

A Closing Inquiry

Meet Marian McCord

Thursday, April 23, 2020

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In February, Marian McCord became UNH's senior vice provost for research, economic engagement and outreach. She was previously the associate dean for research at the College of Natural Resources at North Carolina State University, overseeing the college's sponsored program portfolio and research infrastructure with more than 200 active projects and 19 testing and service centers. McCord also co-founded two research-based startups.

[How has your career primed you for this position?](#)

I have a diverse and multidisciplinary background in my own research program and in research administration, as well as in developing partnerships, working on economic development and working with extension and engagement. I have also been engaged in entrepreneurship, both on the for-profit and social entrepreneurship side.

My personal mission aligns with the mission of the university: I am very interested in public-impact research and am a firm supporter and fan of the land-grant mission. Universities develop science, humanities, arts and technologies, and land grants are the leaders in transferring that to the public and to societal impact. That is our responsibility as public institutions.

Tell us more about your research.

Broadly, my research is in a transdisciplinary area encompassing textiles, polymers and biomaterials for human, plant and animal health applications. I have two degrees in biomedical engineering and I created a nice niche, using textiles or fibrous materials for medical products, devices or implants. I became engaged in some interesting global health challenges that were a really good fit for my expertise: preventing vector-borne disease by creating materials that were either insecticidal or insect-bite-proof, to protect humans against insect bites.

I have had a great career, and I really love the research work that I do, but the amount I can do will be limited in this new role. As an administrator, I have found that remaining engaged in research allows one to relate better to the day-to-day challenges facing faculty.

What opportunities are you most excited about in this new role?

What UNH is doing with bringing together research, innovation, extension, engagement and outreach is really smart and very forward-thinking. It was this integration of these units into a single office that made this position so attractive to me. I am also excited by the mission and the vision that President Dean has laid out to become a top 25 public university, and the focus on student success. I am drawn to UNH's land-grant mission, its size and scale and its great reputation. The university is poised to take great leaps and I want to be a part of that.

PHOTOGRAPHER:

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