

Date: February 15, 2022

To: AP Contribution Award Nomination Committee

From: Tom Tripp, Sr. Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Carson College of Business

RE: Nomination of Stephanie Rink for AP Contribution Award

Stephanie Rink deserves the Administrative Professionals Contribution Award because not only does she perform her assigned duties well, but she repeatedly goes above and beyond the call of duty. Stephanie serves as the executive assistant to Dean Chip Hunter of the Carson College of Business. In that role, she keeps Dean Hunter well informed, prepared, accessible, and organized. Dean Hunter would not be as respected and effective as he is – and he is *very* effective – without the help of a very effective executive assistant.

What really makes Stephanie stand out are all the extra duties she volunteers for and accomplishes. Not content simply to keep the Dean on track, she completed a project-management certificate, then set about managing a half-dozen projects throughout the Carson College. For instance, Stephanie helps the college's advising center manage a suite of related projects involving improving information systems that undergird not just the Carson College's advising activities, but the university's student information systems. The advising staff were overwhelmed with this task, and Stephanie helps them make it manageable. Note that these innovations created by this project are crucial to making a 400-500 student-per-advisor caseload effective. Stephanie and the advisors are inventing ways to help students by:

- Improving the overall student experience via strategic and timely communication, interventions, and transparency of process (such as admissions and study abroad course pre-approvals) with built in "fail-safes;"
- Increasing autonomy and self-direction among students by providing greater clarity of expectations, processes, and strategic communications;
- Improving timely and seamless registration for business courses;
- Reducing advisors' time spent on manual administrative processes;
- Improving automatic tracking of student progress toward degree requirements;
- Decreasing the need for entry of exceptions while increasing transparency of tracking completion of degree requirements;
- Reducing manual management of enrollment systems; and,
- Developing the capacity for course enrollment forecasting.

Note that Stephanie was not asked to manage these projects; she asked Dean Hunter to let her manage these projects.

Another group she helps in the college are the departmental administrators. She speaks with them frequently, not just in formal activities, but also informally serves as confidante to them.

In so doing, she helps them problem solve their conflicts, including innovating solutions to triaging student waitlists. She also serves as the “admin whisperer” for the rest of us in the dean’s office. Without that, I would not sufficiently know how admins really feel about my and others’ directives, and thus would occasionally be blind-sided by a lack of support or necessary critical feedback.

Stephanie also volunteers for several intensive university committees. She served on the WSU Systems Planners Council, helping with university-level strategic planning. She also served on the sometimes contentious University Parking & Transportation committee, and on the WSU Police Department board. One of her biggest contributions to WSU, as you know, is her membership on APAC, serving as its chair for two years from 2018-2020.

Stephanie contributes not just to the Carson College and WSU, but also to the community. In particular, she has been very active and effective serving on the Pullman Police Advisory Committee. Mainly, she facilitated a summit on public safety, then implemented Citizen Police Academy, which is an innovative public awareness program whereby citizens sample police training, thereby learning the challenges police officers face in the field. Stephanie also has helped the City of Pullman plan its future, as a member of the city planning commission and as co-chair of Pullman 2040.

What strikes me about Stephanie is her apparently endless desire to take on more, and more challenging, duties. What *really* strikes me about Stephanie is that she succeeds at each additional duty she takes on. In the four years I’ve worked with her, I have never heard of her failing in any of these tasks. She gets things – *important* things – done.

For these reasons, I believe Stephanie is deserving of the Administrative Professionals Contribution Award.

March 28, 2022

To Whom it May Concern:

I write to nominate Stephanie Rink, Assistant to the Dean, Carson College of Business, for an APAC Contribution award. I recognize that Stephanie is well known to APAC members and leaders for her leadership in APAC itself. I therefore want to focus this nomination on a different and remarkable aspect of her contributions to the university, our unit, and especially the broader Pullman community: her service to the community itself.

Stephanie's work with the Pullman community has been little short of remarkable. She has been a leader in the Pullman 2040 visioning process which is designed to engage the entire community in building a long-range vision for Pullman. It is intended to be followed by the creation of an action plan and I would fully expect Stephanie to be a strong contributor to that process as well. To this role she brings both her WSU experience and her interest in making a better place for all of us to live. In pursuit of this end, she also served on the Pullman planning commission, until recently stepping down.

Even more impactful has been Stephanie's role on the Pullman Police Advisory Committee. She entered serving as the parental representative from the Pullman School District, and she has found herself now *chairing* the entire committee. In this role she facilitated the "Reimagining Public Safety in Pullman" summit, and further, has followed that up by volunteering as to manage the implementation of Pullman's "Citizen Police Academy." As if that weren't enough, she currently assists in running the academy classes. And in between all of this, she's been a community representative as a panelist for interviews of prospective officers.

In these roles, Stephanie has done great things to bring town and gown to better understanding of one another. She communicates with Pullman Chief Gary Jenkins and WSU Chief of Police Bill Garner. She is effective in part because she also serves as a board member for the WSU Police Department, and a representative of staff on the University Parking and Transportation committee. Stephanie bridges the communities, working with community members as well as university staff and faculty to promote mutual understanding. This role has been particularly valuable as our community gives more needed attention to equity and inclusion.

Of course, Stephanie is also likely known to those reading this nomination for her work in APAC itself. She's been a member since 2014, when she was at WSU Vancouver. After moving to Pullman, she continued to stay involved, and chaired the organization from 2018-2020. I hope that her leadership roles in APAC are far enough in the past that you'd be willing to consider her for this award, but I will be happy to nominate her again in the future if this feels awkward for the organization. I'm sure the reasons I offer for her consideration will be as relevant in future years as they are today.

Sincerely yours,

Chip Hunter
Dean, Carson College of Business