



Department of Physics, Engineering and Astronomy

March 3, 2026

Selection Committee
Faculty Senate Staff Service Award

Dear Faculty Senate Staff Service Award Committee:

It is with great pleasure that we endorse Mrs. Sherry Bagwell, Academic Assistant to the Chair for the Department of Physics, Engineering and Astronomy, for the Faculty Senate Staff Service Award. Mrs. Bagwell's exemplary 24 years of service to APSU and the Department is highly deserving of recognition.

Since joining the Department in 2002, Sherry has used her skills, charm, and knowledge to transform the social and academic life of our department into a close-knit, highly productive environment. She constantly anticipates the needs of the students and faculty before they have even realized they have them. Sherry's secret is keeping lists – for each set of department-level goals in any given year, Sherry keeps a checklist of the individual tasks for each project and the order in which they need to be done to ensure nothing is missed. This includes all the usual department-level sorts of things (schedule, etc.), but also high-impact practices unique to our department such as our advising luncheons for students. Another high impact practice in which Sherry plays an integral part, and one that is an important part of our Department culture, is external grant funding to support research with undergraduate students (\$200-\$500K in a typical year spread over 2-4 separate grant awards). Because of the needs of the primary investigators and student researchers, Sherry has actively and independently sought out additional training both on campus and off so that she may better assist the PIs with the accounting, purchasing, and student hiring for these grants. In addition, Sherry processes travel paperwork for as many as 20 individual student trips to regional or national conferences in any given year and helps to ensure that students have the resources they need to take advantage of those opportunities, in particular ensuring travel advances for students who would otherwise be unable to participate.

Sherry is also an integral part of an important Department recruiting initiative, the Governor's School for Computational Physics (GSCP). The GSCP brings 36 talented high-school juniors and seniors to APSU's campus each summer. Sherry has served as Coordinator for this summer program, since its inception in 2008. As Coordinator, she is the first contact for GSCP scholars and parents, she interviews and hires all of the GSCP student mentors, helps the GSCP scholars navigate the APSU application process, and maintains all the necessary records for each student (medical insurance information, release forms, etc.). She also schedules co-curricular and extracurricular activities for the students, such as trips to Oak Ridge National Lab, the City Forum or weekend hikes, as well as ensuring that every GSCP scholar that has a birthday during the program is recognized with cake and ice cream. Sherry's efforts to ensure that all GSCP scholars and parents have an outstanding experience makes her a key part of APSU's recruitment efforts toward these students.

These are just a few of the many ways in which Sherry has gone above and beyond in her support of the Department and APSU. In short, we feel Mrs. Sherry Bagwell far exceeds the expectations

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of her position and is highly deserving of the Faculty Senate Staff Service Award.

Sincerely,
Faculty of the Department of Physics, Engineering, & Astronomy:



B. Alex King III
Professor & Chair



Spencer Buckner
Associate Professor



Eugenii Donev
Associate Professor



Andriy Kovalskiy
Professor



Roman Holovchak
Professor



Russ Longhurst
Professor



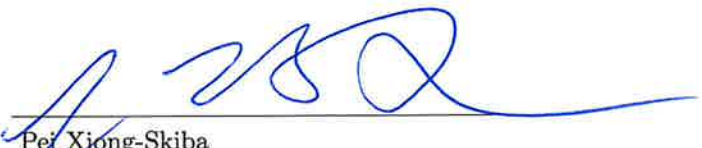
Justin Oelgoetz
Professor



J. Allyn Smith
Professor



Emmabeth Vaughn
Assistant Professor



Pei Xiong-Skiba
Professor