



## **New Fellow Spotlight: Andrea Norris** **Director, Center for Information Technology** **Chief Information Officer** **National Institutes of Health**

Ms. Norris is a senior executive with 30 years of public sector experience leading national management and technology programs and operations in Chief Information Officer (CIO) roles for three top Federal scientific agencies, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Her career reflects a demonstrated track record in using innovative approaches to make an impact at a national scale: accelerating new therapies and cures in biomedical research; enabling space exploration and scientific discovery; and, advancing federally supported research and education efforts at American colleges and universities. Throughout her career, Ms. Norris has brought a unique blend of strategic planning, business management, and technology experience to each of her roles. Ms. Norris has served as the NIH CIO and the Director of the Center for Information Technology since 2011, where she leads a \$1.3 billion technology portfolio supporting scientific research and discovery by 27 national research institutes, and 300,000 researchers at more than 2500 US universities and medical centers.

During her time at NIH, Ms. Norris has led numerous initiatives to enable the organization's mission including a series of innovative public-private partnerships to enable federally funded researchers to make use of advanced, cloud-based computational infrastructure, tools, services; a new high-speed network and supercomputing facility to enable new discoveries in biomedical research; and a comprehensive risk-based cybersecurity program. She also brings organizational governance experience through her work with university and Federal advisory boards as well as nomination committees for national leadership positions.

Ms. Norris has been a member of the Senior Executive Service since 2001 and was recognized with the Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Service in 2008 and 2019 for delivering exceptional public sector leadership and high impact results. She is the recipient of numerous awards including the Theodore Roosevelt Government Leadership award and Women in Federal Health IT. Ms. Norris has a Master of Business Administration degree from the George Washington University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from the College of William and Mary.

### **What are you most looking forward to as a NAPA Fellow?**

I am looking forward to working with the Academy Fellows on the many public administration opportunities and challenges facing our nation. I am excited about the opportunity to contribute to the discussion on how government can respond and support the dynamic and diverse needs of our citizenry with the sense of urgency expected by today's society.

### **What inspires you during these challenging times?**

I am inspired by my colleagues at the National Institutes of Health who are working tirelessly to accelerate the development of tests, treatments and vaccines for Covid-19 and by the many individuals who are providing front line assistance and medical care to the millions of people around the world who are affected by this global pandemic. It is an honor to be part of a community that includes so many dedicated and talented public servants across all levels of government during this unprecedented time of challenge.

### **What do you enjoy most about the work you do?**

I have spent much of my career working to incorporate technological advances to enable the missions of three of the largest scientific and engineering organizations in the world (NIH, NSF, and NASA). Technology is helping us build an open, interconnected, and sustainable ecosystem for collaboration and discovery — one where we can bring the best scientific and technical insight into some of our most challenging health problems. I've witnessed how technology advances have enabled the conduct of some of the most incredible science, in the harshest of weather conditions, literally at the end of the world at the US South Pole Research Station. And like others, I've experienced the wonders of the universe through technology-enabled deep space missions to planets and galaxies far beyond our own. Although the missions are diverse, these agencies have organizational cultures that are grounded in experimentation and discovery, collaboration, and continuous learning. I love the energy and passion of the people, their unrelenting commitment to achieving the mission, and their laser focus on using newly discovered knowledge to deliver transformative outcomes for our nation. These characteristics make for a pretty wonderful work experience. It is always exciting.

## **Who or what inspired you to work in public service?**

My first professional job was on a Presidential Commission to identify ways to apply private sector business practices to Federal program management. The study included many departments and agencies and provided wonderful insight into the world of the Federal government and how it functioned. When it ended, I wanted to continue with similar efforts and subsequently joined a management consulting firm. NASA was one of my first clients. It was an exciting time for our nation's space exploration programs and I knew I wanted to be part of the NASA team. During the decade I was there, NASA was building the new International Space Station and was routinely launching the Space Shuttle like a well-oiled machine. We were discovering gamma rays and black holes, the Hubble Space Telescope was released, and we successfully launched the Mars and Saturn missions with the Mars Pathfinder, Sojourner and Cassini spacecraft. Public service provided the opportunity to be part of these amazing efforts and to have direct impact at a scale I had never imagined.

## **Which of the Academy's Grand Challenges resonate most with you?**

I am pleased that the Grand Challenges include an important focus on data security, privacy, and emergent areas such as artificial intelligence. In science and research, the question of how we can best share data while protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the individual is always top of mind. I am also interested in how to attract and retain the next generation of talent that can bring new perspectives to these Grand Challenges. In particular, I have been engaged in efforts to develop a pipeline of cyber talent to address the ever-expanding threat landscape and would like to contribute to that effort. There is much to be done in this space.

## **What is the first concert you attended?**

Earth, Wind & Fire. That's The Way of the World. Gotta love the 70's.