

# Pamela Shaw Nominated for Northwestern University Employee of the Year

By: Kristi Holmes, Director, Galter Health Sciences Library



**Pamela Shaw**, Biosciences & Bioinformatics Librarian at Galter Library, recently received recognition for her incredible contributions to the Northwestern University community with a nomination for Northwestern University's 2016 Employee of the Year. Pamela is truly an outstanding employee and absolutely exemplifies the spirit of excellence at Northwestern University.

Pamela provided support services for research data analysis and software at a level that is rare across high-level research universities, organizing a great number of training sessions and carrying out dozens of research consultations in 2015 and 2016. As Bioinformatics and Biosciences Librarian, Pamela is responsible for providing support and instruction to the research community at Feinberg School of Medicine. This work requires a significant amount of time and knowledge as she works with researchers to select tools and datasets, teach new strategies for data analysis, and guides our researchers on options for dissemination of their scholarly work. For example, she collaborated with NUCATS and the Northwestern Information Technology's Research Computing Services on the "**Computational Skills for Informaticians**" series which was a great success and will be offered in the future on a regular basis. The sessions topics are timely and an incredible opportunity for Northwestern University investigators and students to gain access to top-notch instruction across several complicated topics.

Pamela has designed and taught a large number of **classes and workshops** over the years. In 2015, she taught several well-attended sessions including sessions on the new NIH Biosketch, EndNote, PubMed, complying with the NIH Public Access Policy, and others. She has offered individual tutorials and small group training sessions by request on a large number of topics, including subscription and freely available bioinformatics tools, complex research topic overviews, and tools and databases available through the European Bioinformatics Institute and the National Center for Biotechnology Information. She always makes sure that the sessions she teaches are timely and high-quality – she is an amazing resource for Northwestern University.

In addition to her service to the university on research, Pamela helps our faculty, staff, trainees, and students with a variety of other requirements in their efforts to be productive and successful scholars. She has long-shepherded our entire Feinberg School of Medicine community through the challenges of complying with public access policies as our local "**NIH Public Access Compliance Monitor**" at Northwestern University. Her knowledge and expertise in this area has proven to be critical in various capacities, especially in helping investigators comply with these policies. She has taught workshops on the Public Access Policy and provided dozens of one-on-one consults to investigators who need assistance with the process. Perhaps, most significantly, she has assisted several dozen investigators who have had difficulties with the policy by helping them get their papers into compliance. She worked with countless faculty, center and program leadership, and support staff to ensure that every detail of compliance was addressed so that NIH funding is not withheld or delayed.

Another critical need at the University this year was the changed formatting and information requirements in the biosketches submitted with grant applications to the National Institutes of Health. This requirement has proven to be a significant burden to researchers around the country, but Pamela has worked with other librarians at Galter to establish a robust support program to address the needs of our researchers, including classes, drop-in consultation services, presentations at department meetings, and virtual support. Pamela and colleagues instructed over hundreds of individuals this year on how to prepare **the new NIH biosketch**—either through individual consultations or group presentations—to help them submit applications with biosketches that met the requirements and helped showcase the impact of their work. She does this with enthusiasm, kindness, attention to detail, and a perspective that is second to none.

Pamela is working on a variety of projects on campus that will most certainly enhance and improve work processes for Northwestern University. In addition to many collaborations with individual labs, she is working on a **data indexing project with the Center for Data Science and Informatics** to make data at Northwestern University more discoverable. Library involvement in data management projects can improve the discovery and description of datasets and this work especially benefits from library-based experts on controlled vocabularies and ontology, data structure, and data management. She is also completing a Genomic Data Science specialization certificate, which will allow her to meet even more pressing needs on campus in this era of "big data".

Pamela Shaw has stepped up in many extraordinary ways over the course of her 16+ year career at Northwestern University and this commitment and dedication to Northwestern University only grows stronger. Her attention to detail, service to patrons, clever and creative problem solving, and insightful contributions have been immensely impactful to our library and to Northwestern University. She is a wonderful colleague, dedicated to the success of Northwestern University, and we cannot think of anyone more deserving of recognition!

Congratulations on your nomination, Pamela!

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