

2003 MIDWEST AREA PASTG Annual Report

Members of the 2003 Council included:

Sherri Buxton - Co-Chair/NACOP/Technical Advisor
Heather Lewandowski - Co-Chair
Melissa Stiefel - Recorder/Information Coordinator
Jaci Weese
Vicki Jones
Brittney Mernick
Ginger Walker
Debbie Bitner
Sandy Groneberg - Ex-Officio, Web Master
Lori Wilson-Voss - Ex-Officio, SOP Editor

Accomplishments

- The PASTG has taken a leadership role in creating a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual, a compendium of approved Agency procedures with examples, to assist the Midwest Area secretarial and administrative support staff. The manual is an excellent training tool for recently hired and seasoned support staff, as well as an invaluable resource for new, revised and current procedures. Other ARS areas regularly use the MWA SOP as a reference tool and have also used it to assist them in developing their own manuals.
- The MWA Mentoring program: The PASTG composed a guide for mentors and appointed experienced mentors for new secretaries in the Area. All new MWA secretaries are assigned a mentor for a minimum of one year although the relationships usually continue beyond that time creating lasting support networks among MWA secretaries. All new support staff are brought into Peoria for training, organized and led by the PASTG. Key Area personnel also meet with the group to provide additional specialized training. Fourteen mentees were trained this year.
- Temporary Assistance Program: The PASTG temporary support program was organized to provide support to units with secretarial vacancies. This program ensures that management unit offices operate smoothly when a permanent support position is vacated. The PASTG recruits volunteers from the secretarial team in the Area to serve in administrative assistance roles in the interim. This service has been recognized within the Area as essential to maintaining administrative workflow and research progress. One MWA location was assisted in addition to a PASTG member assisting a Unit secretary from Corvallis, OR.
- We continue to disseminate quarterly newsletters to all the secretaries in MWA.
- The training scholarship program is continuing to be utilized to a great extent within the Midwest Area. This program provides funding for training from the Area Office allowing employees to benefit from training that may not be possible due to financial constraints within their units. Ten individuals benefited from this program this year with the Area Office contributing \$8600.00 in support of their training. The scholarship application and information is available on the PASTG homepage.

Goals

- Continue to update the Midwest Area PASTG Home Page. and SOP Manual.
- Continue quarterly newsletter.
- Continue training scholarship program.
- Continue Temporary Assistance Program.
- Plan and organize the 3rd PASTG Secretarial Meeting being held in October, 2004.