

118 Bay Street  
Hull, MA 02045  
A short walk from the Atlantic!

May 16, 2022

Dear AIR friends and colleagues,

Thank you for the amazing honor of being the recipient of the AIR 2022 Outstanding Service Award. Thank you especially to those of you who nominated me for this honor, those who wrote letters of support and to those who accepted the nomination. That was a lot of work in busy lives.

I cannot tell you how surprised and delighted I was to get a phone call from President Junelyn Pangan Peebles with the news. It was an especially big surprise as I retired in 2015. To be remembered by AIR members in the 2020's is just splendid. As we'd say in my native language, I am really chuffed!

I was told in 1983, my first year in IR, by the late, great Lois Torrence of the University of Connecticut that I needed to join NEAIR and AIR as soon as I could talk my boss into investing in my professional development. One did as Founding Mother Lois instructed and so here we are!

I was lucky enough to work for the first years of my IR life with Dr. Thomas Porter, one of the best Provosts, mentors and academic leaders one could have wished for at the Connecticut State University (CSU) System Office. He was always supportive and proud of my professional development activities and he mentored me in a way I have tried to replicate throughout my professional life. I have always been grateful he took me on to start the first IR office at the CSU system. The nurturing of my participation in AIR was continued at the University of Massachusetts Boston. I specifically requested this support for me and for the rest of the UMass Boston IR team before accepting the position.

Joining NEAIR and AIR (these experiences were very intertwined) was the start of a wonderful professional, never-boring career filled with learning, friendships, travel, presentations, workshops and volunteering. How lucky can one get?

My Board service to AIR was a series of marvelous opportunities for growth and development. Not that all lessons and experiences are joyous, some test one's resilience and capacity. For these, although often not at the time, I am especially glad. They all helped prepare me for being a participant in the transformation of the Association's governance structure. This was not a one person job! Look at the list of AIR presidents! Bill, Rob and Jim got me into this, and Julie, Sandi and Gayle got me out! I'd name every Board member I served with if I could. What dedicated, hard working and smart people.

The work the AIR Board, Executive Director and the magnificent AIR office team have been able to do over the last few challenging years are testimony to the strength of the systems now in place to move the Association forward. As we know, it is good to investigate and question the policies and practices that frame our organizational lives and to make changes that keep us attending to the needs of the members and of higher education more broadly. My hearty congratulations to the AIR Boards and to Dr. Christine Keller and her team, and to all of you for your work.

And finally, my thanks to Susan Goranson, my beloved partner of 41 years and wife since 2004 (thanks, Massachusetts!). She pointed to a job ad in the Hartford Courant one morning and said, "This looks like something you'd enjoy, I think you should apply for it."

Sincerely

Jennifer A. Brown