
CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

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NSF PASSES UP SOCIAL SCIENCES IN S&T CENTERS DECISION

On December 5, the National Science Foundation (NSF) announced the final selections for its Science and Technology Centers (STC) program. Eleven centers were chosen, and together will receive up to \$24.7 million in support the first year. Each center will perform basic research in a particular scientific area. While these areas range from cosmology and biotechnology to advanced computing and superconductivity, the social and behavioral sciences are nowhere to be seen.

Created to bolster basic scientific research in the United States, the STC program is a significant element of the NSF budget. The agency originally planned to spend \$30 million on 10-20 centers to "exploit opportunities in science and technology where the complexity of problems require the advantages of scale, duration, and/or equipment and facilities that can only be provided by a campus-based research center" (see Update, November 20, 1987).

STC applicants were expected to shape their proposals around a unifying intellectual theme, to include a strong educational component, to incorporate mechanisms for stimulating the transfer

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The Consortium represents more than 185,000 American scientists across the full range of the social and behavioral sciences, functioning as a bridge between the research world and the Washington community.

Victor G. Rosenblum, *President*

Howard J. Silver, *Executive Director*

of basic research knowledge to those interested in building upon it, and to establish linkages with government, industry, states, or other institutions.

Extensive merit review was applied to 323 proposals; about 1,000 reviewers from NSF and other government agencies and laboratories, academia, and industry helped narrow the field. A 23-member multidisciplinary review panel scrutinized the 48 finalists, including four or five in the social and behavioral sciences, and resolved that the research envisioned in the 11 proposals recommended by the director to the National Science Board "was of the highest quality, and could only be accomplished through the center mode." Awards will be negotiated by NSF and host institutions through cooperative agreements, and NSF support after the first year is dependent on available funds and on each center's progress.

William Harris, Director of the NSF-STC program, noted that all of the final 48 proposals have been forwarded to the National Governors Association in the hope that states would fund those not selected. In addition, NSF plans to announce soon about 10 planning grants for next year's STC competition.

The following is a list of each center, its home institution (which in some cases will operate the center in collaboration with other institutions), and the approximate maximum level of funding for the first year.

Center for Particle Astrophysics	University of California at Berkeley	\$1,825,000
Center for Quantized Electronic Structures	University of California at Santa Barbara	2,100,000
Center for the Development of an Integrated Protein and Nucleic Acid Biotechnology	California Institute of Technology	3,050,000
Center for High-Temperature Superconductivity	University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana	4,250,000
Center for Microbial Ecology	Michigan State University	1,100,000
Center for Advanced Cement-Based Materials	Northwestern University	1,750,000
Center for Analysis and Prediction of Storms	University of Oklahoma	900,000
Center for Research on Parallel Computation	Rice University	4,100,000
Center for Photoinduced Charge Transfer	University of Rochester	1,650,000
Center for Discrete Mathematics and Theoretical Computer Science	Rutgers University	1,825,000
Center for High-Performance Polymeric Adhesives and Composites	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	2,124,000

CHANGES FOR NEW CONGRESS: MIKULSKI, HARKIN GET KEY FUNDING SLOTS

The members of the 101st Congress, which convenes in January, 1989, came to Washington at the end of November and the beginning of December to select their leaders and receive committee assignments. They hope to be ready to receive President Reagan's last budget on January 9 and any subsequent revisions to that budget made by President-elect Bush. Officially, the new Congress will convene on January 3, and the following day members will certify the Electoral College results that make George Bush the next president. However, the week of January 23 will see the real convening of the 101st Congress.

In a surprisingly one-sided contest in the Senate, George Mitchell (D-ME) was elected majority leader by his fellow Democrats. Mitchell replaces Robert Byrd (D-WV) who will become chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Alan Cranston (D-CA) was re-elected democratic whip, the No. 2 position in the Senate leadership. The Republican leaders in the Senate will continue to be Minority Leader Robert Dole (R-KS) and Minority Whip Alan Simpson (R-WY).

Other new Senate committee chairmen besides Byrd are James Sasser (D-TN) at Budget and Don Riegle (D-MI) at Banking. New appropriations subcommittee chairs will include two relatively junior members in charge of the subcommittees that handle major items of interest to social and behavioral scientists. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), elected in 1986, will replace retired Sen. William Proxmire at the Senate HUD-Independent Agencies Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over the funding of the National Science Foundation. Tom Harkin (D-IA), elected in 1984, will replace retired Sen. Lawton Chiles at the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee. Mikulski has previously expressed reservations about the current system of funding university-based research (see Update May 13, 1988).

In other Senate committee developments, Brock Adams (D-WA), Wyche Fowler (D-GA), Robert Kerrey (D-NE), and Phil Gramm (R-TX) were appointed to vacant slots on the appropriations committee. Freshman Charles Robb (D-VA) was assigned to the Budget Committee. The Labor and Human Resources Committee has six vacancies on the Republican side (three of the present members were asked to drop their positions pending assignment of slots to the newcomers), which suggests the ranking member of the Education, Arts and Humanities Subcommittee may be one of the freshman senators.

In the House, the Democratic leadership team of Speaker Jim Wright (D-TX), Majority Leader Tom Foley (D-WA), and Majority Whip Tony Coelho (D-CA) were reelected. The fourth ranking post, chairman of the Democratic Caucus, went to former Budget Committee Chairman William Gray (D-PA). Steny Hoyer (D-MD) was elected vice-chairman of the Caucus. On the Republican side, Robert Michel (R-IL) was reelected minority leader. As

expected, Richard Cheney (R-WY) was elected minority whip to replace Trent Lott, who was elected to the Senate from Mississippi.

Also in the House, Leon Panetta (D-CA), as expected, was selected to lead the Budget Committee. Other new committee chairmen are: Henry Gonzalez (D-TX) at Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs; Jack Brooks (D-TX) at Judiciary; and John Conyers (D-MI) at Government Operations. Jim Chapman (D-TX), Chester Atkins (D-MA), and Dean Gallo (R-NJ) are new members of the appropriations committee. Assignments to the House Budget Committee, which experiences a large turnover each new session, will be made in January.<<

JEC REPORT URGES AGENDA FOR A MORE COMPETITIVE FUTURE

A new congressional staff report summarizing testimony from 52 witnesses who testified at a series of hearings held last fall on "Competitiveness and the Quality of the American Work Force" advocates major reforms in early childhood education, schooling, teacher training, and workforce training. In addition, the report notes: "Active Federal support will be required for research, development, demonstration, and information programs to strengthen elementary and secondary school education and training and retraining programs at the work site."

Entitled "The Education Deficit," the report was prepared by the Education and Health Subcommittee of the Joint Economic Committee (JEC), chaired by Rep. James Scheuer (D-NY). It includes statements from social policy researchers making the ominous connection between the United States' slipping economic competitiveness and its shortcomings in education and workforce training.

Scheuer notes, in his introduction, that "certain themes emerged with remarkable regularity from the Subcommittee hearings." One such theme urges the teaching of "higher order skills." Another is to make early childhood education, through the Head Start program, available to all American children, a sentiment endorsed by President-elect George Bush. "Serious consideration," Scheuer asserts, "should be given to keeping schools open more hours each day and more days each week." Schools should also be the center for community and social service needs of families by offering literacy and other education programs for adults.

The federal government has a special responsibility to encourage, support, and recognize effective schools and teachers. This should be done through: mounting research efforts to better measure student achievement, especially in higher order skills; facilitating dissemination of information on effective schools; rewarding professionals who demonstrate success in teaching higher order skills; and recognizing and promoting achievement on the part of schools and teachers. This last seems to be the

bedrock of Bush's education proposals. The federal government should also, "by carrot or stick," the report argues, "provide adequate incentives to the private sector to encourage training and retraining activities for employees."

The report concludes on an optimistic note based on research, asserting that American students can achieve at a higher level, and the American educational system can adjust to the fast changing demands of the world economy. Irving Hamer, deputy commissioner of the New York State Education Department, told the committee: "The research teaches me ... that all children except those that are most severely disabled have the capacity of completing the high school experience with the skills necessary to perform either postsecondary education or enter employment." Lauren Resnick, professor of psychology and director of the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh, noted: "We know schools can do it, because there [is] case after case of institutions, other than schools, succeeding."

Requests for copies of "The Education Deficit" (\$1.50 each) should be sent to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402-9315, or by calling 202/275-3030 (GPO Stock No. 552-070-05049-3).<<

ENHANCING INTERNATIONAL COMPETENCE OF AMERICANS: CAFLIS MEETS

The working groups of the Coalition for the Advancement of Foreign Languages and International Studies (CAFLIS) met again on December 5 to continue consideration of ways to improve Americans' understanding of the world. (For the story of the earlier meeting, see Update September 23, 1988.)

The first working group, chaired by Stanley Katz, president of the American Council of Learned Societies, explored the need for a new national entity that would provide greater federal support for international education, area studies, and foreign language teaching and training. Different models for the new entity based on the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, and the Soviet-East European Research Program were discussed. In this era of budgetary constraints, creative financing of the new entity using funds generated through debt swapping, blocked currency accounts, and trust funds was also proposed. Although some opposition remained to the idea of a new entity, a consensus seemed to be emerging that if present federal programs supporting foreign language and international studies were maintained, the new entity would provide enhanced visibility to this long-neglected area of vital importance to the United States.

The second working group, chaired by Fran Haley, executive director of the National Council for the Social Studies, examined the programs, resources and institutional changes necessary to

enhance the many state and local efforts already underway to improve foreign language and international studies. Participants argued that any new national entity should not deter these efforts. This sentiment was echoed in the luncheon speech by New Jersey Governor Thomas Kean, delivered (in his absence because of illness) by Janice Lilja, deputy director of the State of New Jersey's Washington office. Kean stressed the dynamic and vital role the governors are playing in promoting innovative approaches to international education. Calling the efforts by the governors "pockets of progress in an otherwise indifferent America," Kean claimed that, given the federal budget deficit, any further efforts would have to occur at the state level because, in the immortal words of bank-robber Willie Sutton, "that's where the money is."

The third working group, chaired by John Endean, director of policy analysis for the American Business Conference, explored private-sector involvement in programs to increase foreign language and international proficiency. Participants suggested that support from the private sector for these areas would be achieved through specific programs within the business setting, not through the university or pre-collegiate education system. Further discussions will occur in March.<<

COSSA STAFF CHANGES

We are happy to announce the addition of Stacey Beckhardt to the COSSA staff. Ms. Beckhardt, who will serve as legislative liaison and research associate, will be joining the staff just two days after the COSSA Annual Meeting, which will be held on December 13. Since 1987, Ms. Beckhardt has served as research ethics officer for the American Psychological Association, where she worked on advocacy and governance activities affecting ethical conduct of behavioral research involving people and animals. She holds a master's degree in experimental psychology from Villanova University.

We would also like to take this opportunity to offer an official, belated farewell to Simon Cordery, who served as COSSA executive associate from May, 1987 to August, 1988; he also served as editor of COSSA Washington Update. A historian, Mr. Cordery specializes in 19th-century British labor history, and is currently working toward a doctoral degree at the University of Texas at Austin.<<

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY JOINS COSSA

For the third time this year, the Consortium has the pleasure of welcoming a university into its ranks of contributor institutions. This time, the welcome goes out to Arizona State University (Northwestern University joined and the University of Missouri rejoined COSSA in the spring).<<

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education

The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) supports efforts by educational practitioners to contribute to knowledge about and improvement of postsecondary education. Under this competition, applicants must meet this criterion by producing materials or by engaging in an activity designed to share the practitioner's knowledge with others. Within this absolute priority, applicants are invited to propose ways of developing and presenting lectures on key issues in postsecondary education at conferences and educational institutions. Applicants are invited to address the following questions, though applications addressing other issues are also eligible.

1) What impact have increasing college enrollments had on the nature and quality of postsecondary education? What has been the influence of the changing workplace and economy?

2) How can postsecondary education best respond to the anticipated changes in the racial and ethnic composition of the United States? What can be learned from earlier responses to previous demographic shifts?

3) What are the important changes in colleges' curricular offerings and students' curricular choices during the past decade? Are there significant commonalities in the way the disciplines have evolved during this period? What should be the content of postsecondary education in the future?

Application Procedure: Applications and further information can be obtained from the contact listed below.

Budget: It is estimated that the \$30,000 available for this competition will be divided among about six awards.

Deadline: January 31, 1989.

Contact: Brian Lekander
U.S. Department of Education
7th and D Streets, SW
Room 3100, ROB-3
Washington, DC 20202
202/732-5750 <<

* * * Note to Readers * * *

The next issue of COSSA Washington Update will be published on Friday, January 13th.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS ! ! !

12/9/88

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Population Association of America

Regional Science Association
Rural Sociological Society
Social Science History Association
Society for the History of Technology
Society for Research on Adolescence
Society for Research in Child Development
Society for the Scientific Study of Religion
Southern Sociological Society
Southwestern Social Science Association
Speech Communication Association
The Institute of Management Sciences

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