

# Consortium of Social Science Associations

## COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

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### HOUSE PANEL RECOMMENDS NINE PERCENT BOOST FOR NSF *HS*

On July 10, the House VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee chaired by Rep. James Walsh (R-NY) began the process that will result in a FY 2002 spending figure for the National Science Foundation (NSF). Rejecting the President's budget request of a \$56 million or 1.3 percent increase, the Subcommittee recommended \$4.84 billion for NSF for next year. This is a \$414 million or 9.3 percent increase over the Foundation's current spending plan.

For the Research and Related Activities account, which includes funding for the research directorates, and the Office of Polar Programs, the panel provided \$3.642 billion. This is a \$292.3 million or 8.7 percent boost over FY 2001 spending levels. Unlike their Senate counterparts, the House Subcommittee in recent years has listed spending levels for the individual research directorates. These can be viewed as guidelines, since in the final appropriations bill only a single number for Research and Related Activities has been provided, allowing NSF to make the allocations to the directorates.

The House panel approved \$179 million for the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate. This is a \$14.6 million or 8.9 percent increase over the current spending plan. The Subcommittee again this year emphasized support for a Children's Research Initiative (CRI). The panel directed NSF to spend "up to \$5 million" on the CRI. In report language that will accompany the bill, the Subcommittee told NSF to use the 1997 National Science and Technology Council's (NSTC) report, *Investing in Our Future: A National Research Initiative for America's Children in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* as a guide. The report further states that NSF should employ its normal peer review process for determining grants to the CRI.

Unlike last year, however, the report language does not provide special privileging to certain institutions by suggesting that in the competition

"highest priority be given to institutions of higher education" that meet spelled-out criteria (see *Update*, June 18, 2001). Instead, it goes on to state: "The CRI should encompass all aspects of research on children, excluding medical, and should be open to all scientists from a diverse set of institutions." The Committee further suggests, using the words of the NSTC report, that emphasis should be placed on "pursuing theory-informed, hypothesis-driven research on developmental processes in children, understanding a child's development over the long term, and the influence of families and communities on that development."

The Subcommittee recommended \$886 million for the Education and Human Resources Directorate (EHR). This is a \$100.4 million or 12.8 percent enhancement of the current spending plan. The Committee fully funded the President's Math Science Partnership Initiative at \$200 million. Although the current bills that reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act put this program in the Department of Education rather than NSF, where the Bush administration wants it, the appropriators seem to have given the Foundation a green light to spend funds on this program. The appropriators also included \$10 million for a National Science Scholarship program pushed by the House Science Committee.

#### Inside *UPDATE* . . .

- House Appropriations Passes CJS Funding Bill
- NSF Appoints Former University President Head of Education Directorate
- Surgeon General Issues Call to Action to Promote Sexual Health
- Hyman Addresses NIMH Research Roundtable
- Voting Technology Project Results Unveiled
- Gutmann to Lead Social Science Archive
- Sources of Research Support
- Announcements



The House panel also rejected the Administration's recommendation that the Major Research Equipment account suffer significant decreases. The Subcommittee provided that account with a \$39 million increase over the President's request, but only a \$13.7 million boost over current spending.

For the **Office of Policy Development and Research** at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Subcommittee recommended \$47 million, a \$7 million decrease from last year. It continued to fund the PATH program (Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing) at \$7.5 million, against the Administration's desire to eliminate it.

The full House Appropriations Committee is scheduled to consider the recommendations of the VA, HUD, Independent Agencies Subcommittee on July 17. The House leadership hopes that the bill can pass the House before the August recess. The Senate Subcommittee will mark up its bill on the morning of July 19, with full Committee consideration expected that same afternoon. Majority Leader Daschle (D-SD) has announced that he will try to move nine appropriations bills through the Senate before the August recess, a very daunting task.

In other appropriations news, the House passed the **Agriculture and Rural Development** funding

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), an advocacy organization for federal support for the social and behavioral sciences, was founded in 1981 and stands alone in Washington in representing the full range of social and behavioral sciences.

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bill by a vote of 414-16 on July 11. During the floor debate Rep. Eva Clayton (D-NC), co-chair of the Congressional Rural Caucus, offered and withdrew an amendment that sought a \$10 million increase to support research at the public historically black colleges and universities. The offset would have come from the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants program (NRI), whose funding level was significantly reduced in last year's appropriation, but whose FY 2002 appropriation from the House was the same as last year - \$105.8 million. (For more details on the House allocations for FY 2002, see *Update*, July 2, 2001.)

#### HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS PASSES CJS FUNDING BILL

The full Appropriations Committee in the House, chaired by Rep. Bill Young (R-FL), passed the bill that funds the departments of Commerce, Justice, and State for fiscal year 2002 by voice vote on July 10.

The Committee provided the **National Institute of Justice** (NIJ) the same funding requested by the President - \$54.9 million. This reduction of \$15 million from FY 2001 reflects the elimination of an earmark.

The Committee again provided \$5.2 million to NIJ for grants, contracts, and other assistance for research and evaluation pertaining to violence against women; another \$5 million is provided for research on family violence.

The bill provided \$32.3 million for the **Bureau of Justice Statistics** (BJS), \$3.6 million more than this year and the same as the President's request. The total includes \$1.5 million to fund statistical studies of traffic stops by police, deaths in law enforcement custody, and victimization of the disabled, as well as the conversion to automated data collection for the National Crime Victimization Survey.

Another \$1 million would go to BJS for a domestic violence Federal case processing study from Grants to Combat Violence Against Women.

The Committee provided the **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention** \$278.5 million, slightly less than the President's request.



The **Census Bureau** would receive \$519.8 million for FY 2002, \$23.6 million less than requested. The Committee recommended that \$350.4 be spent on periodic censuses and related programs (adjusting for anticipated deobligations of contracts), \$201 million less than the current fiscal year and slightly more than requested. This includes \$139.2 million for continuing activities of Census 2000.

The panel provided the full request for the planning, design, and implementation of the long-form transitional database for the 2010 decennial census, including the American Community Survey (ACS) (see *Update*, June 18, 2001). The Committee provided \$65 million for preparations for the 2010 Census.

Finally, the Committee recommended \$171.1 million for other periodic censuses and programs, \$25.6 million more than in FY 2001. These include economic censuses (\$52 million), continuous measurement (ACS) (\$27.1 million), intercensal demographic estimates (\$6 million), and others.

The appropriations bill is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on July 17.

#### **NSF APPOINTS FORMER UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT HEAD OF EDUCATION DIRECTORATE**

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The National Science Foundation (NSF) has named Judith A. Ramaley, former President of the University of Vermont (1997-2001) and Portland State University (1990-97), as the new Assistant Director for the Education and Human Resources Directorate (EHR). She replaces interim Director Judith Sunley, who will now become a senior adviser to NSF Director Rita Colwell.

In addition to her two presidencies, Ramaley has also held senior administrative positions at the State University of New York at Albany, the University of Kansas, and the University of Nebraska. She is currently chairing a committee of the U.S. Department of Education's National Advisory Council for School-to-Work Opportunities, and the Association of American Colleges and Universities' National Panel on Greater Expectations. Trained as a biologist, with

a Ph.D. from UCLA, Ramaley has been a professor of biology at five universities.

She led the effort to create the Vermont Public Education Partnership, which brought together the university of Vermont, state education officials, and state colleges to produce a coordinated collaboration that extends from pre-K to graduate education. The initiative emphasized programs such as distance learning and comprehensive responses to statewide workforce needs. This experience will be valuable to Ramaley as she leads NSF's proposed Math Science Partnership Initiative.

Ramaley has served on NSF's Biological Science Directorate's Advisory Committee, as a member of the Kellogg Commission for the Future of the State and Land Grant Universities and chair of NASULGC's Commission on the Urban Agenda, as well as chair of the American Council on Education's Commission on Women in Higher Education.

While at Vermont, she created controversy by canceling the University's hockey season after allegations of physical hazing by a member of the team.

Since NSF Assistant Directors are not subject to Senate confirmation, Ramaley will take up her new position on August 1.

#### **SURGEON GENERAL ISSUES CALL TO ACTION TO PROMOTE SEXUAL HEALTH**

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On June 28, Surgeon General David Satcher released *The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Promote Sexual Health and Responsible Behavior*. Satcher called for strategies that focus upon increasing awareness, implementing and strengthening interventions, and expanding the research base relating to sexual health matters. "We face a serious public health challenge regarding the sexual health of our nation," Satcher warned.

The Surgeon General cited a number of sexually-related public health problems, including:



- Five of the 10 most commonly reported infectious diseases in the U.S. are sexually transmitted diseases (STDs); in 1995 STDs accounted for 87 percent of the cases reported among those ten.
- An estimated 45 million persons in the U.S. are infected with genital herpes, and one million new cases occur per year.
- The AIDS epidemic is shifting toward women. While women account for 28 percent of the HIV cases reported since 1981, they accounted for 32 percent of those reported between July, 1999 and June, 2000. Similarly, women account for 17 percent of AIDS cases reported since 1981, but 24 percent of those reported between July, 1999 and June, 2000.
- There are an estimated 104,000 child victims of sexual abuse per year, and the proportion of women in current relationships who are subject to sexual violence is estimated at 8 percent.

According to Satcher, the *Call to Action* represents "only a first step – a call to begin a mature, thoughtful, and respectful discussion nationwide about sexuality." He further emphasized the need to "understand that sexuality encompasses more than sexual behavior, that the many aspects of sexuality include not only the physical, but the mental and spiritual as well, and that sexuality is a core component of personality."

The report cited three fundamental areas in which strategies could help provide a foundation for promoting sexual health and responsible sexual behavior in a manner consistent with the best available science.

### **1. Increasing public awareness of issues relating to sexual health and responsible behavior**

- Begin a national dialogue on sexual health and responsible sexual behavior.
- Encourage opinion leaders to address issues related to sexual health and responsible sexual behavior.
- Provide access to education that is thorough, wide-ranging, begins early, and continues throughout the lifespan.

### **2. Providing the health and social interventions necessary to promote and enhance sexual health and responsible sexual behavior**

- Eliminate disparities in sexual health status that arise from social and economic disadvantage, diminished access to information and health care services, and stereotyping and discrimination.
- Target interventions to the most socioeconomically vulnerable communities.
- Strengthen families, whatever their structure.

### **3. Expanding the research base**

- Promote basic research in human sexual development, sexual health, and reproductive health, as well as social and behavioral research on risk and protective factors for sexual health. Expand the research base to cover the entire human life span.
- Research, develop, disseminate, and evaluate educational materials and guidelines for sexuality education, covering the full continuum of human sexual development.
- Expand evaluation efforts for community, school, and clinic-based interventions that address sexual health and responsibility.

### **HYMAN ADDRESSES NIMH RESEARCH ROUNDTABLE**

The news is "very good" for the health of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), noted NIMH Director Steven Hyman, addressing the Institute's Fifth Annual Research Roundtable on June 15. The new administration has decided to keep the agency on a "very healthy budgetary track," which includes a substantial increase for mental health research, Hyman said.

He expressed the need for funding continuity more than dramatic increases. Educating the Congress on this need is an ongoing process, Hyman explained.

Addressing individuals, families, policymakers, and officials attending the roundtable, Hyman shared the fact that the World Health Organization (WHO) designated mental health as a major topic of the World Health Assembly that was held in Geneva in May. Mental Health will be the sole topic of the WHO's World Health Report for 2001 scheduled for release this fall. According to Hyman, the report should provide a significant platform for improving



the understanding of mental illnesses and health worldwide. The Report will complement Surgeon General David Satcher's well-received report on mental health, said Hyman.

The joint efforts of NIMH and the participants of the roundtable have "benefited immensely from attention directed to [mental disorders]," Hyman continued. "[Satcher's] landmark report on mental health, his call to action on suicide, his report on youth violence, and his national agenda for child mental health assign a new level of credibility and urgency to the challenge of responding to new mental disorders."

### Current Research Priorities

NIMH is currently focusing its efforts in seven areas:

**1. Understanding the inter-relationship of mental and physical health.** Although the impact of mental illnesses on disability is becoming more well-known, the fact that mental illnesses (particularly depression) can have a significant impact on the incidence and course of general medical disorders is not, said Hyman. Depression is a systemic disease that affects the entire body.

**2. Strategic planning for research on mood disorders.** The NIMH initiative, *Breaking ground, Breaking Through: A Strategic Plan for Depression and Bipolar Disorder Research* is designed to identify scientific areas that offer significant opportunities for progress or in which there are currently significant gaps in knowledge.

**3. Investing in America's racial/ethnic diversity for mental health careers.** At its May 2001 meeting, the National Advisory Mental Health Council (NAMHC) accepted the report from its Workgroup on Racial/Ethnic Diversity in Research Training and Health Disparities Research. The current and projected numbers of racial/ethnic minority investigators and faculty are insufficient to fill future shortfalls in the science workforce.

**4. Fostering childhood and adolescent mental health.** In the United States today, one in every ten children and adolescents suffers from mental illness severe enough to result in significant functional impairment. In May, the NAMHC Child Workgroup issued a report recommending that

NIMH strengthen research, in part by accelerating interdisciplinary and multi-site research to develop new interventions (both psychosocial and pharmacologic) for child and adolescent disorders (see *Update*, June 18, 2001).

The Institute is developing FY 2002 initiatives that will lay the groundwork for a series of child treatment research networks designed to develop new treatments over the next decade. According to Hyman, the expanded network will direct resources to research on bipolar disorder, autism, depression in prepubertal children, and comorbid conditions that adversely affect child development.

**5. Supporting research on mental health in our aging population.** Older individuals are becoming a substantially larger proportion of many nations' populations. To help sharpen NIMH's focus and better coordinate the Institute's approach to research in the mental health of aging, Hyman reconvened a workgroup of intramural and extramural staff within NIMH to review its current aging research portfolio. This workgroup will prepare a strategic plan for the future of NIMH research on mental health in the elderly population.

**6. Developing tomorrow's research clinicians.** Hyman noted that, in order to carry out these ambitious research initiatives, there is a need for many new qualified clinicians.

**7. Rapidly translating basic discoveries into innovative prevention strategies and treatments.** Hyman emphasized the urgent need to translate findings in basic neuroscience, genetics, and basic behavioral science into diverse clinical applications. He urged development of improved psychosocial interventions and testing of both pharmacologic and psychosocial treatments in trials that simultaneously improve the quality of care available and convince insurers and employers that these treatments are of substantial benefit and cost-effective.

According to Hyman, the long-term NIMH investment in behavioral science research has yielded a wealth of opportunities for developing and applying behavioral science knowledge and methods to benefit clinical, intervention, and services research and, ultimately, clinical care. Behavioral science, he asserted, can offer critical insights into the nature of mental illness and health and the processes and interventions that can prevent illness



or lead from disorder to remission, recovery, and rehabilitation.

It will be crucial to obtain synergy by promoting research interactions and collaborations that cross disciplines, encourage technical and theoretical approaches, and explore multiple levels of analysis, including interactions across basic and clinical neuroscience. . .

## VOTING TECHNOLOGY PROJECT RESULTS UNVEILED

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A group of experts from Caltech (California Institute of Technology) and MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) gathered at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) July 19 to discuss the results of the first phase of their project.

Stephen Ansolabehere, an MIT political scientist, opened the seminar by explaining that the early part of their undertaking has focused on understanding the problems presented by current voting technologies. He went on to comment that the group has started to explore solutions to nationwide election troubles, and that the second phase of the project will center on design and issuing detailed recommendations for improvements to the system.

Also presenting were Thomas Palfrey, professor of economics and political science at Caltech; MIT media specialist Ted Selker; and Caltech electrical engineer Shuki Bruck. The four researchers discussed voting techniques and trends around the country and tried to dispel several popular notions regarding various methods of voting. For one, they made the case that there is little difference in average cost across various forms of voting. Their data showed that electronic systems do not cost much more than punch cards or even paper ballots.

The researchers also presented figures on miscounting errors. They found that, contrary to many people's expectations, electronically cast votes are not much more accurate than punch card tallies, "chad or no chad."

Reviewing nationwide trends in voting technology, the participants explained that optical scanning systems are replacing punch card ballots in

many small localities, while computerized ballots are generally taking the place of lever machines in bigger counties. Selker commented that this is a positive development as optical scanners generally win the best performance marks of any type of technology, and electronic systems are being vastly improved as they are put in place with greater frequency around the country.

The seminar then turned to methods for improving the electoral system. Bruck offered a glimpse of a potential method of voting that would allow individuals to create their ballot on any computer with internet access and submit the vote in-person to any officially designated location. Bruck admitted that several problems need to be worked through to make the idea functional, but was confident that the general framework was feasible.

Congress is currently considering ways to reform elections in the U.S. (see *Update*, July 2, 2001), and the researchers advised policymakers to pour money into the election system for two primary reasons: 1) to allow for immediate fixes using the best current technology; 2) to allow localities to keep their systems running smoothly in the long run as new technologies are introduced.

In a question and answer session following the presentations, Charles Stewart, an MIT political scientist and former COSSA seminar speaker, stated unequivocally that the states should not follow Oregon's system of 100 percent mail-in voting. He asserted that Oregon's voting rate didn't increase much as a result of the switch, and that votes sent through the mail are too prone to fraud.

[Editor's note: The edited transcript from COSSA's March 16 Congressional Briefing on election reform is now available. Contact [coffa@coffa.org](mailto:coffa@coffa.org) for a copy.]

## GUTMANN TO LEAD SOCIAL SCIENCE ARCHIVE

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Myron Gutmann, Director of the Population Research Center and Professor of History at the University of Texas at Austin and a member of the COSSA Board of Directors, has been named the new Director of the Inter-university Consortium of Political and Social Research (ICPSR). Located at the University of Michigan, the ICPSR is the major



data archive for the social and behavioral sciences. It has also provided methodological training in sophisticated statistical techniques for many in the social and behavioral sciences.

Gutmann, who has Master and Doctoral degrees from Princeton, has been a leader in the interdisciplinary study of history for the past 25 years. He has studied and written on the economic, social, environmental, and demographic histories of Europe and the Americas. Most of his research in recent years has been about the history of the populations of the southwestern United States, the history of the Hispanic population in the U.S., and the relations among population, land use, and the environment in the U.S. He has also published extensively about the demographic, social, and economic history of Belgium and the Netherlands in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

He is currently researching the population and environment of the Great Plains of the U.S., studying the way people have used the land in that area since the 1870s. In addition, Gutmann is examining the history of Mexican-origin families in the U.S. and the ways in which their structure and experiences have and have not resembled those of other groups in the U.S. population.

Gutmann will take up his duties at ICPSR on August 1, 2001.

## SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT

COSSA provides this information as a service and encourages readers to contact the sponsoring agency for further information. Additional application guidelines and restrictions may apply.

### Improving Contraceptive Practice and Delivery

To address the many public health and other concerns associated with unplanned pregnancies, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) seeks to foster research that can result in improved contraceptive use in the U.S.

The initiative has three main aims: conduct basic research that will directly inform strategies to support effective contraceptive use among individuals and couples seeking to prevent

or delay pregnancy; conduct research to identify and evaluate innovations in clinical practice and family planning service delivery that will lead to measurable improvements in contraceptive practice; and support basic and applied research addressing the influence of policy and the structure and financing of reproductive health services on effective contraceptive use, and the cost-effectiveness of alternative approaches to structuring and financing services.

This initiative invites applications that address one or more of the following general areas:

1. Basic research that will directly inform strategies to support effective contraceptive use among individuals and couples seeking to prevent or delay pregnancy;
2. Research to identify and evaluate innovations in clinical practice and family planning service delivery that are affordable and sustainable, and will lead to measurable improvements in contraceptive practice;
3. Basic and applied research addressing the influence of policy and the structure and financing of reproductive health services on effective contraceptive use, and the cost-effectiveness of alternative approaches to structuring and financing contraceptive services.

Letters of intent are due **July 31, 2001**; applications must be received by **September 11, 2001**. For more information, see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/rfa-hd-01-015.html>.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Grover J. (Russ) Whitehurst was confirmed by the Senate July 12 to be Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education at the Department of Education (see *Update*, May 21, 2001). Whitehurst will head the Office for Educational Research and Improvement.
- Edited transcripts from COSSA's Congressional Seminar, *How Neighborhoods Matter: The Value of Investing at the Local Level*, held on September 25, 2000, are now available. Email [coffa@coffa.org](mailto:coffa@coffa.org).



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1522 K Street, NW, Suite 836, Washington, D.C. 20005

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