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### On Third Attempt House Passes COMPETES Legislation

After three consecutive attempts in as many weeks, on Friday, May 28, the House of Representatives approved legislation reauthorizing the America COMPETES Act (H.R. 5116) by a vote of 262 to 150. The House-passed bill makes investments in science, innovation, and education. It is designed to strengthen the U.S. scientific and economic leadership through reauthorization of the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institute on Standards and Technology, and the Office of Science at the Department of Energy. It also reauthorizes the National Nanotechnology Initiative and the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Act. Incorporated in the measure are provisions directing the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to work with agencies to develop a consistent policy regarding the management of scientific data collection, coordinating federal programs and activities in manufacturing research and development, and establishing a working group to coordinate federal science agency research and policies related to the dissemination and stewardship of the results of federally supported research.

House Science and Technology Committee Chair Representative Bart Gordon (D-TN), who vowed to bring the bill back to the floor after the earlier setbacks, observed upon passage of the bill: "As I've said before, this bill is too important to let fall by the wayside. Today, we took the action necessary to see consideration of this bill completed" (see Update, [May 17, 2010](#)). Gordon employed the rarely-used "division of the question" maneuver, which required members to vote on each of the sections of the Motion to Recommit tactic used by House Republicans during previous consideration of the measure to kill the bill. The approach allowed the Members to go on record "voting on provisions gutting funding for our science agencies, voting on whether we should eliminate programs that will help create jobs, voting on whether to eliminate programs that will make us more energy independent, voting in opposition to federal employees watching

pornography, and voting on whether universities that ban military recruiters should receive federal research dollars. We have provided all Members, in a reasonable manner, with the ability to vote on each of these items separately instead of all together," declared Gordon.

The House's second effort to pass the bill occurred on May 19 when the measure was reintroduced as H.R. 5325, the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010. The new version of the legislation was introduced under a House procedure suspending the rules which prohibits the offering of additional amendments and requires a two-thirds majority for passage. Introducing that version of the bill, Gordon expressed his disappointment regarding the House's earlier failure to pass the legislation, but insisted he was "not deterred...This bill is too important to let fall by the wayside. More than half of our economic growth since World War II can be directly attributed to development and adoption of new technologies. The path is simple: research leads to innovation; innovation leads to economic development and good paying jobs." All of the House Democrats supported H.R., 5325, but only 15 of 163 House Republicans supported the measure. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (MD), expressing his "disappointment," vowed "to bring the COMPETES Act back to the House Floor under a rule soon."

H.R. 5325 was identical to H.R. 5116 except: 1) it reduced the authorization of period from five to three years, and 2) it adopted language from the motion to recommit banning the use of the authorized funds to pay the salary of federal employees disciplined for viewing pornography on the job. It also included the 52 amendments adopted to H.R. 5116 on the House floor (see Update, [May 17, 2010](#)). The compromise language represented in H.R. 5325, which reduced the authorization period, however, was ultimately stripped from the House-approved version.

The measure now awaits consideration by the Senate.

## NSF's SBE Advisors Meet; Brainstorm Proactive Ideas Agenda

The National Science Foundation's (NSF) 21-member Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate (SBE) Advisory Committee held its first meeting of 2010 at NSF headquarters in Arlington, VA, on May 20-21. Chair Michael Goodchild, UC-Santa Barbara, who was congratulated for having just been elected on May 21 to The Royal Society of sciences ([www.royalsociety.org/New-Fellows/](http://www.royalsociety.org/New-Fellows/)), smoothly shepherded the group through a full agenda of the usual administrative tasks, Directorate updates, and a meeting with the NSF Director, Arden Bement, and Deputy Director, Cora Marrett. This meeting was the last opportunity for Bement to meet with the Committee before he steps down as NSF Director at the end of May to assume the directorship of the Global Policy Research Institute at Purdue University (see Update, [February 8, 2010](#)).

At the top of the SBE agenda was a several-hour "Future Directions for SBE" brainstorming session that was barely interrupted by a brief lunch and minimal breaks. The meeting also focused on a handful of mandatory and invited reports by committee and staff members on the Science of Learning Centers program, which was recently brought under the SBE umbrella, Directorate organizational structure and changes, NSF budget priorities, and international partnering involving SBE. This was Directorate head Myron Gutmann's second SBE meeting (see Update, [July 27, 2009](#)).

### NSF Organizational News

Regarding SBE organizational structure, the main news is that a new division-level Office of Multidisciplinary Activities (OMA) has been created this year, reporting to the Office of the Assistant Director (i.e., Gutmann) along with the existing three division offices; (Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences (BCS), Social and Economic Sciences (SES), and Science Resources Statistics (SRS). The OMA will be a focal point for activities that cut across SBE disciplinary boundaries, including the Science of Learning Centers, Science of Science & Innovation Policy (SciSIP), Research Experiences for Undergraduates, and Minority Post-doctoral Research Fellowships. OMA

also co-funds interdisciplinary research with other NSF divisions and directorates.

### **Budget Woes and Means**

On the budget front: SBE has been proposed to receive a 5.3 percent increase over FY 2010 in the President's budget request for FY 2011. This translates to \$268.7 million, up from FY 2010's \$255.2 million level. Grant proposal volume for 2009/2010 is a little more than 2,900 and about 2,700 for SBE's BCS and SES divisions, respectively. This level continues a steadily increasing amount over the previous five years' levels. Proposals in the less-than-\$20,000 range (i.e., mostly dissertation improvement grants) have been inching upward less dramatically and are about level at 700-800 over the last two years. Grants above this dollar range are rising in volume more quickly but have a somewhat lower success rate. NSF program officers have the flexibility to counterbalance award size in order to increase success rates (i.e., number of grants awarded).

The group discussed the need to get not only a higher request for SBE but also to get compelling ideas to OMB (Office of Management and Budget) in future budget proposals in order to maintain and increase the SBE line in the President's proposed budgets. OMB essentially "cherry picks" items of interest relative to the Administration's policy areas of interest from among two NSF proposed budgets (a higher- and a lower-dollar proposal) in the annual budget development process. With the exception of the SRS, the basically flat SBE funding proposed in FY 2011 was partly due to OMB's prioritizing environmental research, in which SBE does have a role. However, the NSF director, a strong SBE advocate, said Gutmann, gave the SBE a one percent increase over what OMB wanted, due to flexibility within his authority. Among the positive FY 2011 budget news: The SRS budget would increase by \$2.1 million, SciSIP would increase by \$0.5 million, and capacity building would be assisted. For example, there is a new investment of \$4.57 million in the graduate research fellowship program, and an increase of \$370 thousand in Faculty Early Career Development awards.

### **Special Initiatives**

Regarding FY 2010 special solicitation developments, NSF has begun requesting proposals for a new competition for an online ethics science resource center, which is part of its effort to assist university researchers and others in meeting the requirements for education and certification in ethics for grant submissions in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). SBE has "graciously volunteered to manage the competition on behalf of the agency," according to Judy Sunley, Deputy Assistant Director of SBE, (see Update, [April 5, 2010](#)). Among other creative new initiatives are some involving SBE and CISE (Computer and Information Science and Engineering Directorate). One of the new initiatives in this area is on "Social and Computing Systems," which has just closed its solicitation and award decisions are in process now.

Another FY 2010 SBE activity is an interagency partnership called STAR Metrics ("Science and Technology in America's Reinvestment: Measuring the Effect of Research on Innovation, Competitiveness and Science"), which intends to develop measures related to outcomes of science and technology investments. Leadership from the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, the National Institutes of Health, and NSF are involved, along with universities and researchers involved in the \$14 million Science of Science and Innovation Policy (SciSIP) program. The participants are making use of administrative data from the agencies and schools and public datasets (e.g., on publications, patents). They will make the data enclave available to all partners. They plan to make use of new mechanisms for describing and assessing research investment portfolios. An important outcome will be a joint SBE-CISE advisory committee reviewing the new mechanisms.

### **Doing Science of Learning Research under the Center Funding Model**

The SBE Committee heard a fascinating rapid-paced set of presentations from each of the directors of the six Science of Learning Centers (SLCs), which do cutting-edge work on how children and adults learn and how some of the involved processes (behavioral, neurological, social, language,

spatial, visual/auditory) relate to learning science and mathematics. The presentation led to the familiar discussion pitting the unique value of collaborative center-mode science such as SLCs against the relative value of grants to individual scientists, in terms of the best mode for advancing basic science. While SLCs will be included in NSF's FY 2012 budget proposal to OMB, it is not clear what their future is within SBE. They are viewed as a natural fit in SBE as a source of basic science as opposed to the more translational work by, for example, the Department of Education, which might be viewed as having a role in learning.

### Brainstorming for SBE's Future

A significant portion of the SBE meeting was devoted to brainstorming by the group for "big ideas," in the spirit of the "Grand Challenges" initiative that stemmed from President Obama's fall 2009 release of the *Strategy for American Innovation*. The strategy outlines the Administration's plans to foster innovation for sustainable growth and the creation of high-quality jobs. One of the goals is to harness science and technology to address the "grand challenges" of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The SBE Committee thus wanted to identify ideas that have the potential to advance the SBE Directorate's contribution to significant research-based discovery and to national policy. The impetus for the effort was in part the Committee's expressed desire to be proactive about SBE's future and to avoid a passive role in promoting the potential contribution of SBE disciplines to advancing national well-being. Using the 2009 report of the NSF Advisory Committee for Environmental Research and Education, *Transitions and Tipping Points in Complex Environmental Systems* ([www.nsf.gov/geo/ere/ereweb/advisory.cfm](http://www.nsf.gov/geo/ere/ereweb/advisory.cfm)), as a guide, the group launched into a fun, wide-ranging, and highly engaging session of idea generation that all were enthusiastic to continue into lunch and after the visit by the NSF director and assistant director that afternoon. The discussion also received inspiration from the European Science Foundation's November 2009 Science Position Paper, titled *Vital Questions: The Contribution of European Social Science* ([www.esf.org](http://www.esf.org)) of the Standing Committee of the Social Sciences. This report was brought to the attention of the SBE group by its chair, Sir Roderick Floud, who sits on the SBE Advisory Committee.

The Committee also drew inspiration from the January 2009 report, *Social, Behavioral and Economic Research in the Federal Context*, published by the President's National Science and Technology Council's (NSTC) Subcommittee on Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences. Also fresh on their mind was NSF's new Proposed Strategic Goals, which include the following concepts: Transform the Frontier; Innovate for Society; Perform as a Model Agency with a new Emphasis on setting measurable performance goals; and Assessment and Evaluation.

The Committee's brainstorming session was wide-ranging and touched on several interesting topics. A handful of initial and very broad themes that emerged include: The general question of information technology's impact on: society and social networks, new ways and contexts of learning, and human attention multitasking limitations (e.g., texting during driving) that technological capabilities are far surpassing. Another theme is the economy in relation to electronic trading and the role of government regulation and the implications for "innovating the United States out of debt." Does the current economic crisis represent the leading edge of a paradigm shift in how companies produce and distribute goods and services? A third theme related to measurement and has to do with our knowledge of tracking societies around the world.

NSF Director Arden Bement liked the direction the Committee appeared to be taking and added a few of ideas of his own to the list of themes including: The extent to which societies can adapt to change (e.g, climate change). The extent can we better negotiate the payoff conflict between short-term investments and long-term investments. A second theme he mentioned relates to the scarcity of natural resources and the demand for those resources (e.g., rare materials) and in the implications for agriculture, clean water, etc.

(Lee Herring of the American Sociological Association contributed this report to Update.)

## PCAST Meets; Discusses Underattention to Social Science

At its May 21 meeting, the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) had interim discussions and presentations on the various pending reports and potential recommendations to the President on an expansive list of topics. The topics of the reports include: K - 12 Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education; Advanced Manufacturing; Health Information Technology; Influenza Vaccinology; Nanotechnology; Networking and Information Technology R&D (NITRD); Biodiversity Preservation and Ecosystem Management; and Energy Technology and Innovation. Office of Science and Technology (OSTP) director and PCAST co-chair John Holdren noted that preparatory work had also been done by the International Security subcommittee and the Health and Life Sciences subcommittee. A number of the subcommittees expect to release their recommendations/reports at PCAST's next meeting in July.

All of this activity led Holdren to observe that the current PCAST advisory body is the most active and productive in its history. The group officially meets six times a year, but conducts business much more often because of the number of studies it has underway, Holdren explained. He opened the meeting by recognizing that it was PCAST co-chair Harold Varmus' last meeting as a member. Varmus has been appointed the director of the National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health (see related story). Holdren also reported on the confirmation hearing of physicist and Nobel Laureate Carl Wieman as OSTP's Associate Director for Science and expressed hope for his early confirmation. Holdren noted the backlog of nominees awaiting confirmation votes by the full Senate including Philip Coyle for OSTP Associate Director for National Security and International Affairs whose confirmation hearing was held in October 2009 (see Update, [April 5, 2010](#)).

PCAST co-chair Eric Lander, MIT and Harvard, thanked PCAST members for their "unprecedented work" in examining "the very complex and important areas where science and policy intersect." Lander noted that over the next six months a number of the PCAST studies underway "will mature into very important guiding documents."

### Training and Social Science Common Themes Throughout Discussions

PCAST member Rosina Bierbaum, University of Michigan, noted that two common themes ran throughout the various discussions, including the subcommittee deliberations on Advanced Manufacturing, STEM Education, and Energy; (1) training the next generation of leaders; and (2) the underattention given to the social sciences. Bierbaum stressed that as the Committee thinks about STEM education it will need to take into consideration that training will need to be "very different" than that experienced by PCAST members. She shared that the discussion at the Energy workshop emphasized the need for creation of a generation of leaders that can think in systems ways, that can think about the use of lifecycle analysis, and that can combine basic science engineering and even natural resource thinking. It is a very interesting topic that PCAST should try to grapple with across all three of the studies, Bierbaum suggested.

The second area "that came up very strongly," Bierbaum explained, was "that the whole issue of social sciences has been under attended to" in the discussions, particularly those surrounding Advanced Manufacturing and Energy. If we invent technology that no one wants to implement that is not a solution. Understanding what motivates behavior and technological changes that can actually happen will be very important, she asserted. Thinking about how social science can be built into our thinking about Advanced Manufacturing, next generation energy technology, and STEM education will be very important, Bierbaum emphasized further.

Ernest J. Moniz, MIT and former Associate Director for Science at OSTP from 1995-97, agreed with

Bierbaum and emphasized that it is an important point. Moniz, who is co-chairing PCAST's Energy subcommittee with Shirley Ann Jackson, President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, shared that with social science "a particular member of Congress associated the need for that, predominantly with energy and secondarily on the training side." In addition, there was identification by members of the Administration around particular disciplinary areas that needed strengthening and could be a very important part of the STEM focus, said Moniz.

Maxine Savitz, Honeywell, Inc. (retired), made the point that when referring to the social sciences it is not just about economics, but those disciplines studying social behavior and psychology, both as it pertains to training and getting them to address these issues.

Jackson added that "obviously the social sciences are important because there are behavioral aspects to the transition to adoption of innovative technologies of any kind." Economics plays through all of this and has its own unique aspect of public policy that involves incentives and disincentives of various kinds. She also underscored Bierbaum's "important point about systems thinking and how these things link through." It is "not just the hard-core science and engineering but all of these things."

Christopher Chyba, Princeton University, observed that universities need to create a new breed of interdisciplinary scholar or researcher and it is very important for PCAST to emphasize that point. He expressed his concern that while most universities "tout the importance of interdisciplinary research," it is not always rewarded and often may be considered less rigorous. There is a mismatch between the needs of the future and the current way the benefits and rewards systems of universities are set up. It would not hurt for PCAST to chip away at that, Chyba advocated.

Jackson noted the need for more educational experiments and ways that courses and majors are put together. Barbara Schaal, Washington University, St. Louis, pointed out that the issue of interdisciplinary education is "really fundamental and has been an issue for such a long time." There is a "glimmer of hope," she added, and noted at her university there is great interest from students around environmental policy, social science, business, and law.

Nobel laureate Mario Molina (University of California, San Diego) and Bierbaum both cited the need for a compendium of examples in order to determine best practices learned that would serve to jump start the area. Bierbaum advocated building this into the current studies or as a follow on. Responding to the suggestion, Lander noted that there would be a follow on study to the K-12 STEM Education report focused on the university and beyond. PCAST would review this discussion and think about it for the STEM 2 study, he said.

### **K-12 STEM Education**

Lander, co-chair of the K-12 STEM Education subcommittee along with James Gates, University of Maryland, provided the Committee with an interim report on that subcommittee's deliberations around the subject. He noted the reasons are well known as the result of many studies that have expressed concerns about the performance of students in the U.S. with respect to math and science and the accompanying lack of interest in these subjects. It has been the combination of both proficiency gaps and interest gaps that provoked PCAST to do the study. The goal of PCAST's efforts, Lander reported, is to build on the work of the many "important studies that have been done and provide concrete recommendations to the Administration."

According to Lander, broadly speaking, the goals for K-12 STEM education range from having an entire citizenry that is at least STEM capable, able to understand issues involving STEM subjects and apply them in their daily lives and political decision making; creating a workforce that is of a considerable size and is STEM proficient; providing for a continuing supply of STEM experts to lead in science and technology; and creating industries. There is also a significant focus on closing the

achievement gaps between different groups in society with respect to both proficiency and interest. He noted that there is extensive interest by the subcommittee regarding girls going into STEM subjects.

Work so far for the subcommittee, reported Lander, has included thinking about the need to focus on preparation and inspiration as complementary goals. Accordingly, the subcommittee has looked at the funding components in the U.S, including the Department of Education as well as the science mission agencies. This includes an examination of how well aligned these components are, how well overseen they are, how effective they have been, and the degree of evaluation.

Lander and Gates expressed interest in hearing from the public regarding issues not attended to by PCAST. Holdren added that STEM education is President Obama's highest priority overall. PCAST's recommendations "will find an eager audience in the President," he concluded.

During PCAST's public comment session, Paula Skedsvold, FABBS, discussed the importance of the social and behavioral sciences for STEM education. She highlighted the [joint letter](#) that COSSA and FABBS recently sent to PCAST emphasizing that the "behavioral and social sciences, including the field of education research, are part of the larger family of science and must also be recognized for their role in a broad STEM education curriculum." The letter notes that, "Unfortunately, the science and science policy communities have been inconsistent in acknowledging the role of the behavioral and social sciences in STEM education." The social and behavioral science community urged PCAST to "take the lead in affirming that *all* sciences are needed for the nation to address the nation's many challenges."

Responding to Moniz' question regarding an agenda for the social and behavioral sciences in energy, Skedsvold referred him to the January 2009 report, *Social, Behavioral and Economic Research in the Federal Context*, published by the President's National Science and Technology Council's (NSTC) Subcommittee on Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences.

The May 21<sup>st</sup> PCAST meeting can be viewed at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/pcast>

## Education Committee Examines 'Research and Best Practices on Successful School Turnaround'

On Wednesday, May 19, the House Labor and Education Committee held the eighth in a series of hearings, *Research and Best Practices on Successful School Turnaround*, on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Committee Chair Representative George Miller (D-CA) opened the hearing by pointing out the daunting challenges the education system faces in addressing this crisis, noting that there are currently 5,000 chronically low performing schools, two thousand of which produce 70 percent of the nation's dropouts. "Turning around our lowest performing schools is critical for our economy, for our communities and for our students. Our global competitiveness is relying on the actions we're taking today," said Miller. He observed, however, that "there is extensive research and real world examples that can show us the elements that lead to school success."

David Silver, principal of the Think College Now Elementary school in Oakland, California, testified that "less than one in 20 students from the Oakland public school system are eligible to attend a school" in the University of California system. Silver's school reflects the challenges many urban,

poor, and predominately minority schools face: 95 percent of the students receive free or reduced lunch; two-thirds are English Language Learners; and more than 90 percent are minorities.

Responding to Representative Mazie Hirono's (D-HI) question regarding the federal government's role in helping these failing schools, Silver answered he believes that what is needed is an increase in federal funds to Title I schools. For schools to be effective states and districts need to create conditions that support schools and allow them to achieve success. These conditions include providing administrators with more autonomy over personnel decisions, budgets, curriculum and assessments, said Silver.

Jessica Johnson, chief program officer at Learning Point Associates in Naperville, Illinois, replied that the federal government should help schools with data collection and putting tools in place that would allow schools more flexibility in addressing problems. Johnson also testified school turnarounds require change not just by the schools and district, but also by the whole community. The focus on change must extend beyond the school to the broader community: social services, community based organizations, and youth organizations. She pointed to research that shows efforts to improve a school's poor performance work best when school leaders and teachers work together to bring about change, and those results are sustained when a more comprehensive approach that includes parent and community involvement as part of the solution. "We must build capacity in a system from the state to the classroom in order to provide every student access to and opportunity for a world-class education. Our children deserve this, the complexities of society demand it, and we have a moral responsibility to make sure it happens," Johnson asserted.

Research on school turnarounds is sparse. The hearing's panelists agreed that more research is needed to determine what methods are truly effective. They also called for the development of data systems that would allow researchers and educators to analyze assessments in real time and use that information to help students.

## Former NIH Director Harold Varmus to Lead National Cancer Institute

On May 17, President Barack Obama announced his intent to appoint former National Institutes of Health (NIH) director and Nobel Laureate Harold Varmus as director of the National Cancer Institute (NCI). He replaces current NCI director John Niederhuber appointed by President Bush.

Varmus served as NIH director under President Bill Clinton from 1993 to 1999. He is co-chair of President Obama's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), effective until July 9, 2010. He is the President of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and Institute of Medicine and recipient of the National Medal of Science.

In a joint statement with NIH director Francis Collins, Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius, noted Varmus's "vast wealth of expertise:" "Today, cancer research is poised to move forward at an unprecedented speed and Harold is ideally qualified to lead the revolution to fight this formidable disease."

Collins observed that: "It is exhilarating and gratifying to have my good friend and colleague Harold Varmus back at NIH." "I look forward to working together with him as we move forward on the development of new and powerful approaches to prevent, diagnose, and treat cancer."

## IES Releases Annual Report on 'The Condition of Education'

The Institute for Education Sciences released its annual report on *The Condition of Education* on May 27. The congressionally-mandated report is designed to ensure reliable, accurate, and timely data necessary to monitor the progress of education. The 2010 report features a special section

that focuses on high poverty schools. The section provides a descriptive profile of high-poverty public schools in the United States, drawing upon data from various National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) survey collections presented in the report. The characteristics of students who attend these schools, as well as the principals, teachers, and support staff who work in these schools are also examined. Forty-nine indicators of developments and trends in U.S. education are presented. The indicators focus on participation and persistence in education, student performance and other measures of achievement, the environment for learning, and resources for education.

High poverty schools are defined as schools with 75 percent or more of their students eligible for free or reduced lunch. In 2007-2008, more than 16,000 or 17 percent of all public schools were categorized as being high poverty, reflecting an increase in the number of high poverty schools within the last decade. In the 2007-2008 school year, 20 percent of all public elementary schools and nine percent of public secondary schools were considered high poverty, compared with 1999-2000 when 15 percent and five percent, respectively, were considered high poverty schools.

In 2007-2008, approximately 40 percent of Black and Hispanic elementary school students attended high poverty schools, compared with only five percent of white students. The states with the highest percentage of high poverty elementary public schools were Mississippi (53 percent), Louisiana (52 percent) and New Mexico (46 percent). Not surprisingly, these schools are also had the highest rate of secondary schools with high poverty at 43 percent, 27 percent, and 34 percent, respectively.

Despite what some are calling a dropout crisis, the report shows that the percentages of 16-24 year olds without a high school degree and who are not enrolled in school have declined since 1980 for whites, blacks and Hispanics.

The report also showed an increase in undergraduate enrollment in the last four decades. From 1970 to 2008, undergraduate enrollment in college increased from 7.4 million students to 16.4 million. By 2019 college enrollment is projected to reach 19 million, with women making up the majority of students with 59 percent.

For more information and to view the full report is available on the NCES website at <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe>

## Greenstein Wins AAPSS' Third Moynihan Prize; Other Social Scientists Honored

The American Academy of Political and Social Science (AAPSS) conferred its 2010 Daniel Patrick Moynihan Prize on Robert Greenstein, founder and director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, at a dinner in Washington, DC on May 13. The Center is a much cited non-partisan research and policy organization focusing on the impact of federal policy and budget proposals on low- and moderate-income families. Previous winners of the Moynihan Prize are Alice Rivlin and David Ellwood.

While directing the Center, Greenstein has been named a MacArthur Fellow, won the Heinz Award in Public Policy, and the John W. Gardner leadership award. He was also a member of President Clinton's Bipartisan Commission on Entitlement and Tax Reform. Prior to founding the Center, Greenstein served as Administrator of the Food and Nutrition Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture under President Carter where he helped to design the Food Stamp Act of 1977.

In addition to the Moynihan prize, AAPSS honored seven other distinguished social scientists. Under Secretary of Commerce for Economic Affairs Rebecca Blank was named an Eleanor Roosevelt Fellow for her work focusing on the interaction among the macro economy, social policy programs,

and the well-being of low-income families. She has also spent many years working to improve the measurement of poverty in the U.S. culminating in the recently announced decision to provide a supplemental poverty measure in addition to the "official" poverty measure.

Former COSSA Board Member Kitty Calavita of the University of California, Irvine, was named the Thorsten Sellin Fellow for her research focusing on immigration and immigration lawmaking in the U.S. and other countries. Sheldon Danziger of the University of Michigan and a former COSSA congressional seminar speaker became a John Kenneth Galbraith Fellow for his research on social welfare policies and the effects of economic, demographic, and public policy changes on trends in poverty and inequality.

Princeton Political Scientist Larry Bartels was named the Robert Dahl Fellow for his extensive research and writing on American electoral politics, public opinion, and political economy to explain, in Bartel's words, "whether democracy works as advertised." Mark Granovetter of Stanford University was honored as the James Coleman Fellow for his work on how social structure, especially in the form of social networks, affects economic outcomes.

Stanford University Psychologist Carol Dweck became a Hebert Simon Fellow for her work in the dynamics of motivation that examines the self-conceptions people use to structure the self and guide their behavior in achievement and interpersonal processes. Her Stanford colleague, sociologist Paula England, was named the Frances Perkins Fellow for her work on women in the labor market, especially the gender gap in pay and how it flows from sex segregation of occupations.

The American Academy of Political and Social Science, a COSSA Member, was founded in Philadelphia in December 1889 to promote the progress of the social sciences and to create a forum in which the widespread interest in contemporary political, economic, and social issues could find expression. The *Annals*, the Academy's bimonthly journal, was launched in 1890. Phyllis Kaniss is the AAPSS' Executive Director and Princeton Sociologist Douglas Massey is its current President. For more information go to: [www.aapss.org](http://www.aapss.org).

## Child Hunger by the Numbers

Far too many children do not have enough food to eat, according to a recently released May 24 report by the Center for American Progress (CAP), *Feeding Opportunity: Ending Child Hunger Furthers the Goal of Cutting U.S. Poverty in Half over the Next Decade*. The report examines how widespread the problem is, how many different types of families are affected, and what can be done about it. According to *Feeding Opportunity*, child hunger has a significant impact on our economy, costing the U.S. \$28 million each year in health care costs, lost productivity, education system impacts, and charity system expenses.

The paper, authored by Joel Berg, New York City Coalition Against Hunger, discusses "child hunger in America, how it functions as both a cause and effect of poverty, and the significant policy reforms Congress can take this year in the child nutrition programs to make a significant down payment on ending child hunger and fighting poverty." It is reported that in 2008, there were 16.6 million or 22.5 percent of children living in homes with some level of food insecurity. Food insecurity, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), are households which are "at times, uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food for all household members because they had insufficient money and other resources for food."

USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack, the keynote speaker at the CAP briefing releasing the report, stressed that there are three reasons that child hunger and obesity should be a priority for our nation: education, healthcare and national security. Research shows that children, who are hungry, do worse academically and are more likely to drop out of school. These kids are also at greater risk

for chronic diseases, contributing to lost productivity and rising healthcare costs. Lastly, hungry children put our national security at risk (due to the increasing obesity problem more youth are being declared unfit to serve in the national armed service), raising concerns that we will be unable to meet future military needs. Vilsack pointed out that nutrition, with the goal to eliminate child hunger by 2015 and substantially reduce the level of childhood obesity, is one of four priority areas for the USDA over the next four years.

According to the USDA, 27.9 million people receive food stamps. However, in 2007, nearly 25 percent of children who didn't have enough food, lived in households that the program considered to be making too much money to receive any government nutrition assistance. It is a national problem. In 2007, the report notes families faced hunger throughout the U.S.: Southeast (35 percent), West (30 percent), Midwest (18 percent) and, Northeast (17 percent).

Feeding Opportunity reports that currently 11 million students in 88,000 schools are served free or reduced cost breakfast, and 31 million students in 102,000 schools are served free or reduced lunches. The report calls for a need to improve and expand access to meal programs. Given that children are in school 180 days out of the year, the report stresses that expanding access to allow more children to participate in summer meals, after-school meals, and supper programs would ensure that children get the food they need all year round.

The briefing also highlighted President Obama's FY 2011 budget proposal which includes \$1 billion extra per year for ten years for child nutrition programs. The Administration also wants to make the school meal program paperwork free and easier for parents by enrolling those who already qualify for other government programs or who live in high poverty areas to automatically qualify for the school meal program. According to the report, an estimated \$1 billion in tax dollars at the federal, state, and school district levels is spent each year solely on collecting and submitting required forms and daily meal counts for the school meals program. The rationale is that this money could be reinvested in the program to provide access for more children in more schools.

For more information or to download a copy of the report, see [http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/05/feeding\\_opportunity.html](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/05/feeding_opportunity.html)

## Opportunities in the AFRI Competitive Grants Program

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), the major competitive grants program at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), has a number of funding opportunities available to social, behavioral, and economic researchers. AFRI replaces the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program.

According to the AFRI announcement, it will award grants to address priorities in the following areas:

1) Plant Health and production and plant products; 2) Animal health and production and animal products; 3) Food safety, nutrition, and health; 4) Renewable energy, natural resources, and environment; 5) Agriculture systems and technology; and 6) Agriculture economics and rural communities.

For the agriculture economics and rural communities' area, AFRI invites research applications that focus on a) Prosperity of Small and Medium-Sized Farms and Rural Communities; and b) Economics of Markets and Development.

For the Prosperity of Small and Medium-Sized Farms and Rural Communities **the deadline for applications is July 14, 2010**. Approximately \$7 million will be available. The program area priorities include:

- 1) Develop new multidisciplinary (economic, physical, biological, environmental, etc.) models and tools to facilitate the adoption of new agricultural productions and conservations, practices, including conservation and carbon offset programs to mitigate the effects of climate change, and in turn, to enhance the prosperity of small and medium-sized farms, including forestland and ranches.
- 2) Evaluate the impacts of changes in input costs, and markets, including credit and insurance markets, and their effects on farm entry, farm transition and farm viability and private strategy and public policy options for addressing these effects.
- 3) Promote the sustainability of small and medium-sized farms and rural communities, by enhancing knowledge of appropriate entrepreneurship and small business development strategies, including the use of emerging information technology systems, e-commerce, local and regional partnerships, entrepreneurial networks, value-added processing, and workforce development.
- 4) Evaluate the institutional, social, cultural, economic and psychological factors that affect consumer and producer behavior in rural communities, and in turn, enhance the efficiency and equity of public and private sector investment in agriculture and rural communities.
- 5) Identify optimal regional land use and architectural decisions that protect the rural environment and promote economic development while reducing poverty and enhancing rural quality of life.

For the Economics of Markets and Development, the deadline for applications is July 7, 2010. Approximately \$3 million will be available. Program area priorities are as following:

- Enhance understanding of the changes in agricultural input- and output-structure and conduct, and in turn, its effectiveness in the development of competitive markers at home and abroad.
- Develop new models and theories to enhance understanding of changes in domestic and foreign consumer tastes and preferences to help promote the development of new agricultural generic materials and agribusiness products and technology.
- Enhance understanding of causes and impacts of market failure and develop strategies to incorporate the externalities in agricultural resources and product markets.

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## NICHHD Seeks Input in Defining Agenda to Address Research Capacity Building

The *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) is seeking input from the broader scientific community regarding models and best practices in the development of sustainable research capacity at non-research intensive institutions of higher education with the long term goal of conducting health disparities research that will address the mission of NICHD. That mission is: "To ensure that every person is born healthy and wanted, that women suffer no harmful effects from reproductive processes, and that all children have the

chance to achieve their full potential for healthy and productive lives, free from disease or disability, and to ensure the health, productivity, independence, and well-being of all people through optimal rehabilitation." The Request for Information (RFI) is for planning purposes only and is not a solicitation for applications.

NICHD's Division of Special Populations (DSP) recently completed a review of programs and initiatives that address building and sustaining research capacity. The DSP was created to strengthen the NICHD's commitment to ensuring the health and well-being of children, adults, families, and communities by addressing and eliminating health disparities through the participation of diverse populations in biomedical and behavioral research within the United States and abroad. In addition to the DSP program review, a consultative meeting with representatives from the scientific community was convened. The goal of the meeting was to identify models of building sustainable research programs at non-research intensive institutions. These institutions can serve as a resource for addressing health disparities within their local communities and/or geographic regions.

The workgroup encouraged the DSP to:

- Identify and document best practices in developing research infrastructure and capacity in non-research intensive institutions.
- Address challenges that faculty member's face in participating in research, such as heavy teaching loads and lack of authority to identify and compete for federal research funding.
- Maintain successful components of current initiatives (e.g. Extramural Associates Program) that address strengthening offices of sponsored programs.
- Consider the changing demographics in the U.S, and the need to address groups that have not been recipients of research resources to develop infrastructure and capacity.
- Include Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) as a theme to address sustainable research and training programs.

Respondents are asked to address the challenges in establishing sustainable research programs.

Examples of challenges that may be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- Creating a culture in which original research and facilitating research literacy are valued activities.
- Innovations in creating adequate time for conducting original research.
- Implementing a research agenda that supports the mission of the institution as well as reflects the national research agenda.
- Innovative approaches to creating a critical mass of independent biomedical and bio-behavioral researchers at non-research intensive institutions.
- Encouraging interdisciplinary research across departments.
- Motivating undergraduate and/or graduate students to become involved in research.
- Evaluating efforts to enhance research infrastructure and capacity at institutions.

DSP is also seeking examples of the most innovative capacity building approaches to address these as well as any other challenges listed. DSP will accept responses until **August 15, 2010** via email to NICHD's DSP email address: [NICHD\\_DIVERSE-L@LIST.NIH.GOV](mailto:NICHD_DIVERSE-L@LIST.NIH.GOV). Respondents are asked to mark

their responses with this RFI identifier, NOT-HD-10-016. For each response, respondents are asked to provide (1) brief background information, (2) define the challenge, and (3) describe the potential solution. Responses are expected to be 500 words or less for each challenge/solution. To respond or for more information contact: Regina Smith James via (301) 435-2692 or via Email: [rjames@mail.nih.gov](mailto:rjames@mail.nih.gov) or see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HD-10-016.html>.

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