

April 17, 2024

Dear AIR Board of Directors and Award Committee,

With sincere delight and profound honor, I accept the esteemed Rising Star Award from the Association for Institutional Research (AIR). This acknowledgement marks a significant personal milestone and serves as a testament to the supportive and collaborative community of professionals in the field of institutional research (IR).

Receiving this prestigious award fills me with profound gratitude and instills a deep sense of responsibility to further enrich our field with meaningful contributions. I am deeply humbled to be recognized among a cohort of remarkably talented and dedicated individuals who are driving innovation and fostering excellence in IR.

I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the AIR community, whose unwavering support has consistently provided avenues for my professional growth and development. I am particularly grateful to esteemed organizations such as the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Data Institute, the North East Association of Institutional Research (NEAIR), the Texas Association of Institutional Research (TAIR), the California Association for Institutional Research (CAIR), and the Overseas Chinese Association of Institutional Research (OCAIR). These organizations have offered me invaluable opportunities for networking, collaboration, and professional advancement.

I am profoundly appreciative of the mentorship and guidance generously extended to me by esteemed colleagues such as Allan Medwick, Alex Yin, David Eubanks, Eric Lanthier, Helen Qi, Henry Zheng, Hongxia Fu, Jennifer Wu, Qingmin Shi, Timothy Chou, Tongshan Chang, Yang Zhang, and Yongchao Zhao, among others. Their insights, encouragement, and support have played an instrumental role in shaping my professional trajectory and inspiring me to strive for excellence.

Furthermore, I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to my collaborators on various research endeavors and professional development initiatives, including Amy Yang, Ashley Gerhardson, Braden Hosch, Chen Shen, Damji Stratton, Enyu Zhou, Grace Shin, Heidi Burgiel, Jing Zhang, Johnny Jr. Woods, Jun Xiang, Kelly Lin, Tien-Ling Hu, and Xin Li. Their passion for advancing IR and their commitment to enhancing knowledge and experiences within our field through collaboration have enriched my professional journey immeasurably.

This award is a reflection of the supportive and collaborative culture inherent within higher education and the IR community. It motivates me to continue pursuing innovation, sharing knowledge, and engaging in leadership opportunities within my institution and the broader community.

I am committed to upholding the values of excellence and dedication that the AIR Rising Star Award represents, and I look forward to continuing my professional growth and contributing to the advancement of IR.

Thank you once again for this incredible honor. I am truly grateful for this recognition.

Sincerely yours,



Linli Zhou, Ph.D.

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