

# Samantha J. Ellithorpe

· 828-226-5773 · ellithorpe.samantha@gmail.com · linkedin.com/in/samantha-ellithorpe ·  
· Cullowhee, NC ·

· Arranger · Responsibility · Belief · Restorative · Achiever ·

A results-oriented Research Administrator with experience in research development, proposal development, and process improvement. Proficient in overseeing multiple projects simultaneously, identifying and interpreting compliance requirements during the pre-award stage, developing and maintaining project timelines and budgets, and fostering collaborative relationships with internal and external stakeholders. Recognized for strengthening team performance, improving processes, and implementing effective methodologies that enhance research operations and support organizational success.

## KEY COMPETENCIES

---

Financial Management	Financial Reporting	Team Leadership
Strategic Planning	Process Improvement	Budget Development & Tracking
Relationship Building	Data Analysis	Communication
MS Office	Attention to Detail	Operations Management
InfoEd Grant Management Software	WordPress	

## EDUCATION

---

**WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY** 2015  
Bachelor of Science | Magna Cum Laude

**WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY** May 2026  
Master of Entrepreneurship in Innovation and Leadership

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

---

**Pre-Award Service Manager** 2023 - Present  
Western Carolina University

Responsible for leading and managing sponsored research initiatives at Western Carolina University, with a focus on strengthening pre-award services, enhancing research development resources, and improving operational efficiency. In this role, I oversee and contribute to current initiatives such as the development of Granting Success, a comprehensive guide to sponsored research designed for faculty who are new to WCU and/or new to research, as well as the creation of an affiliated Office of Research Administration site that houses the course alongside an interactive repository of WCU researchers and research-related resources to promote collaboration. I also support the planning and implementation of programming to increase the visibility and accessibility of the Office of Research Administration across campus.

In addition to these ongoing efforts, I have led several key process improvement and infrastructure projects that continue to support current operations. I directed a comprehensive data cleanup of the InfoEd grant management system to improve record-keeping and reporting accuracy, resulting in enhanced data integrity and reliability. I developed a detailed InfoEd User Manual for faculty, enabling greater independence in managing proposal and award records and increasing confidence in navigating institutional systems. I also designed and implemented a proposal and award tracking system that streamlines annual reporting and enables point-in-time data analysis to support informed decision-making. Further, I revitalized and redesigned the Office of Research Administration's pre-award webpages by integrating updated institutional data, policies, and proposal development resources, creating a more user-friendly, effective platform. To support team consistency and onboarding, I developed standard operating procedures that ensure efficient training and continuity for new personnel.

General Manager leading an investment group specializing in long-term residential rentals. As the driving force behind a 6-person team, I orchestrated strategic initiatives to enhance performance by implementing innovative processes. My commitment to transparency, efficiency, and modernization has consistently delivered results, ensuring optimal returns for our investors.

**Accomplishments:**

- Successfully managed a diverse multi-property portfolio with a combined budget exceeding \$10 million.
- Acted as the key liaison between the property management company, ownership/investor groups, and the maintenance team.
- Developed and managed property budgets and expenses, resulting in reduced turnover and exceeding owner expectations in profitability.
- Orchestrated a seamless transition to a digital database for property and capital improvement files. This initiative streamlined operations, significantly reduced printing and storage costs, enhanced transparency for investors, and highlighted a commitment to modernization and cost-effective solutions.
- Proactively identified and addressed roadblocks, ensuring the attainment of maximum value for the ownership group.
- Demonstrated a strategic mindset and solution-oriented approach to complex challenges.
- Leveraged strong interpersonal and communication skills to build trust and rapport.
- Created a positive environment for collaboration and problem-solving, contributing to increased employee and client retention.
- Implemented standardized protocols that improved overall efficiency in the move-in and move-out process.
- Reduced discrepancies and ensured accurate documentation of property conditions.
- Enhanced financial transparency and compliance surrounding tenant security deposits.
- Successfully created and managed the company website, featuring digital listings and virtual tours of available rental units.
- Provided an alternative to in-person tours during the COVID-19 lockdown, showcasing adaptability.

## PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

---

**North Carolina Real Estate License**

Issued by the North Carolina Real Estate Commission  
License #294321

Issued January 2017

**North Carolina Notary Public**

Issued by the North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State  
Notary #202226300228

Issued September 2022

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

---

**The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People**

17-week personal development course facilitated by Franklin Covey

January 2026

**The 6 Critical Practices for Leading a Team**

12-week leadership course issued by Franklin Covey

December 2023

**COMPASS Competencies for Achieving Supervisor Success**

Leadership course for supervisors new to North Carolina state employment

November 2024

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

---

<b>Society of Research Administrators International (SRAI)</b>	2023-Present
<b>National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA)</b>	2023-Present

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

---

<b>Managing the Pre- to Post-Award Handoff</b>	July 2026
Society of Research Administrators International Coffee Talk	

This session will focus on the transition from Pre-Award to Post-Award, exploring handoff timing, roles in award negotiation, operational tools, award setup, communication, and compliance throughout the research lifecycle.

<b>Mentoring – What’s It All About</b>	May 2026
Society of Research Administrators International Coffee Talk	

<b>Bridging the Silos: Sponsored Programs and Export Control</b>	May 2024
Association of University Export Control Officers (AUECO) Annual Conference	

This presentation provides insight into the different attempts at identifying gaps and strengthening processes in the application of Export Control laws and standards in relation to the award preparation process in Research Administration

<b>Do’s and Don’ts of Cost Share</b>	November 2024
North Carolina Research Administrators Alliance Conference	

This presentation provides comprehensive guidelines for effectively incorporating cost share into budgets, emphasizing best practices for compliance, avoiding common pitfalls, and ensuring accurate and accountable budget management.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

---

<b>2025-2026 Gold Award for Staff Excellence</b>	<i>Nominated</i>
Western Carolina University	

<b>Future of the Field Award</b>	Awarded June 2025
Society of Research Administrators International	

<b>2024-2025 Star Staff Award</b>	<i>Nominated</i>
Western Carolina University	

## SERVICE AND COMMITTEES

---

<b>Chair of the Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions Thread for the 2026 Annual Conference</b> Society of Research Administrators International	May - June 2026
<b>Judge – 2026 College of Business Student Innovation Showcase</b> Western Carolina University	April 2026
<b>Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions Collaborate Community Working Group</b> National Council of University Research Administrators	January 1, 2026–December 31, 2027 2-Year Term
<b>Speaking Proposal Reviewer for the 2026 Annual Conference</b> Society of Research Administrators International	January 2026 – October 2026
<b>Odyssey Program Committee Member</b> Society of Research Administrators International	November 2025 1-Year Term
<b>Grant Writing Workshop Planning Committee</b> Western Carolina University	March 2024 - May 2024
<b>Research and Scholarship Conference Undergraduate Research Expo &amp; Graduate Research Symposium Planning Subcommittee</b> Western Carolina University	2024 - Current
<b>Provost Scholarship Development Award Review Committee</b> Western Carolina University	2023 - Current

---