

ATS announces two new staff transitions

By CHRIS MEINZER

The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) is pleased to announce two new staff transitions, further strengthening the organization and better positioning it to fulfill the mission and strategic priorities set by the ATS Board of Directors. ATS has now expanded from 22 to 33 staff members. Organizational enhancements such as these continue to be significant as ATS positions itself to serve its membership as grant and New Century Fund support continue to grow, having nearly doubled in the last five years.

Senior director of programs and initiatives

After a bi-national search, ATS is pleased to announce the selection of Heather Campain Hartung as its new senior director of programs and initiatives (SDPI). She holds a deep appreciation of the value of graduate theological education. She also shares the vision of how ATS and the Commission on Accrediting (COA) can best serve member schools.

In addition to her recent work as director of accreditation at ATS, Hartung brings to this position senior leadership experience in theological schools, where she honed her awareness of the need for ongoing curiosity and learning in service to an institution's mission. Her extensive experience in the church, in higher education, and in corporate environments has convinced her that organizations must tend well to people and clearly define their collective work in service to the mission. As SDPI, Hartung will ensure that ATS programs and initiatives operate effectively and cohesively and align with the ATS mission and strategic priorities in service to its member schools.



Heather Campain Hartung



Elise Sutter

"Heather has a wealth of skill and experience that will benefit the staff and membership in this important time," said ATS Executive Director Frank Yamada. "As the board engages a new visioning process for the future of ATS, she will be well positioned to help us realize that new vision and direction, and I am excited to have her join the senior leadership of the organization."

Hartung has begun transitioning into this new role even as [ATS seeks her replacement as director of accreditation](#). She will continue to serve the schools to which she is assigned as liaison until further notice.

Associate director of human resources

With the expansion and relocation of staff in the last five years, it has become necessary for ATS to have a staff member fully dedicated to human resources. ATS is delighted to name Elise Sutter as its new associate director of human resources (ADHR). Sutter brings along human resources experience with a nonprofit similar in size to ATS. She has a master's degree in counseling psychology, and she continues to pursue additional human resource certifications. Over the last two years, she has established herself as an energetic and thoughtful staff member dedicated to the ATS mission.

When Sutter joined ATS in a part-time capacity in January 2023, it was understood that she brought with her relevant experience and expertise in human resources. During her tenure, as her role grew from part-time to full-time and the need for human resource capacity expanded, she became a natural fit for this newly created position.

As ADHR, Sutter will work closely with senior leadership to translate the ATS mission, vision, and strategic priorities to human resource efforts by creating and managing a robust system of staff recruiting, training, and development through transparent and documented policies and practices.



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