Julia Russell, Associate Chief Information Officer, embodies the values of Our Common Ground with patience, warmth, and humor.

Julia is clear-sighted: her experience has been crucial as Enterprise Technology Services navigated several recent transitions, both technical and organizational. Julia is responsive: she is able to quickly identify and assess risks and problem areas, and works collaboratively with her staff to identify the best path to their resolution. Julia radiates accountability: she never lets her team lose sight of their duty to UVM’s students, faculty, and staff. Julia is sincere in her desire to make the right decisions for constituents, even when it’s not easy or convenient.

Working closely with Julia, it is easy to observe the personal side of her obvious commitments to openness, integrity, and respect. Over the last two years and ending only recently, Julia has balanced the demands of leading Enterprise Technology Services without the aid of two key directors, and she has done so with considerable grace.

Throughout 2016, while Enterprise Technology Services recruited a new director for the Information Security Office, Julia was the primary contact for addressing the needs of the Information Security Office, answering questions and viewing the challenges and dynamics of the department with a broader lens. Despite her many other obligations, Julia met with the Information Security Office team regularly to receive updates on work and lend a solution—or sometimes just to lend an ear—to the team’s frustrations and concerns with the ever-changing dynamics in the field. She never rushed, giving the Information Security Office team her undivided attention.

Julia is a calm presence in any situation. The work of the Information Security Office often requires a timely response to situations that are sometimes technically confusing and personally uncomfortable. Julia always makes herself available, and uses her elevated perspective to ask good questions, collaboratively find the correct course of action, and lend any support that is needed to act in UVM’s best interest.

Julia was forthright and candid about the process of recruiting the new Information Security Office director, and about evaluating and reorganizing Enterprise Technology Services as a whole. The group has its new leader now and is on its way. But the team remains forever grateful for Julia’s strong leadership, built on openness, integrity, and respect.