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CU I&E Submission: Coffee & Conversation with the Administrative Team [1]

Category

Training/Education

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Project Team

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Project Description

The Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health (CAIANH) has developed a year-long monthly series of 45-minute training sessions on a variety of fiscal and administrative topics to support our faculty and PRAs. Topics were chosen from priorities identified through an interactive activity during a CAIANH all-staff meeting and include event planning, travel, pre/post award, human resources, contracts, and subcontracts, and more. The Administrative team schedules the sessions and creates a flyer to advertise the event and the topic of the month. We also provide hot coffee and just ask faculty and staff to bring a mug and any questions they have. Presentations are short and interactive with a lot allocated for questions and sharing. We stream the training on Zoom for off-site employees and we record the trainings to add to our training library.

Project Efficiency

The greatest efficiency is the savings of time and personnel effort. By having these trainings on topics relevant to our faculty, we avoid mistakes which cost time and effort to correct. We also avoid back-and-forth emails to repeatedly explain common situations in our department. Learning from each other provides practical applications for administrative and fiscal policies. Since we record and add them to our YouTube channel and intranet site, we can refer people to that resource when they have future questions and can provide training on a wide variety of topics to new employees.

Project Inspiration

We were inspired to develop these trainings because we found we were spending a lot of time answering the same questions over and over. It became clear that our faculty and PRAs needed additional training and support and an ongoing training resource. Instead of being reactive about answering questions that popped up, sometimes last minute, we decided to be proactive and provide ongoing training on a variety of topics. It has helped our employees have the resources they need, and it has helped the Administrative team solidify our knowledge and be better prepared to support the research.

What Makes You Happiest about this Project?

This makes me happy because we get to come together each month to share knowledge and experiences with our colleagues over coffee. We strive for excellence at CAIANH, and I feel that this simple step has helped our faculty and PRAs feel more confident about interpreting and navigating federal and university policies related to sponsored funding. It has also taken a huge load off of the Administrative team to not be bogged down with emails and never-ending questions. We turned a difficult situation into a connecting and learning experience for the price of a few cups of coffee!

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