pre and post award duties, but highly prefers working with faculty to assist in their proposal submissions. She was the 2022 recipient of a Division 3 Superior Accomplishment award, and is an active member of NCURA. She appreciates, policies, procedures, deadlines, and the feeling of accomplishment when a proposal is submitted without any concerns from the core office.**

**Heather feels most purposeful and fulfilled when she is creating resources (i.e. policies and procedures), providing mentoring and coaching to colleagues, and assisting faculty in developing proposals for submission. She enjoys being part of someone's professional growth and aiding in building top-tier employees that are confident, successful, and resourceful.**



## Dr. James Fairbanks

Assistant Professor  
 College of Engineering

**Dr. James Fairbanks is a computational mathematician with a Ph.D. in Computational Science and Engineering from Georgia Tech. He's acclaimed for innovative work in programming languages, algebraic techniques, and their applications in scientific computing and data science, particularly in epidemiology.**

**With a B.S. in Mathematics from the University of Florida, he was supported by the NDSEG Fellowship. Notable for his contributions to high-performance computing and data analysis, he has influenced fields like healthcare, social science, and biology. Awards include the DARPA Young Faculty Award and ODNI XAMINE Challenge. Fairbanks has published extensively, focusing on structured epidemic modeling, dynamic systems, and categorical data structures. He's a recognized trailblazer in advancing computational mathematics.**





## Kathy Parrish

Manager, Administration Services  
Anesthesiology

**Kathy Parrish, a dedicated professional, boasts a commendable tenure of seven years with the University of Florida and the Department of Anesthesiology. Presently, she holds the esteemed position of Manager for Administration Services within the Faculty Support Solutions team, Office of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development.**

**Throughout her multifaceted journey within the department, Kathy has consistently demonstrated her ability to develop, innovate, and implement services, policies, practices, and systems that enhance organizational effectiveness. Simultaneously, she ensures the provision of exemplary customer service to faculty, research and finance divisions, and administrative staff. Embracing her newfound leadership role, Kathy's primary objective is to maintain her unwavering commitment to serving faculty and staff, thereby upholding the high standards of support she has consistently delivered.**



## Martin Noguera

Assistant Director Of Research Administration  
College of Medicine

**Martin Noguera is a seasoned professional in the field of research administration, currently serving as the Assistant Director of Research Administration in the Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics. His exceptional organizational skills and strategic mindset have contributed to the successful execution of numerous grant proposals and the efficient allocation of resources within the university.**

**Martin is highly regarded for his ability to foster collaborative relationships with faculty, staff, and external stakeholders, facilitating interdisciplinary research initiatives. As an advocate for continuous improvement, he stays abreast of evolving research policies and procedures, implementing best practices to streamline administrative processes. Martin's unwavering commitment to excellence and his passion for supporting groundbreaking research makes him an invaluable asset to the university's research administration team.**





## Kathryn Rohlwing

Research Coordinator III

Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics

**Kathryn Rohlwing serves as a Research Coordinator for the Department of Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics. She is a University of Florida alum with a Master of the Arts in Museum Studies. After several years managing grants, exhibits, fundraisers, and public programs for museums throughout the Southeast, she now uses her skills in project management and policy & procedure development to assist in managing grants and research related to biomedical informatics.**



## Luisa Murphy

Research Coordinator II

Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics

**Luisa Murphy is a Research Coordinator in the Department of Biomedical Informatics at the University of Florida. She graduated from the University of North Florida with a degree in Public Health and Health Education. She has experience with managing research community engagement programs. This role allowed her to connect with diverse populations, facilitating effective communication and collaboration between community members, healthcare providers, and local organizations. Luisa has now transitioned into utilizing her experience in public health programs to effectively coordinate and oversee projects in the biomedical research field. Her expertise allows her to develop comprehensive project plans, set achievable goals, and ensure successful execution.**





**DAY 1**

***CONCURRENT 2***

***SESSION PRESENTERS***

***1:15 PM - 2:45 PM***

**NOVEMBER 15, 2023**



## Lindsey Telg

Adjunct Lecturer,

Department of Occupational Therapy  
College of Public Health and Health Professions

Lindsey Telg is an Adjunct Lecturer in the Department of Occupational Therapy, College of Public Health and Health Professions, University of Florida. She received her Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences at Florida International University (2006) and her Masters in Occupational Therapy from the University of Florida (2012). While in her Masters program, she founded the Occupational Therapy Equal Access Clinic which is still in operation today. Lindsey worked in public health for the Miami-Dade Area Health Education Center overseeing a large youth health education program.

As an Occupational Therapist, she has worked in adult inpatient rehabilitation, adult outpatient, and outpatient pediatrics. She specializes in care for clients with traumatic brain injury, executive function challenges, pediatric feeding delays, and trauma-based concerns. She has been an adjunct instructor in the Department of Occupational Therapy since 2016 and has taught or assisted in many of the courses offered in the Doctorate of Occupational Therapy (OTD) program.

She has received the Florida Occupational Therapy Award of Appreciation (2013), was selected for the American Occupational Therapy Emerging Leaders Program (2014), and received the Outstanding Young Alumni Award (2017) from the College of Public Health and Health Professions.



## Anna Baird-Galloway

OTD, OTR/L, MT-BC

Clinical Assistant Professor  
Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics

Anna currently works as a Clinical Assistant Professor for The University of Florida's Department of Occupational Therapy and serves as the faculty coordinator for the student-run Occupational Therapy Equal Access Clinic (OT EAC). She is a licensed and registered Occupational Therapist and a board certified Music Therapist. Anna completed her bachelor's of science in music therapy at The University of Alabama and worked for several years in the greater Chicagoland area. As a music therapist, she worked as a member of multiple rehabilitation teams for stroke recovery, Alzheimer's/dementia, TBI, SCI, mental/behavioral health, and hospice care.

She received her master's degree and her post-professional clinical doctorate in occupational therapy (OTD) at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). For her doctoral project, she created a continuing education course, Intentional Use of Music within the Occupational Therapy Scope of Practice, where she defined appropriate uses of music within the OT scope of practice and effective ways to increase collaboration with music therapists. This dissertation evaluated self-efficacy of each participant pre-, post-, and one-month after the implementation of this course. As an occupational therapist, Anna has worked extensively in acute care (cardiac, pulmonary, neuro, vascular, oncology, transplant), inpatient and outpatient mental and behavioral health, and end of life/palliative care. Anna is also a certified leader for Stanford's Chronic Disease Self-Management Program.





## Meena Thiyagarajah

Associate Vice President  
Finance and Administration  
UF/IFAS Office of the Senior Vice President

**Meena Thiyagarajah is a seasoned professional in the realm of finance and administration, currently holding the position of Associate Vice President at the UF/IFAS Office of the Senior Vice President. With a career spanning several years, Meena has established herself as a leader in the fields of finance, budget management, business operations, and external business agreements (EBAs).**

**What sets Meena apart is her multilingual prowess, as she is fluent in several languages, including Bahasa Melayu, Bahasa Indonesia, Tamil, and Colloquial Mandarin. This linguistic diversity allows her to engage with a wide range of stakeholders and partners across different cultural backgrounds, fostering effective communication and collaboration in the global landscape of finance and administration.**

**Meena fluently speaks Bahasa Melayu, Bahasa Indonesia, Tamil, and even rocks Colloquial Mandarin.**



## Benita Bannis

Director  
UF/IFAS Office of Workforce Development

**As the Director of the newly created UF/IFAS Office of Workforce Development, Benita Bannis collaborates with UF/IFAS leaders to improve the organizational climate and support the academic, career, and professional development of the UF/IFAS community throughout Florida.**

**Benita is the lead champion of UF/IFAS for All, a strategic commitment to providing the support, safety, and structure to help students, staff, faculty, and the broader community grow and thrive. In this role, Benita is also responsible for designing pathways and pipelines that grow Florida's emerging workforce and UF/IFAS's research, teaching, and Extension impact.**

**Benita is a triple Gator, earning her undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of Florida. Her previous roles included research administration and international programs, building support and access programs for students and their families, and UF's recruitment, admissions, and retention activities.**





## Marrah Berry

Associate Director, Strategic Research Development  
Sponsored Programs

**Marrah Berry is a Penn State graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics, a Master of Engineering degree in Systems Engineering, and she is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the University of Florida (UF) Environmental Engineering Sciences Department, focusing on Engineering Education. Marrah Berry started her UF career working as a post-award research administrative assistant, where she quickly learned the Department's functions. During her time in the Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering (HWCOE), Marrah Berry played a pivotal role in facilitating new faculty in grant submissions, inspiring tenured faculty to explore beyond their comfort zones, and serving as a mentor, guide, and leader within the HWCOE research administration group. Her invaluable experience also extends to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, providing her with a unique perspective on how different colleges within UF can collaborate seamlessly, bridging the gap between faculty and administrators. In her current role as the Associate Director of Strategic Research Development, Marrah Berry has continued to evolve, emerging as a resource for the entire UF research community. Her unwavering dedication, visionary approach, and profound impact exemplify her commitment to advancing research excellence at UF.**



## Melissa Mullaney

Sponsored Programs Training Manager  
Sponsored Programs

**Melissa is the Sponsored Programs Training Manager in the Division of Sponsored Programs. Her primary responsibilities are onboarding and continued education for DSP staff, maintaining and enhancing resources such as the DSP website and Instruction Guides, UFIRST support, and creating campus programs in support of pre-award and nonfinancial post-award activities. Prior to assuming this role, Melissa was a Sponsored Programs Officer in DSP for five years, focusing on pre-award and nonfinancial post-award transactions. Melissa holds a Master's degree in Arts Administration, and has experience in fundraising and grant writing in the nonprofit sector.**







## Laura Ling

Senior Associate Controller

Office of the Controller, Special Projects

**Laura Ling is a Senior Associate Controller in Finance and Accounting and is currently working as the Finance Lead for the Empowering UF project. Laura has been with the university for 20 years in a variety of roles, including working with Internal Audit, Finance and Accounting, and the UF Performing Arts. Prior to working at UF, Laura worked as an Audit Manager for PricewaterhouseCoopers.**

**As the Business Intelligence Analyst for the Controller's Office Center for Excellence, Michelle is passionate about driving innovation through people and data. Prior to her career at UF, Michelle's work as a hospitality professional led to a deep appreciation for the power of human connections. Her curiosity and desire to envision big-picture connections drives her data and process improvement work as she strives to uncover underlying challenges and questions. In her role at the Center for Excellence, Michelle leads projects focused on standardized financial reports, increased access and use of data, and clarity of reporting for the Enterprise. Outside of work, Michelle's two young boys ages 6 and 1, keep her busy and full of joy.**



## Michelle Romero

Business Intelligence Analyst

Controller's Office Center for Excellence



## Jim Freyman

Director, Data Platform and Analytics

UF Information Technology

**Jim has been with UFIT for over 15 years, most recently as an Associate Director of Data Analytics. He served as the COMPASS Program Director and led the UFIT Project Management Office for six years. Jim previously led the Enterprise Systems operations, change and release teams. Jim also served as the Technical Lead for UF's COVID-19 Return to Campus data and reporting initiative.**



**Empowering UF: Build a Better Data Future**



**DAY 2**

***POSTER SESSIONS***

**9:00 AM - 9:30 AM**

**NOVEMBER 16, 2023**



## Perihan Brown

Accounting & Financial Analyst III  
Harn Museum of Art

**Perihan Brown received two degrees from the University of Florida: Bachelor of Science in Accounting and a Master of Science in Management. Perihan worked in various University of Florida Departments as an Accountant and a Research Administrator. Before joining the Harn Museum of Art Team in November 2022 as a Financial Analyst III, she worked as an Accountant in the Department of Physical Security, Vice President for Business Affairs, performing Departmental Annual Budgets, Inventory, Asset Management, overseeing Purchase Orders, Requisitions, PCard transactions, Travel, and Departmental Monthly Reconciliation Processes. In her roles as a Research Administrator and Clinical Trials Fiscal Administrator in the Physics and Neurology Departments, respectively, her responsibilities expanded from Proposal Preparation and Submission to Post-Award Management for both Basic Science and Clinical Trials Research.**





## Brandon Telg

Instructional Designer and Trainer  
Training and Organizational Development, UFHR

**Brandon is an Instructional Designer on the Training and Organizational Development Team. He has over 6 years of experience at the University of Florida in the Instructional Technology space and more than 5 years of experience as an instructor. In addition, Brandon has worked as an event manager for festivals, conferences, concerts, and storytelling events throughout Gainesville.**

**Brandon strives to help people grow through understanding and developing their stories, personally and professionally. He combines his experience in communication with a hands-on mentoring approach to work with people and organizations to achieve their goals.**





## Jada McCray

Student

Health Education and Behavior

**Jada McCray is a health education and behavior undergraduate, driven by a passion for holistic health, wellness, and spirituality. She co-created the Fundamentals Academy and is building a wellness blog to empower others in personal and professional development while advocating for the transformative power of nature.**

**Adrian is a certified Tiny Habits, Happiness, and Heroic Performance coach. He conceptualized and co-created The Fundamentals Academy, coaches clients, and presents at events like CxUF. He has a BA in Psychology and is pursuing his MA in Happiness Studies - The Science of Wellbeing. Adrian has spent the last 10+ years studying the science of positive psychology, well-being, happiness, expertise, learning, resilience, and behavioral design. He is fiercely committed to helping others flourish by guiding them from theory to practice to mastery in a variety of fundamentals. When Adrian is not working to help others, you can find him writing software. As a full-stack Application Developer, he has built everything from educational games and business apps to content management system themes and analytics dashboards.**



## Adrian Gritz

Application Developer Analyst IV  
Warrington College of Business



## Jeni Lomnick Higgins

Academic Administrative Specialist  
School of Theatre and Dance

**Jeni Lomnick Higgins is an administrative professional with 20+ years' experience across sectors: non-profit community healthcare, private industries (technology, construction, transportation), education. Lomnick Higgins leverages this to build connections with people. Communication experience: 10+ years volunteer service as a crisis intervention/suicide prevention counselor, outreach consultant, and trainer; training in effective communication, mentorship, facilitation. Certifications: Crucial Conversations, Management Mastery, international mentorship, ethical research conduct, mindfulness/life coach, wellbeing. Lomnick Higgins' current work includes facilitation of open, genuine spaces for colleagues connected through work and personal interests. Building connections while centering mental health and self-care led her to co-create the Fundamentals Academy with this team. Looking forward to sharing our work with the UF community and beyond!**



**Better Than We Were: WOOP, If/Then It Is!**



## Jessica Kirwan

Project Manager III  
Department of Medicine,  
Quantitative Health Section

**Jessica Kirwan is a Project Manager in the Intelligent Critical Care Center (IC3) and assists a transdisciplinary team of engineers and clinicians in conducting sponsored research in medical artificial intelligence through project management, regulatory management, writing, and human resources activities. She has been working in the College of Medicine for over 18 years and is a Gator alum with a Master's degree in English.**



## Dr. Anindya Paul

Assistant Scientist  
Department of Medicine,  
Quantitative Health Section

**Dr. Anindya S. Paul is an Assistant Scientist in the Intelligent Critical Care Center (IC3) and works with an interdisciplinary team of UF graduate students, postdoctoral associates, software developers, UI experts and external university and industry partners to develop and deploy automated image analysis tools using cutting edge artificial intelligence (AI) technology in digital and computational pathology. In UF, he has been focusing on developing an end-to-end automated software platform for several cross-institute NIH funded large consortia which combines on-demand cloud computing, and an easy-to-use web interface for massive scale data visualization, data management, domain expert interaction and AI infused computational pipeline to identify clinically relevant microanatomic functional units from kidney histology images. Before joining UF, Dr. Paul has spent more than a decade in R&D industry especially last 8 years at Intel Corporation AI division where he was pioneering the next gen of AI research through understanding and mitigating unique security and privacy threats of sensitive data towards a robust, secure and trustworthy AI solution. At Intel, Dr. Paul was instrumental in forging a large-scale worldwide consortium in the form of multi-institution Federated Learning platform to train and deploy a brain tumor segmentation model using brain MRI from hospitals around the world.**





## Caleb Chambliss

Program Coordinator  
Experiential Learning Department  
Heavener School of Business

**Caleb Chambliss works for the Experiential Learning Department in the Heavener School of Business. He supervises two leadership development programs helping students apply the Five Exemplary Principles of Leadership and live as authentic professionals. Caleb is in his doctorate seeking to understand the complexities of quality experiential learning design to create a high school athlete leadership development experiential learning curriculum. His favorite quote is by John Dewey- “You do not learn from experiences; you learn from reflecting on your experiences.” This guiding quote validates his priorities for his faith, wife, and family with the mission of loving people to life.**



## Catherine Coe

Director, Competency Development and Program Evaluation  
Experiential Learning Department  
Heavener School of Business

**Catherine Coe is currently the Director of Competency Development and Program Evaluation for the Heavener School of Business. She has been a professional at UF for over 15 years, working in advising, instructional design, and now experiential learning. Catherine is also a triple, soon to be quadruple Gator, with her BSBA-Economics, MA-Economics, MEd-Higher Education Administration-Student Personnel, and currently ABD in her PhD in Education Technology. She is a new(ish) mom to her daughter Coral who is almost 2, a dog mom to three, foster dog mom to puppies, and a cat mom to many! She loves the Gainesville community, traveling with her pups in their RV, and has a goal to visit all of the National parks in the next 5 years. Catherine designed and launched the Gator Ready platform for business students at UF to be able to track and develop their career readiness competencies, and she's currently working on growing the platform to include micro-credentialing.**





## Devin Dissell

Sponsored Programs Officer Manager  
Division of Sponsored Programs

**Devin Dissell is a Sponsored Programs Officer Manager for UF's Division of Sponsored Programs (DSP) since July 2023. Before that, he spent over 4 years as a Sponsored Programs Officer specializing in post-award nonfinancial management. He has worked with a plethora of federal and non-federal sponsors in setting up new funding through UFIRST, as well as managing existing awards throughout their lifecycles. He has extensive experience in many sponsor electronic grants management systems.**

**Devin received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of West Florida in Health Care Administration. He also holds an Associate in Arts degree in Journalism. As a Gainesville native, he is a proud Florida Gator and holds dear the research mission of the University of Florida.**





**PRESENTER**



## **Dr. Elizabeth Gadsby**

Innovation Strategist; Adjunct Faculty  
Microbiology and Cell Science

**Dr. Elizabeth Gadsby and her husband, James Gadsby, are grateful to serve their alma mater, the University of Florida. Elizabeth earned her bachelor's in microbiology at UF and PhD in biochemistry at Georgia Tech, as well as a master's from Dallas Theological Seminary.**

**Through her career spanning Fortune 500 and biotech start-up leadership roles, Dr. Gadsby has led the successful discovery and commercialization of medical and consumer products as an inventor on over forty patents. She is passing on her experiences to current undergraduate and graduate students as an adjunct faculty member creating course offerings in Innovation Project Management and Microbiology Careers for Impact.**

**She inspires others to thrive in their careers through powerful feedback skills. She received the top corporate award for building talent of African American employees. She is an active mentor through local and international organizations including American Society of Microbiology, Young Life, and Greenhouse.**





## Jamie Dale

Assistant Director, Finance  
College of Education Business Svcs

**Jamie Dale is an accomplished professional who serves as an Assistant Director of Finance, in the College of Education. Beyond her professional achievements, she possesses a profound passion for education and making a positive impact in the world. Recognizing the importance of education in transforming lives, Jamie has dedicated significant time and effort towards collaborating with communities in Guatemala to support scholarship programs and feed malnourished children. Her faith and family drive her to continue to build a long-lasting legacy in everything she does.**



## Michele "Shell" Romano

Research Administrator III  
College of Education Post Award Coord Svcs

**Michele "Shell" Romano provides grant management services concerning financial, budget, contract allowances, policies, directives, and regulations on the use of funds for compliance with Federal, State, and local granting agencies. She looks for the best solution to solve challenges along the way. Shell also serves as a liaison between core offices across UF to achieve results in support of the Centers many actives.**

**Shell began with the University in 2003. Her experience includes Pre-Award & Post Award services. As part of her service she brings knowledge related to assistance in multiple areas from beginning to end of grant life cycle. She seeks out information when unique opportunities arise. Her experience includes UF policy, practices, and systems. Including UFIRST, Peoplesoft, Effort, Space reporting, and many others.**





## Jamie Harris

Sponsored Programs Officer  
Division of Sponsored Programs

**Jamie Harris is a Sponsored Programs Officer for UF's Division of Sponsored Programs (DSP). Jamie has over 22 years of experience working in Pre-Award administration. She has also worked in UF's College of Engineering and the Department of Medicine. She has in-depth knowledge of the various funding agencies. In addition, she has worked extensively with eRA Commons since its implementation. Jamie is a graduate of the University of Florida, where she received her Bachelor of Science degree in Health Science Education. She is a Certified Research Administrator (CRA®).**



## Nick Pugh

Sponsored Programs Officer  
Division of Sponsored Programs

**Nick Pugh comes to the University of Florida from Auburn University where he graduated with a BSBA in Supply Chain Management. Nick worked, at Auburn, as a Sponsored Programs Administrator from 2016 to 2020. His main responsibilities were to oversee the submissions, negotiate contracts, and initiate non-financial post award actions for the College of Agriculture and Extension services. He then accepted a position at the University of Florida, with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Research Office, as a Research Administrator. Nick is currently employed with the Division of Sponsored Programs, as a Sponsored Programs Officer, where he reviews proposals for the University.**





## Dustin Stephany

Sustainable Building Coordinator  
Planning, Design, and Construction

**Dustin graduated with a double major in Architectural Engineering and Construction Management from the Milwaukee School of Engineering. In 2010 he went to Rinker Hall to obtain a master's degree in Construction Management with a sustainability focus. He has a wide range of experience in engineering and construction management, as well as building operations and maintenance for a multitude of building types, including corporate office headquarters, hospitals, military detention facilities, luxury residential homes, sports facilities and university buildings. In 2015, he transferred from Facilities Service's Energy Department to Planning, Design and Construction where he currently guides building professionals in the development and execution of sustainable projects here on campus. UF prides itself in having more green building certifications than any other public higher education institution. As UF strives to become a top five university, Dustin provides leadership in implementing sustainability strategies and occupant wellness principles that optimize building performance while greatly enhancing the experience for students, faculty, staff, and Gator Nation visitors.**

**Dustin maintains credentials as a LEED Accredited Professional, WELL Accredited Professional, Green Globes Professional, Certified Energy Manager, and Florida WaterStar Certifier. Outside the office he enjoys traveling and mentoring Gainesville High School students. He is interested in learning about various cultures and exploring what shapes human behavior. He plays disc golf and goes camping throughout all of the Florida seasons.**





## Victoria Peprah-Asante

Associate Controller, Finance & Accounting  
Disbursements and Travel

**Victoria's professional journey spans over 25 years with expertise spanning both Finance and Accounting as well as Human Resources. Armed with an Accounting degree from UF's Fisher School of Accounting and an MBA, she embodies dedication and excellence in her fields.**

**As the Associate Controller of Disbursements and Travel, Victoria's commitment and passion is to ensure process enhancement and efficiency in her teams and this strategic acumen drives her teams towards excellence. Outside of her professional realm, she is an avid reader constantly seeking knowledge beyond her duties. Balancing this quest for wisdom, she cherishes moments with her family. Recently, Victoria embarked on a new adventure – gardening.**



PRESENTER



## Alisha Hargon

Accounting Specialist  
Finance & Accounting  
Disbursement Services - MarketPlace Help Desk

**Alisha Hargon is an accomplished member MyUFMarketplace team in University of Florida's Disbursements Team. Alisha's robust career spans over 12 years with extensive expertise in managing Accounts Payable, coupled experience with handling Accounts Receivables.**

**Although Texas is her place of birth, Alisha's upbringing occurred amidst the charming environs of Gainesville. Alisha is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree program at Florida State University at Jacksonville. Beyond the world of numbers, Alisha enjoys a variety of activities including sun-kissed beaches which are her haven offering her moments to cherish sunrises and sunsets that paint the sky in vibrant hues. She is also a proud parent who loves to watch her kids engage in baseball, football including fostering and their talents and passions.**





## Cheyenne Sapp-Beard

Fiscal Assistant II  
Finance & Accounting

**Cheyenne Sapp-Beard is a dedicated member of the Supplier Maintenance team in the University of Florida's Disbursements Team. With a passion for Finance & Accounting, she is currently pursuing her academic journey as an accounting major at Santa Fe College. Over the past year, Cheyenne has found immense fulfillment working in this area of Disbursements, contributing her expertise and enthusiasm to her role. Beyond her professional pursuits, Cheyenne's most cherished role is that of a loving mother to her daughter, Charlotte. Alongside her commitments, Cheyenne finds joy in various hobbies such as reading, gardening, and exploring new destinations through her travels. Her multifaceted interests and dedication exemplify her as a well-rounded individual who thrives both in her career and personal life.**





## Katrina Brown

Finance & Accounting  
Travel Team in Disbursements

**Katrina is a dedicated professional with a bachelor's degree from UF and a remarkable 21-year career in the field of accounting. Her journey in accounting includes not only corporate roles but also a successful entrepreneurial venture, where she ran her own business for several years. In her most recent endeavors, Katrina has extended her expertise to the Travel Department, where she played a pivotal role in implementing UF GO over the past year, showcasing her adaptability and commitment to excellence.**







**DAY 2**

***CONCURRENT 3***

***SESSION PRESENTERS***

***9:45 AM - 11:15 AM***

**NOVEMBER 16, 2023**

**PRESENTER**



## **Rhonda Black**

Office Manager/Administrative Support Assistant II  
CHPS

**Rhonda Black, received her P.M.S.E. (Professional Masters of Science in Entrepreneurship) from Warrington College of Business at UF and was 1 of only 10 Floridians chosen to participate in 2021 cohort of the NASDA Foundation – F2F Accelerator Grant Program at Innovation Hub. Ms. Black has worked for UF since January of 2001 and is currently Office Manager at the Center for the Humanities and the Public Sphere, responsible for managing fiscal, budgets, travel, and expenses. Ms. Black has taken over 125 training courses from UF Training and Organizational Development and received certifications in: All three PRO3 (Fiscal, HR, and Academic), Business Communication, Managing at UF, Thrive, and Gators Together. As a community volunteer, she completed training through the Alachua County Crisis Center and was a crisis hotline volunteer and a mentor at the Center for Innovation and Economic Development. Throughout Rhonda’s work and volunteer experience, her workshops have promoted personal and professional development. Examples include overcoming procrastination, effective communication, negotiating, and conflict resolution.**





## Dr. Luisa Amelia Dempere

HWCOE RSC Director

Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering Research Service Centers (RSC)

**Dr. Luisa Amelia Dempere is the director of the Research Service Centers in the Herbert Wertheim College of Engineering at the University of Florida.**

**She is a certified instructor of the Crucial Conversations and Crucial Influence courses from the company Crucial Learning®.**

**Dr. Dempere has facilitated multiple training sessions and delivered several presentations on these topics at UF in the colleges of Engineering, Dentistry, and Journalism, as well as part of programs such as the UF Post-Docs Association, UF New Faculty Orientation, and the HUB Collaboratory.**





## Kelly Wilder

Assistant Director, Research Administration  
College of Pharmacy

**Kelly serves as the Assistant Director, Research Administration at the College of Pharmacy. She leads a team of 7 research administrators charged with managing pre and post award activities for the # 3 funded College of Pharmacy in the nation. Kelly enjoys problem solving, innovating, and educating.**



## Melissa Mullaney

Sponsored Programs Training Manager  
Sponsored Programs

**Melissa is the Sponsored Programs Training Manager in the Division of Sponsored Programs. Her primary responsibilities are onboarding and continued education for DSP staff, maintaining and enhancing resources such as the DSP website and Instruction Guides, UFIRST support, and creating campus programs in support of pre-award and nonfinancial post-award activities. Prior to assuming this role, Melissa was a Sponsored Programs Officer in DSP for five years, focusing on pre-award and nonfinancial post-award transactions. Melissa holds a Master's degree in Arts Administration, and has experience in fundraising and grant writing in the nonprofit sector.**





## Jada McCray

Student

Health Education and Behavior

**Jada McCray is a health education and behavior undergraduate, driven by a passion for holistic health, wellness, and spirituality. She co-created the Fundamentals Academy and is building a wellness blog to empower others in personal and professional development while advocating for the transformative power of nature.**

**Adrian is a certified Tiny Habits, Happiness, and Heroic Performance coach. He conceptualized and co-created The Fundamentals Academy, coaches clients, and presents at events like CxUF. He has a BA in Psychology and is pursuing his MA in Happiness Studies - The Science of Wellbeing. Adrian has spent the last 10+ years studying the science of positive psychology, well-being, happiness, expertise, learning, resilience, and behavioral design. He is fiercely committed to helping others flourish by guiding them from theory to practice to mastery in a variety of fundamentals. When Adrian is not working to help others, you can find him writing software. As a full-stack Application Developer, he has built everything from educational games and business apps to content management system themes and analytics dashboards.**



## Adrian Gritz

Application Developer Analyst IV  
Warrington College of Business



## Jeni Lomnick Higgins

Academic Administrative Specialist  
School of Theatre and Dance

**Jeni Lomnick Higgins is an administrative professional with 20+ years' experience across sectors: non-profit community healthcare, private industries (technology, construction, transportation), education. Lomnick Higgins leverages this to build connections with people. Communication experience: 10+ years volunteer service as a crisis intervention/suicide prevention counselor, outreach consultant, and trainer; training in effective communication, mentorship, facilitation. Certifications: Crucial Conversations, Management Mastery, international mentorship, ethical research conduct, mindfulness/life coach, wellbeing. Lomnick Higgins' current work includes facilitation of open, genuine spaces for colleagues connected through work and personal interests. Building connections while centering mental health and self-care led her to co-create the Fundamentals Academy with this team. Looking forward to sharing our work with the UF community and beyond!**





## Ana Meyer-Ruiz

Assistant Controller  
Finance & Accounting  
Asset Management

Ana Meyer-Ruiz has 17 years of experience working at the University of Florida. In her current role, she serves as the Assistant Controller for Asset Management, overseeing the Accounting, Inventory and UF Surplus teams. Before working for Asset Management, she was the Accounting Manager in the Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) Department, managing the fiscal operations for the Department. Before ECE, Ana worked in Cost Analysis, assisting with Effort, Space, and Quality Assurance Reviews. Ana holds a bachelor's degree in Accounting from Saint Leo University and a master's degree in Forensic Accounting from Florida Atlantic University. Her expertise includes audits, reporting, sponsored project management, fiscal operations, process improvement, correcting variances, and asset management.

Jessica Ropicki is a graduate of the University of Florida where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Accounting degree and a Master of Accounting degree. She is a CPA and is the Accounting Manager for Asset Management at the University of Florida. Before working at UF, Jessica was the Comptroller for the Education Service Center, Region 2 in Corpus Christi, Texas and before that was the Assistant Director for the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Florida. While in her position as the Accounting Manager for Asset Management, she has worked on process improvements and implementations of several new accounting standards including GASB 87 and GASB 96.



## Jessica Ropicki

Accounting Manager  
Finance & Accounting – Asset Management



## Brenda Harrell

Associate Controller  
Finance & Accounting – Cost Analysis &  
Construction Accounting

Brenda Harrell is an Associate Controller in the Department of Finance and Accounting, Division of Cost Analysis/Construction Accounting/Research Participant Payments/Asset Management at the University of Florida. She has been with the university since 1997 and has experience in financial statement assistance, effort reporting, space reporting, construction accounting, research participant payments, Contracts and Grants post award activities, and high level federal financial reports including the Indirect Cost Proposal, Higher Education Research & Development Survey and the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards.

Daniel Morgan started with the UF College of Pharmacy in April 2009 and is currently the Assistant Director of Operations for the college. Daniel has the responsibility of overseeing the logistic operations, fiscal operations and the departmental administrative support operations for the college. Before arriving at the college, Daniel worked in the banking and credit counseling industries for 10 years.



## Daniel Morgan

Assistant Director, Operations  
College of Pharmacy

**Not Pictured: Eric Chesser**





**DAY 2**

***CONCURRENT 4***

***SESSION PRESENTERS***

**12:30 PM - 1:30 PM**

**NOVEMBER 16, 2023**



## Cassandra Stich

Research Administrator I, Fiscal Assistant II  
Department of Emergency Medicine

**Cassie Stich is currently a research administrator and fiscal assistant in the department of Emergency Medicine. She is passionate about all things research related, and strives to make a positive impact on the world. Originally from California, Cassie went to school intending to become a physical therapist. However, after undergrad, she opted for culinary school instead, and has spent most of her professional career in catering, and restaurant and event management.**

**Since transitioning into the research world, she has gained invaluable experience managing a complex international grant funded pilot program, and she hopes to continue developing her expertise in research administration. She lives in Gainesville with her husband Tommy, their kids Cayden and Myla, and their dog Cosmo.**







## Kenya Williams

Assistant Director, Classification & Compensation  
UFHR

**Kenya Williams is the Assistant Director of Classification & Compensation with UF Human Resources. She is a dynamic and forward-thinking HR professional with nearly 25 years of experience in various areas, including benefits, training, employee recognition, classification, and compensation. Her expertise extends to customer service excellence, strategic planning, business and process improvement, data analysis, and building strategic partnerships. In her current role, she implements programs to ensure market competitiveness and that the university is compliant with regulations and laws regarding equitable compensation.**

**Ms. Williams holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in HR Management, Santa Fe College and is a member of the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR). Kenya also is a proud graduate of the 2021-22 UF Academy for Emerging Leaders.**



## Carolynne Standish

Manager, Classification & Compensation  
UFHR

**Carolynne Standish is the Manager of Classification & Compensation with UF Human Resources. She has over 10 years of leadership experience and a passion for helping others through development, mentoring and team collaboration. She is skilled in many areas of Human Resources including compensation, building and executing strategy, performance management and coaching and development. As a Manager, she leads a highly collaborative team in ensuring that the UF pay structure aligns with law and regulation while being competitive and equitable.**

**Ms. Standish holds an MBA in Human Resource Management from St. Leo University and a Bachelors of Science degree in Psychology from the University of Florida. She also has her SHRM-CP (Society of Human Resource Management) certification.**





## **Mandy Millam**

Sponsored Programs Officer  
Sponsored Programs

**Mandy Millam is a Sponsored Programs Officer II with the University of Florida's Division of Sponsored Programs (DSP). She has been with DSP for a year and a half with a focus on post award set up and award management. Mandy loves meeting and partnering with people across colleges.**



## **Daniel Palchick**

Contracts Officer  
UF Research Sponsored Programs

**Dan Palchick is a Contracts Officer with the University of Florida's Division of Sponsored Programs (DSP). Dan has been with DSP for about two years. Prior to joining DSP, Dan was a Senior Staff Attorney with AARP Legal Counsel for the Elderly, where specialized in contract drafting and negotiations. Dan's portfolio with DSP is primarily focused on research contracts directly with the State of Florida.**



*My proposal was accepted! Wait, now what? From Negotiation to Integration*

PRESENTER



## Robyn Gregory

Operations Manager  
The Lastinger Center for Learning

**Robin Gregory is an accomplished Operations Manager with a diverse background spanning the financial industry, career services, and the education sector. Her varied experiences have given her with a unique perspective, allowing her to adapt to the ever-changing demands of each industry with innovation and creativity.**

**Currently, the Operations Manager for the New Worlds Reading Initiative, Robin excels in project management, operations strategy, and partnership development. In her role, she oversees the day-to-day operations of a statewide initiative, streamlining team workflows and maximizing productivity.**

**With a Bachelor of Arts in Rhetoric & Professional Communication from Iowa State University and a Master of Science in Management from UF, Warrington College of Business, Robin brings a potent blend of education and hands-on expertise to drive successful outcomes.**



*Maximizing the use of Technology and AI in Administrative Roles*



## **Dr. Ellen Zimmerman**

Gastroenterologist | Professor  
Vice Chair for Academic Affairs  
University of Florida Division of  
Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Nutrition

**Ellen Zimmermann is a professor of medicine in the division of gastroenterology and vice chair for academic affairs for the department of medicine, where her focus includes helping to enhance faculty development, facilitating the promotion and tenure process, and mentoring junior faculty. Dr. Zimmermann trained in medicine at the University of Wisconsin and in gastroenterology at the University of Michigan. After completing a postdoctoral research fellowship at the University of North Carolina, she returned to the University of Michigan, where she joined the GI division and established her NIH-funded lab. While at Michigan, she served as GI fellowship director for five years and established and directed the university's Crohn's and Colitis Program, which grew to a nationally recognized Center of Excellence in inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), research and innovative clinical care. She is Emeritus Professor of Medicine with tenure at the University of Michigan. Dr. Zimmermann joined UF in 2013. Her clinical specialty is caring for patients with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, with particular interest in caring for college students with IBD. Her lab is funded by a U.S.-Israel Binational Science Foundation grant and an NIH Small Business Innovative Research grant, both on drug discovery. She is an active leader in various national societies, including the American Gastroenterological Association. In her role in the Office of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development as the Associate Dean for Faculty Development, Dr. Zimmermann is interested in faculty retention, facilitating individualized faculty mentoring and career development, and programs supporting women's careers in medicine and science.**

## **Featured Panelists**

### **Jennifer Co-Vu**

**Associate Professor, Pediatrics,  
Radiology, Obstetrics and  
Gynecology  
Director, Fetal Cardiac Program  
Director, Single Ventricle  
Program  
University of Florida Congenital  
Heart Center**

### **Lisa Merlo**

**Associate Professor of Psychiatry  
Director of Wellness Programs,  
UF College of Medicine**

### **Stacy Beal**

**Associate Professor  
Residency Program Director  
Medical Director, Microbiology  
Laboratory**

### **Jennifer Bizon**

**Professor & Chair, Neuroscience  
Director, Evelyn F. And William F.  
McKnight Brain Institute**

### **Kevin Clarke**

**Director of Human Resources  
College of Medicine**



**Helping Women Faculty Thrive Through Community:  
The UF Women in Medicine & Science (WIMS) Initiative**