

Bender  
of  
Twigs



## Melissa Ellenz

What Makes Melissa such a great administrative manager? An effective administrative manager plays a crucial part in ensuring the smooth operation of an organization, but that's only the official definition. She keeps our department running smoothly and does it with a friendly smile and a sense of humor that make it all look easy. And not only in the Modern and Classical Languages Department. Who doesn't remember her vital role at the Registrar's Office, as well as in the Physician Assistant and Economics Departments? Her experience in these other areas has turned her into a guide, in many ways, for MCLL. She embodies the university's values through her conduct and daily interactions with others, as she takes on her responsibilities not only with professionalism, but also with a trustworthiness and humility that make her a role model for all who come through the office. We all know that an administrative manager must be well organized, but Melissa's attention to detail goes beyond just prioritizing and organizing tasks; the office hums along smoothly under her experienced hand... and it looks and smells good, too, with her seasonal décor and deliciously fragrant ambient scents!

Melissa possesses strong communication skills. She is skilled at conveying information clearly and accurately but is also an active listener. Many of us share our plans and dreams with her, and these initial conversations frequently result in collaboration among our members. Melissa interacts with a myriad of people and tasks simultaneously every day of the academic year, so she knows what we do, what we like, and what we need. She understands her own emotions, takes a deep breath, and listens to us. Melissa's emotional intelligence is foundational in managing our workplace and in fostering our social interactions and wellbeing. Life at MCLL is unpredictable, and Melissa often faces challenges that require innovative solutions, which she implements effectively even as she looks for ways to improve the status quo. Her ability to adapt to ever-changing circumstances – people, languages, moods – helps everyone to navigate new developments without losing sight of our goals and of who we are.

Her generosity, cooperation, and compassion inspire us all by setting high standards for us to become better coworkers. Her leadership is unquestioned, but she is not the loudest voice in the room; instead, she is the thoughtful comment, the compliment that keeps us going, the wisdom that sustains us through difficult times. We are grateful for her unwavering support during some of those tough days when what we most need is an injection of joy. Her encouragement and positivity make all the difference for our students, faculty and staff. She is the team member that makes the others feel valued and empowered. Melissa understands the mission of the university. Although she doesn't speak the languages we teach, she will defend each and every one of them because she understands the value of a good education and of different cultures. If we ever doubt ourselves or our mission as educators, Melissa reassures us that no effort is too small if it helps us to achieve our goals. She is much more than an employee; she is committed to playing her part to make WSU a great institution of higher learning.

As we celebrate this milestone with her, we express our profound appreciation for her key contributions to our team's success. We are fortunate to work alongside her, whose kindness and dedication make our office feel like a home. On a personal note, Melissa doesn't like chocolate, loves dogs, and has an army of delightful gnomes in the office to protect us. What makes Melissa the great administrative manager she is? Essentially, it's being an all-around great person, and it is easy to work with such an awesome human being. We hope Melissa knows that we value her as administrative manager, coworker, role model, and friend.

**Rocío del Águila**

Associate Professor, Chair and Graduate Studies Coordinator  
Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures  
Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

**Julie Henderson**

Undergraduate Coordinator and Associate Educator  
Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures  
Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences