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Volunteer Appreciation – Kelli Goodkowsky – Chair, Education Committee



Q: Tell us about yourself and where you work.

A: My name is Kelli Goodkowsky and I am the Program Director for the Goodwin University Histologic Science Program. I spent the majority of my career supervising hospital histology labs and transitioned to higher education in 2012. Goodwin University is a career-focused, innovative learning community, that meets students where they are- and meeting students “where they are”, to me, is really the crux of providing a quality education.

Q: What have been your challenges and highlights over the past few years?

A: A personal challenge I've had over the past few years is keeping material fresh for students, especially in the didactic courses. Times are different and with technology and the internet there is so much information at our (and our students) fingertips- instantaneously! Keeping students engaged in a 2-hour and 50-minute lecture can be a challenge. I was not a career teacher and what I've discovered is teaching is an art. To address this challenge, in 2017 I participated in an 8-month training in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) which transformed the way I teach and how I design curriculum.

One initiative I am currently implementing is the use of open educational resources (OER) in our histology program which will pose a significant decrease in the cost of books for our students.

Q: How has volunteering helped you build upon your successes and/or addressed your challenges?

A: Volunteering connects me with others in the field, teaches me new skills, and broadens my perspective. I really enjoy being a part of something bigger than myself. Volunteering forces me to stay on my game. As an example, education relies on the ability to examine data in order to justify change... a skill that I continue to hone. As Chair of the Education Committee, the committee is examining data as it pertains to student engagement and the field of histology in general. We have committee members who are particularly skilled at analyzing data and their skillset helps my growth in this area. We engage in productive conversation, which will ultimately result in advocacy on behalf of individuals who choose histology careers. Everyone wins!

Q: What advice do you have for others who would like to volunteer?

Seek volunteer opportunities that you are passionate about, but also remain open to the unknown. Don't discount any hidden talent or transferable skill. You never know where that skill might lead or whom it might help.

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