

April 2, 2019

Dear AIR Colleagues:

I am humbled and very grateful to be selected to receive the AIR Outstanding Service Award. This recognition is and always will be very special to me. The Association for Institutional Research, the learning experiences associated with our organization, and especially the colleagues with whom I have interacted and learned have been amazing and are treasured. It has been an honor and privilege to serve in AIR over the years, and I am astonished to reflect upon the path that brought me to today.

I first learned about institutional research when I was a doctoral student at Virginia Tech in the early 1980s. I had an opportunity for a graduate research assistantship in Institutional Research and Planning Analysis (IRPA), which was led by James R. Montgomery and Gerald W. McLaughlin. I greatly appreciate the mentorship and encouragement of these two remarkable leaders. The outstanding IRPA operation and stellar team at Virginia Tech were amazing and inspiring. I learned a great deal during this experience, which convinced me that I wanted to pursue a career in institutional research and planning analysis. This exemplary IRPA team was very actively engaged in working, learning, and sharing with colleagues through scholarly activity and professional development opportunities at the state, regional, national, and international levels. The team worked hard, provided significant information and analyses to the university, had a good sense of humor, and was prolific in presenting, publishing, and sharing their work, in order to help colleagues to learn and benefit as well. From this exceptional team, I readily discovered how beneficial it is to connect with colleagues in our profession, through the activities and resources of AIR and corresponding organizations at the regional and state levels.

I was encouraged and mentored to become actively involved in AIR, in the Southern Association for Institutional Research (SAIR), and in the Virginia Association for Management Analysis and Planning (VAMAP). Opportunities at Baylor University and later at Tennessee Tech University provided paths for me to continue to grow and develop in professional knowledge and expertise, but also to share and to serve in AIR and related organizations, as had been modeled for me in the early part of my career. I am very thankful for leaders, colleagues, and institutional support at Virginia Tech, Baylor University, and Tennessee Tech University, encouraging and enabling me to engage strongly with AIR, SAIR, VAMAP, the Texas Association for Institutional Research (TAIR), and the Tennessee Association for Institutional Research (TENNAIR).

Over the years, I have continued to be so very appreciative of the large cadre of outstanding professionals in AIR. These colleagues have contributed to the continual vitality and intentional evolution of the profession of IR and the role of IR in higher education. It is in this context that it has been my great pleasure to engage with AIR and AIR colleagues in working, learning, and developing together, as we strive to help students and to improve higher education.

Serving in AIR in a variety of roles and at different times over the past decades has certainly been a rewarding experience. I engaged with a number of opportunities to contribute to the development and delivery of the AIR Forum. I worked with the relocation of the AIR executive office away from a modest space at Florida State University to a larger, more functional space for an AIR staff that has grown in size and expertise. I served on the editorial board of the *AIR Professional File* and *IR Applications*, and in other years published in *Research in Higher Education* and produced a chapter in *The Handbook for Institutional Research*. I served on financial advisory task forces and audit committees and assisted the Association in making a transition to improved management of financial resources. Serving on the AIR Board of Directors during 9 of the past 15 years, I had extensive involvement with helping the Association to face numerous opportunities and challenges, including the transition to a new approach to association governance.

I have so admired, respected, and appreciated the many exceptional AIR members, the array of remarkable members of the Board of Directors, and the excellent AIR Executive Directors and Executive Office staff members with whom I have had the opportunity to work and serve.

Therefore, I enthusiastically recommend that you engage with the myriad of opportunities for service and professional growth in the Association for Institutional Research. You will find that your understanding of institutional research, effectiveness, planning, assessment, decision support, policy analysis, accreditation, and other related activities will be expanded and strengthened. You also will build a valuable and endearing network of colleagues and friends who will make your professional endeavors even more beneficial to you and your institution, and more meaningful to you.

Again, I am very grateful for wonderful colleagues and for the many opportunities that have been available through my involvement in the Association for Institutional Research. I am very honored to receive the AIR Outstanding Service Award!

Very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn W. James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "s".

Glenn W. James