



Elaine Staats, MPH

Chief Executive Officer

Prior to her appointment as Chief Executive Officer in December, 2021, Elaine Staats served as the Director of Sponsored Research at PAVIR since 2010. She leads the PAVIR Contracts & Grants (C&G) team to provide outstanding service and support to VA Palo Alto Investigators for pre- and post-award administration. This includes ensuring adherence to applicable federal, state, and local regulations and policies, establishing processes and procedures to maximize the integration of research administration principles with investigator innovation, and overseeing C&G staff while fostering a culture that promotes Veterans research. Ms. Staats enjoys process improvement, development of investigators through the arc of their career span, and serving those who have served. Elaine was the 2019 winner of the Board of Directors Distinguished Service Award from the National Association of Veterans' Research and Education Foundations (NAVREF).

She holds bachelor's degrees in Animal Physiology & Neuroscience as well as Sociology from the University of California, San Diego and an MPH from the University of California, Los Angeles. Ms. Staats has worked in the research administration field in not-for-profit and academic settings for more than fifteen years.



Lisa Clark

Director of Human Resources

Lisa Clark joined PAVIR in September of 2018 as Director of Human Resources. Lisa has 25 years of increasingly responsible Human Resources service delivery and leadership experience. Prior to joining PAVIR, Lisa held Human Resources leadership roles in various industries including medical device, technical service, software, and defense. Lisa's experience spans all specialties within HR including organizational planning, strategic partnerships, employee development, total rewards, talent acquisition, and employee engagement and relations.

Lisa holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master of Science in Human Resources Management and Organizational Behavior from Golden Gate University. Ms. Clark enjoys bringing process improvement to organizations as well as focusing on employee engagement.



Lily Ibragimov

Director of Finance & Accounting

Lily Ibragimov joined PAVIR in 2008 as Controller and was promoted to the position of Director of Accounting in 2018. Ms. Ibragimov manages all accounting functions at PAVIR including revenue recognition and collection, cash disbursement and cash management, internal controls, financial statement and income tax preparation, financial analysis and projection, audit and federal financial reporting, and related policies and procedures. Lily has more than 20 years of extensive accounting and finance experience in both for-profit and not-for-profit sectors.

Ms. Ibragimov has a bachelor’s degree in economics from Technological Institute of Odessa, Ukraine and Master of Business Administration degree from San Jose State University. She is an active certified public accountant (CPA) in the state of California since 2005 and continues her professional education in areas related to not-for-profit accounting, audit and finance.



Mary Thornton

Director of Operations

Mary Thornton has been with the Palo Alto Veterans Institute for Research (PAVIR) since 1995. She has filled many positions at PAVIR from Accounting Assistant through the present, Director of Operations. Ms. Thornton’s work in various capacities at PAVIR has positioned her well to now focus her efforts on the information technology, data analysis and systems functions of the organization. In this role one of her responsibilities is the Research and Development Information System (RDIS) which is central to the research activities at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System. As one of the three original architects of VA Palo Alto’s RDIS, and a user and proponent of the system throughout its history, Mary is uniquely qualified to assure that it will support the needs of the research community into the future. She derives great satisfaction from working out systems and procedures, especially those involving the use of technology, that help the entire organization work more efficiently and productively as PAVIR supports the scientists in their important endeavors. Ms. Thornton was the 2018 winner of the National Association of Veterans' Research and Education Foundations (NAVREF) *Barbara West Award for Distinguished Service*.

Prior to her service with PAVIR, Mary’s experience was in customer service, business and accounting.



Allison Malate

Director of Sponsored Research

Allison Malate started her PAVIR journey as a Contract and Grant Analyst in 2010. Since then, she has held various roles within the Contracts and Grants Department and has over 17 years in research administration. She enjoys assisting investigators in furthering their novel ideas through research and education. Allison strongly believes in thoughtfully equipping research administrators for success so that they can better serve the research community. As such, she is purposeful in providing coaching and mentoring as part of her leadership of the Contracts and Grants team.

Allison has a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of California, Riverside and an MBA from the University of Redlands.