Science Societies

Martin receives Administrative Excellence Award

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> Lisa Muirheid Martin, Program Coordinator of the Illinois Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) Program, has received the 2026 ICCA Administrative Excellence Award. She has spent most of her professional career advocating for the Certified Crop Adviser Program and the CCAs who have earned their certification.

Lisa Muirheid Martin, Program Coordinator of the Illinois Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) Program, has received the 2026 ICCA Administrative Excellence Award. The award recognizes outstanding regional administrative services that contribute significantly to the success of the CCA program and honors individuals or teams who demonstrate exceptional efficiency, innovation, and dedication in supporting the CCA program's mission and operations.

Martin has been a tireless advocate for the CCA Program since its inception and has dedicated more than 30 years to strengthening, promoting, and modernizing the program at both the state and international levels. She has served on countless committees and task forces over the years and is continually asked to contribute wherever her experience is valuable. Most recently, she served on the Strategic Planning Committee, the online application task force, and a task force focused on engaging companies to reward employees for earning CCA certification in an effort to address declining CCA numbers.

Advancing the CCA Program

Martin has long recognized that the value of the credential depends not only on technical excellence, but also on visibility and public trust. She became one of the program's earliest marketing advocates and may have served as the first marketing committee chair. She developed a press release recognizing newly certified CCAs that was later adopted by the International Certified Crop Adviser program and has regularly encouraged other state boards to actively market the CCA credential.

She was instrumental in creating the Illinois CCA of the Year Program with the Illinois Farm Bureau, helping build it into a respected recognition program that provides award recipients with publicity and financial stipends while elevating awareness of the profession. She also helped create the Soy Envoy Program with the Illinois Soybean Association, connecting CCAs with farmers through blogs, podcasts, interviews, and educational outreach. That initiative generated thousands of dollars in free publicity for the Illinois CCA Program and expanded awareness of CCAs through publications and communications reaching more than 30,000 soybean farmers.

Supporting Illinois CCAs

One of Martin's most valued contributions is her personal commitment to helping CCAs remain in compliance. Each year, she sends additional notices to more than 300 Illinois CCAs who are short on CEUs or at risk of losing certification. Many Illinois CCAs are familiar with the "little red slip" she mails with detailed instructions on how to regain compliance. She often follows up with emails, texts, or phone calls late in the year to help advisers avoid being dropped for missing CEUs or dues payments. She has spent countless hours helping advisers maintain certification and remain engaged in the profession.

Martin coordinates the annual Illinois CCA conference, ensuring advisers have opportunities to earn CEUs and stay current on industry issues. When a major University of Illinois conference was cancelled, she helped organize expanded programming to meet CCA needs, including a two-day conference prior to COVID and an online conference during the pandemic.

Simply put, the Illinois CCA program would not exist in its current form without Lisa Martin. Her tireless advocacy, exceptional service, and long-term leadership have had a lasting impact on Illinois agriculture, the CCA profession, and the many individuals and organizations she has supported throughout her career.

Submit your award announcements

Know a CCA or those who support CCAs who have received an award or recognition? We'd like to let everyone know! Submit your announcements here.

Illinois CCA Program

International CCA Program

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