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COSSA Colloquium on Social and Behavioral Science and Public Policy, November 29-30

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Congress Returns: CR and Sequestration Key Items

After a recess of six weeks of campaigning, travel, two presidential nominating conventions, and perhaps even some rest and recreation, members of Congress returned to Washington on September 10 for a short session before they leave again for the election campaign. They are expected to come back after the election for a lame-duck session no matter the results on November 6.

The major business for the legislators is to enact a Continuing Resolution (CR) that will fund government programs during the first six months of fiscal year 2013 that begins on October 1, 2012. The House is expected to pass the bill this week and the Senate next week. Congressional leaders have worked hard to keep any policy riders or spending anomalies off the CR. Although the Congressional Budget Office estimates that by using the agreed-upon \$1.047 trillion spending cap for FY 2013, there would be an additional \$8 billion available, any extra funds are expected to go to national security activities. Almost all the Federal agencies will have to make do with their FY 2012 spending levels. Under CRs, the Office of Management and Budget prescribes how agencies apportion their funding for the first six months of FY 2013. This usually means no new program starts and minimal spending, with agencies even more cautious because of the specter of sequestration.

If nothing is done between now and January 2, sequestration - automatic across-the-board spending reductions - will take place right after the new year. Before recessing at the end of July, Congress enacted the Sequestration Transparency Act, which directed the Administration to provide details of how it intends to implement the cuts. The report was due on September 7, but the President was a little busy last week, so the White House announced it would postpone the release of the details until late in the week of September 10.

Unlike the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings reductions in the 1990s, the current sequestration requires the Administration to provide an estimate of the percentages and dollar amounts that would be cut from every discretionary and mandatory spending account at the program, project and activity levels, as well as a list of accounts that are exempt from cuts.

Some hope that with the details on the table, the severity of the reductions will make Congress and the White House work even harder to avoid the sequestration and work toward the elusive "grand bargain" that would include deficit and debt reduction, entitlement reform, and tax reform. That will probably have to wait until after the election. The expiration of the Bush tax cuts at the end of 2012 would also come into play and put additional pressure on policymakers.

Congress will also have to deal with expiring authorizations, most significantly the Farm Bill and the Welfare Reform Act. The expectation is that without agreement between the Senate and the House on these measures, they will simply get one-year extensions, with the 112th Congress punting these into the 113th Congress next year.

NSF Moves Programs Out of the Office of the Director

Perhaps in anticipation of sequestration, National Science Foundation (NSF) director Subra Suresh

announced a small reorganization on September 6. The move streamlines the Office of the Director. The Office of Cyberinfrastructure moved into the Computer Information Science and Engineering Directorate. The Office of Polar Programs will now reside in the Geosciences Directorate. The Office of Integrative Activities and the Office of International Science and Engineering will become one office.

New Leadership at Census Bureau

With the departure of Bob Groves to become the Provost at Georgetown University, the U.S. Census Bureau has new leadership in a number of key positions. Thomas Mesenbourg, the former Deputy Director, has been elevated to Acting Director, a position he has held before during earlier periods without a Presidentially- appointed and Senate-confirmed director.

Mesenbourg has worked at the Census Bureau since 1972. He has served as the Assistant Associate Director for Economic Programs, chief of the Economic Census Staff, and chief of the Economic Census and Surveys Division. He has planned and processed the Census of Agriculture and the Economic Census and organized the 1991 International Conference on Classification that led to the development of the North American Industry Classification System. In 2011, Mesenbourg was the recipient of the Julius Shiskin Memorial Award for Economic Statistics. Mesenbourg earned his bachelor's degree in economics from Boston University in 1968 and his master's from Penn State in 1971.



To replace Mesenbourg as Acting Deputy Director, the Bureau has tapped Nancy Potok. She was serving as the Associate Director for Demographic Programs at Census. She had previously been the Deputy Undersecretary for Economic Affairs at the U.S. Department of Commerce. Before joining the Department, Potok was the chief operating officer at McManis and Monsalve Associates and the senior vice president and director of the Economics, Population and Labor Studies Department for the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago. She had previously worked at the Census Bureau from 1995 to 2002, when she served as principal associate director and chief financial officer. She is an elected fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration. Potok holds a Ph.D. in public policy and administration from George Washington University, a master's degree in administrative science from the University of Alabama and a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from Sonoma State University in California.

One of Director Groves' legacies is the strengthening of the research component of the Bureau. He appointed Michigan statistician Roderick Little as the Bureau's Associate Director for Research & Methodology and Chief Scientist and leader of a new directorate focusing on those areas. Little left the Bureau this summer. Before leaving, Groves named Thomas Louis to replace Little, effective January 2013. Louis is professor of biostatistics at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. His doctorate is in mathematical statistics from Columbia University, and he headed the biostatistics department at the University of Minnesota. He is an elected member of the International Statistical Institute, and a fellow of the American Statistical Association and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

Janine Clayton Appointed ORWH Director

National Institutes of Health Director Francis Collins announced the appointment of Janine Austin Clayton as the Director for the Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH) and Associate Director on Women's Health, NIH. Clayton served as ORWH Deputy Director prior to her tenure as Acting Director of ORWH since the retirement of Vivian Pinn in August 2011.

In appointing Clayton, Collins noted her "demonstrated leadership over the past year, scientific acumen, and commitment to this important area of research."



She is a board certified ophthalmologist. She discovered a novel form of disease associated with premature ovarian insufficiency that affects young women. Her research interests also extend to the role of sex and gender in health and disease. Clayton is the author of 80 scientific publications, journal articles, and book chapters.

A native Washingtonian, Clayton received her undergraduate degree with honors from the Johns Hopkins University and her medical degree from Howard University College of Medicine. She completed a residency in ophthalmology at the Medical College of Virginia and fellowship training in cornea and external disease at the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins Hospital and in uveitis and ocular immunology at the National Eye Institute (NEI) where she was also the deputy clinical director.

For more information about ORWH, see <http://orwh.od.nih.gov>.

Defense Department to Continue Minerva Initiative

The Office of the Secretary of Defense is pleased to announce that the Department will continue the Minerva Research Initiative with a competition for 2013 awards. The deadlines are: **White papers: Sunday, September 30. Full proposals: Wednesday, December 12.**

Minerva is a university-based social science basic research program initiated by the Department of Defense (DOD) in 2008 to improve the fundamental understanding of the social, cultural, behavioral, and political forces that shape regions of the world of strategic importance to the United States. In 2012 ten projects ranging in size from \$200,000 to \$3million were awarded Minerva grants, with research just begun or about to begin.

According to DOD, though the budgetary environment remains uncertain, both the President's Budget recommendations to Congress for Fiscal Year 2013 and Congressional committees' recommendations indicated very strong support for the growth of the program. Nothing is certain until a complete budget is passed by Congress however, the timeline of which remains uncertain.

The Minerva Initiative solicits white papers and full proposals which propose basic research in the following three topics and eleven subtopics listed below. The detailed descriptions of each (found in the released Broad Agency Announcement) are intended to provide the proposer a frame of reference and are not meant to be restrictive. The Minerva program is highly competitive and DOD encourages innovative proposals related to these research topics.

- (1) Belief Formation and Movements for Change
 - (1-A) Belief formation and influence
 - (1-B) Group identities and cultural norms
 - (1-C) Movements for change
 - (1-D) Collaboration and competition between violent groups
- (2) Models of Societal Resilience and Change
 - (2-A) Economic factors
 - (2-B) Energy, environment, and resource factors
 - (2-C) Other factors impacting societal stability and change
 - (3) Theories of Power and Deterrence
 - (3-A) The role of the state in a globalized world
 - (3-B) Cyber norms and governance
 - (3-C) Beyond conventional deterrence
 - (3-D) Emerging topics in power and deterrence

The program will consider proposals both for single-investigator awards as well as larger, multidisciplinary and multi-institution teams. This competition is open to institutions of higher education (universities), including DOD institutions of higher education and foreign universities.

Non-profit institutions and commercial entities are also eligible to compete as collaborators on university-led proposals.

To download the Broad Agency Announcement from the Office of Naval Research regarding Minerva go to: <http://www.onr.navy.mil/~media/Files/Funding-Announcements/BAA/2012/12-016.ashx>.

For more information about the history and funding of projects in the Minerva Initiative go to: <http://minerva.dtic.mil/>.

Center for Health Statistics Releases Two Briefs: One on U.S. Mortality, Another on Veterans Health

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) published a brief entitled *Death in the United States, 2010*, with new data on mortality rates and life expectancy across age groups, races and ethnicities, and genders in the U.S. Overall, mortality rates dropped 0.5% from 2009 levels, which the authors attribute to "ongoing reductions in death rates from major causes of death such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, and chronic lower respiratory disease." Life expectancy in 2010 was 78.7 years (76.2 for males and 81.1 for females). In both genders, Hispanics had the highest life expectancy, followed by non-Hispanic whites, then non-Hispanic blacks. Between 2000 and 2010, the age brackets that saw the greatest decreases in mortality were the youngest (under 25) and the oldest (over 65). The report also examined the geographical distribution of mortality, finding that generally, the Southeastern states have higher death rates than the rest of the country. The five leading causes of death in the U.S. in 2010 were heart disease, cancer, chronic lower respiratory diseases, stroke, and accidents, which together accounted for 63% of deaths. However, the leading causes vary across age brackets. Infant mortality decreased substantially in 2010 (the largest single-year drop since 1995). There were 1,864 fewer infant deaths compared to 2009 (3.9% lower).

The complete report can be accessed at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db99.htm>.

The NCHS also released a brief comparing the health of nonelderly male veterans (25-64) to their nonveteran counterparts, concluding, "Overall, veterans aged 25-64 appear to be in poorer health than nonveterans, although not all differences in health are significant for all age groups." The authors also noted that "the health differences that appear at older ages suggest that the effects of military service on health may appear later in life." The report utilized data from the 2007-2010 National Health Interview Survey. Veterans were more likely than non-veterans to report fair or poor health, multiple chronic conditions, serious psychological disorders, and work limitations. The disparities between veterans and nonveterans tended to widen with age. However, veterans were also significantly more likely than nonveterans to have health insurance.

The complete report can be accessed at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db101.htm>.

National Academies to Hold Symposium on Social and Behavioral Sciences

The National Academies' of Science and Engineering and the Institute of Medicine are sponsoring a symposium on *Social and Behavioral Sciences in Action!* on September 24, 2012 from 2 to 5:30 p.m. at the Keck Building 500 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, DC. The session will also be webcast.

The first in a series, this symposium will feature perspectives on the contributions of the social and behavioral sciences to national security, medicine, and engineering with commentary by **Ralph J. Cicerone**, President of the National Academy of Sciences and Chair of the National Research Council, **Harvey V. Fineberg**, President of the Institute of Medicine, and **Charles M. Vest**, President of the National Academy of Engineering. Other speakers include:

- **Kenneth Prewitt**, Carnegie Professor of Public Affairs, Columbia University, Chair, DBASSE Advisory Committee, and President of COSSA;
- **Rita R. Colwell**, Distinguished Professor, Johns Hopkins University and University of Maryland, College Park and former Director, National Science Foundation;
- **Mary Cummings**, Associate Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology;
- **Robert A. Fein**, Secret Service, retired; Department of Psychiatry, Harvard University;
- **Lucian L. Leape**, Department of Health Policy and Management, Harvard School of Public Health; and
- **John D. Lee**, Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

For more information and to register for the symposium and its webcast go to:

http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/SBS_in_Action/index.htm.

Perspectives on the Future of the Sociology of Aging - Papers from NAS Workshop Released

The 2010 created Panel on New Directions in Social Demography, Social Epidemiology, and the Sociology of Aging established under the auspices of the Committee on Population of the National Research Council recently released the papers associated with a two-day workshop held August 2011. The papers' authors come from a range of disciplines, from sociology and demography to social genomics and public health. The papers highlight the broad array of tools and perspectives for further advancing understanding of the aging processes in ways that can guide policy. The final report is expected later this year.

The Panel's task was to inform the National Institute on Aging's Division of Social and Behavioral Research by preparing a report: "that will evaluate the recent contributions of social demography, social epidemiology, and sociology to the study of aging and seek to identify promising new research directions in these sub-fields."

The Panel was chaired by Linda Waite, Lucy Flower Professor in Urban Sociology at the University of Chicago. In the introduction and overview of the volume of papers, Waite notes that the U.S. population is "growing inexorably older...This demographic shift is occurring at a time of major economic and social changes, which have important implications for the growing elderly population."

Several themes emerge from the collection of papers, including the need to grapple with the changing nature of what is being studied: social institutions, social networks, social groups, and social forces. A second theme is the importance of recognizing that aging takes place across the entire life span, so research questions related to old age outcomes cannot be properly understood by focusing solely on what occurs during the last stage of life. The third theme is the vast mostly untapped potential for greater integrated science. Waite notes that some of the most promising recent research has been done at the interstices between disciplines when a researcher (or more frequently an inter-disciplinary team of researchers) has begun to explore how genetic influences and social environments work in concert to vary the course of aging.

Among other things, the papers examine the most critical social and economic changes that are occurring in the U.S. society and what they possibly imply for the well-being of older people. They also provide a global perspective on the demography of population aging and point to three promising areas of research where demographers can make real and substantive contributions: 1) biodemography, with a particular focus on understanding the interrelations between chronological

age, health and disability; 2) changes in the life course; and 3) development of better forecasts, projections, and simulations that take into account the changes taking place in successive cohorts as well as the evolving microprocesses to develop a "big picture" of future populations and their macro level features.

Some of the most exciting opportunities for new research in the field of aging involve interdisciplinary collaboration that has the potential to examine research questions from multiple angles, produce new insights and perspectives on long standing problems, elicit a new awareness of the value of certain types of data, and allow the dissemination of science across a wide multidisciplinary audience, Waite notes. The study of the biological effects of social forces, particularly as it applies to the aging process, is still in its infancy, and there are many questions.

In Chapter 6, Tara Gruenwald discusses the "Opportunities and Challenges in the Study of Biosocial Dynamics in Healthy Aging." She notes that one of the most striking results from this research is the findings that the correlations between social risk factors and poor health are similar to - and sometimes greater than - the correlations between biomedical factors such as smoking or obesity, and poor health. At the same time, social epidemiologists' work has included examinations of how psychological stressors and other social factors, such as the presence of supportive relationships, affect various biological measures, such as the level of stress hormones or the expression of various stress-related genes. Conversely, Maxine Weinstein and colleagues, in their chapter responding to Gruenwald offer a "somewhat less optimistic view of the value of recent biosocial survey efforts."

To read or download a copy of the report see: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13473.

Amicus Brief Cites Social Science Research Applicability in Affirmative Action Case

On October 10, 2012 the U.S. Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in the case of *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin*. The case, initiated in 2008, challenges the university's policy of using race as a factor in admissions decisions. The plaintiff asserts that promoting diversity in education is not a compelling governmental interest, which was a central ruling in the Court's 2003 decision in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, in which the Court upheld the race-conscious admissions policy of the University of Michigan Law School. The plaintiff also argues that the University of Texas's holistic admissions policy is not narrowly tailored to a diversity interest because the university already admits enough minority students through the state's "top ten percent" policy, which guarantees admission to a state university to high-ranking high school graduates in Texas.

On August 13, the American Educational Research Association (AERA) joined by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Sociological Association, the American Statistical Association, the Association for the Study of Higher Education, the Law and Society Association, the Linguistic Society of America, and the National Academy of Engineering filed an amicus curiae brief in the U.S. Supreme Court. They urged the Court to consider an overwhelming body of scientific evidence relevant to the case.

The brief presents the Court with social science evidence that bears directly on the case, including summaries and citations of pertinent studies to aid the Court's deliberations on whether student body diversity remains a compelling governmental interest and whether the policy is narrowly tailored.

Social science research has consistently found that diverse educational environments yield educational benefits to both minority and majority students, according to the brief. The Court relied on such findings in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, citing an earlier "Brief of the American Educational Research Association, et al." in its decision. Because the research literature on student body diversity has continued to progress since 2003, the new brief argues that the research continues to provide substantial social science evidence to underscore UT-Austin's compelling interest in diversity.

Recent research, which includes studies relying on increasingly sophisticated mathematical and statistical techniques, has built on an already strong base of scientific evidence supporting student body diversity. Numerous studies demonstrate that student body diversity leads to important educational benefits such as the reduction of prejudice; growth in cognitive abilities, critical thinking skills, and self-confidence; the promotion of civic engagement and skills needed for professional development and leadership; and improved classroom environments and curricula.

Research also shows that significant harms are associated with student bodies and classroom environments that contain only token numbers of minority students. Harmful conditions associated with racial isolation include overt discrimination against minority students and stereotype threat that can compromise minority student achievement. As stated in the brief, research shows these harms are prevalent in settings with low percentages of minority students, such as programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The brief also presents recent research undermining arguments that diversity harms minority students. Research shows that purported problems of student stigma and the "mismatch" of minority students-the supposition that minority students will underperform at selective universities because of lesser academic credentials-lack a solid empirical basis. Instead, research shows that stigma is not a significant problem in institutions using diversity-based admissions, and that race-conscious admissions leads to higher academic performance and college completion by minority students.

Finally, the brief summarizes research showing that race-conscious policies are necessary to achieve diversity and that race-neutral policies such as the top-ten-percent plan are, by themselves, insufficient for advancing a diversity interest.

The full brief is available at:

http://www.aera.net/Portals/38/docs/Education_Research_and_Research_Policy/11-345%20bsac%20American%20Educational%20Research%20Association%20et%20al.pdf.

COPAFS Appoints Katherine Smith as New Executive Director

The Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS) has appointed Katherine "Kitty" Smith as its new Executive Director. She replaces Ed Spar, who has led the organization since 1992. Smith will begin her new position on October 1.

Smith comes to COPAFS from the American Farmland Trust (AFT) where she is the Chief Economist and Vice President for Programs. Prior to her position at AFT, she was the Administrator of the Economic Research Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.



Smith is an active member of the American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) and the Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association (NAREA). A Fellow of AAEA, she served as an elected member of the Board of Directors and an elected member of the AAEA Foundation. She has also served as co-editor of the *Review of Agricultural Economics*. In June 2012, she received the Outstanding Public Service through Economics Award from the NAREA. She obtained her Ph.D. from the University of Maryland, College Park in Agricultural and Resource Economics.

The Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics, founded in 1980, provides for open dialog between its members and the Federal statistical agencies. Member organizations include professional associations, businesses, research institutes, and others interested in Federal statistics. COPAFS' objectives are to: increase the level and scope of knowledge about developments affecting Federal statistics; encourage discussion within member organizations to respond to important issues in Federal statistics; and bring the views of professional associations to bear on decisions affecting

Federal statistical programs. COPAFS and COSSA have worked closely together on many issues affecting the federal statistical system.

IHDP Releases Annual Report

The International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP) released its annual report for 2011, which detailed its efforts to better understand the relationship between social factors and global environmental change.

To address the lack of a comprehensive framework for the social dimensions of global environmental change, IHDP, UNESCO, and the International Social Science Council (ISSC) collaborated to survey 1,276 scholars worldwide and analyzed participation in research pertaining to this topic. The results identified four major under-addressed areas:

1. Equity/equality and wealth/resource distribution
2. Policy, political systems/governance, and political economy
3. Economic systems, economic costs and incentives
4. Globalization, social and cultural transitions

With those four areas in mind, IHDP plans to convene a group of scholars to assess findings from the humanities and social sciences related to global environmental change.

IHDP held its 18th Scientific Committee meeting in Nanjing, China in October 2011. The meeting focused on "Unpacking the Social Sciences for Global Sustainability." Participants affirmed the importance of understanding the social aspects of environmental change in order to understand their impact and identify solutions. They acknowledged, however, that social factors are among the most often overlooked areas of environmental change research.

IHDP's Global Land Project supported a report, "Paying for Ecosystem Services: Promise and Peril," published in the journal *Science*, that examined the pros and cons of applying market-like mechanisms to environmental public goods. The report examined existing payment systems, looked critically at the science behind such models, and examined the incentives created.

The *Inclusive Wealth Report 2012* presented a new economic index, the Inclusive Wealth Index (IWI), which is intended to avoid some of the problems of other indicators, such as GDP and the Human Development Index, that reflect short term growth without addressing that growth's impact on resources. The IWI tracks a nation's "progress, well-being, and long-term sustainability." A country's IWI is calculated by taking into account variables including investments in manufacturing, quality of life for workers (wages and education), and natural resources such as forests, fossil fuels, and minerals. The *Inclusive Wealth Report* examined 20 countries from 1990-2008.

The Annual Report discussed the challenges of living in the "Anthropocene" era, in which human beings act as the primary drivers of environmental change. Two IHDP projects directly address these challenges. The first is the Knowledge, Learning, and Societal Change (KLSC) alliance, which conducts inter- and trans-disciplinary research by soliciting the active participation of stakeholders from start to finish. The KLSC alliance aims to answer questions concerning how computational models and narratives of sustainable futures can be used to create options and stimulate constructive action on both the policy and individual levels. The second project, the IHDP Earth System Governance Project, focuses on understanding and achieving sustainable governance architecture.

The report discussed the hurdles that must be overcome to achieve a truly "green" global economy and issued a number of recommendations about how this can be accomplished. IHDP's recommendations included accepting the limits of the planet's resources, focusing on integrating social factors with scientific and technological transformation, looking beyond simply making existing systems more efficient, and striving for a post-consumerism society.

The full report can be accessed at: <http://www.ihdp.unu.edu/article/read/ihdp-annual-report-2011>.

NSF Seeks Proposals on Coastal Sustainability

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has initiated a program on Science, Engineering, and Education for Sustainability (SEES). As part of that program, it now solicits proposals for research regarding Coastal Sustainability. The deadline for proposals is January 17, 2013. NSF expects to make this an annual solicitation.

According to NSF, the Coastal SEES program is a multi-directorate program that seeks to: enable place-based system-level understanding of coastal systems on a variety of spatial and temporal scales; yield outcomes with predictive value in coastal systems; and identify pathways by which outcomes could be used to enhance coastal sustainability.

An integral component of all proposals should be communication of outcomes and connections to related national and international activities where applicable. Sustainability is a global concern, says NSF, and research findings and approaches should have broad application and transferability of knowledge.

NSF indicates that successful proposals will integrate across natural environmental and human dynamics of coastal systems and contribute to our understanding of complex systems. Concepts that underlie the science of sustainability include complex adaptive systems, emergent behavior, and multi-scale processes, as well as the feedbacks, adaptive capacity, vulnerability, and resilience of coupled human and natural systems. An important research goal is to understand how patterns and processes at local and regional scales are shaped by, and shape, processes and patterns that manifest at the global scale over the long term. In addition to encouraging place-based approaches, which can include multiple places, this solicitation acknowledges the value of issue-based science as well as longer time-scale perspectives. Relevant issues include, for example, sea-level rise; saline-water encroachment; coastal morphological, land use, and vegetative changes; ocean ecosystem changes; erosion and land defense; coastal energy development; and human actions concerning perceptions, attitudes and responses to these issues. In some cases, comparative approaches may be particularly instructive, and multiple domestic sites and international collaborations will be considered.

The Coastal SEES Program seeks proposals that create inter/trans-disciplinary research teams. To assist in the development of new potential partnerships, the initial competition provides two funding tracks:

Track 1: Incubator Research Proposals. These proposals bring new or emerging inter/trans-disciplinary teams together to develop ideas and approaches. Projects could, for example, do one or more of the following: mine, integrate, and synthesize existing data sets; collect new data; conduct modeling experiments, test new integrative approaches, and/or identify new conceptual ideas and key gaps in knowledge and methods. NSF anticipates that some funded incubator projects will lead to mature teams and ideas that will lead to future submissions as full research proposals in a later round of Coastal SEES. However, the emphasis of a Track 1 proposal should be the conduct of research and its outcomes, not preparation of plans and proposals. Incubator proposals should propose funding in the range of \$200-600K over two years.

Track 2: Research Proposals. These proposals support inter/trans-disciplinary teams to conduct major new integrated coastal systems research. These may include theoretical, field, laboratory and/or modeling activities. Research proposal budgets can be up to \$3 million over five years.

When developing proposals, NSF encourages investigators to look for synergies with other activities that may provide data, infrastructure support, and/or intellectual linkages. However, funding for Coastal SEES is distinct from funding for other activities that take place in the coastal zone.

Whereas a proposal to Coastal SEES may include elements that are under investigation in one or

more of these other programs, a distinguishing feature of a proposal to Coastal SEES should be its integrated, systems-oriented approach and its holistic and long-term viewpoint. Successful proposals will fit clearly and convincingly within the broader context of human-natural system interactions and sustainability, and the proposal must make this case.

NSF expects to make ten Track 1 and five Track 2 awards. Total anticipated funding for the solicitation is \$15 million.

For further information contact Susan Sterret, Program Director, Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences, (703) 292-7267, or ssterett@nsf.gov.

The full solicitation is available at:

http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?WT.z_pims_id=504816&ods_key=nsf12594.

Research Infrastructure for Demographic and Behavioral Population Science

Demography is an intrinsically interdisciplinary field, drawing from the academic disciplines of sociology and economics, as well as geography, anthropology, and other social and behavioral, and biomedical sciences. Population science addresses scientific questions that rely heavily on observational research and natural experiments. Accordingly, the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) seeks to increase the pace and impact of research within the mission of its Demographic and Behavioral Sciences Branch by providing research infrastructure to population science centers.

The funding opportunity announcement (FOA), Research Infrastructure for Demographic and Behavioral Population Science (R24) (RFA-HD-13-007), is designed to advance research within the Branch's scientific mission. That mission has three components:

1. Research in demography, the scientific study of human populations, including their size, composition, distribution, density, and growth and decline, as well as the causes and consequences of demographic change. Major areas of focus include fertility, mortality and morbidity, migration, population distribution, nuptiality, and family demography.
2. Behavioral and social science research on sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS and reproductive health.
3. Research on human health, including productivity, behavior and development - using defined populations and probability samples. Major areas of focus include research on the effects of early life influences and policy factors on health.

An objective of the FOA is to increase the impact of population science research by:

- Encouraging collaborations among population scientists and between population scientists and scientists in other disciplines, within and across institutions;
- Developing new approaches and methods that advance population science research;
- Fostering the development of junior population scientists and providing opportunities for junior, mid-level, and senior scientists both within and outside of population science to engage in interdisciplinary population science;
- Promoting the application of the methods and perspectives of population science to new topics in the area of health and well-being of populations; and
- Supporting the dissemination of population science data sets, methods and significant research findings.

A second objective is to decrease the costs of population science research and increase the efficiency of population scientists by supporting cost-effective research infrastructure.

Three types of research infrastructure will be supported: (1) Research support cores which provide

administrative and technical support; (2) Developmental infrastructure cores which increase the scientific scope and productivity of the center's research and researchers; and (3) Public infrastructure cores which are primarily directed at external audiences, although core activities may also benefit the applicant center.

Applications are due November 30, 2012. For more information and/or to apply, see: www.grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-HD-13-007.html.

NIH Director's New Innovator Award

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is seeking applicants for its NIH Director's New Innovator (DP2) Award (RFA-RM-11-005). The initiative created in 2007 is designed to support a small number of early stage investigators of exceptional creativity who propose bold and highly innovative new research approaches that have the potential to produce a major impact on broad, important problems in biomedical and behavioral research.

The New Innovator Award differs from traditional NIH grants in that it is designed specifically for unusually creative investigators with highly innovative research ideas at an early stage in their career but may lack the preliminary data required for an investigative-initiative or R01 grant.

The Award initiative is part of the NIH Common Fund which supports cross-cutting programs that are expected to have exceptionally high impact.

Applications are due **October 17, 2012**. For more information see: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-RM-12-016.html>.

Estimating the Economic Costs of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias

The National Institute on Aging has issued a series of grant announcements (Small Grant Program (R03)-- PA-12-253, Research Project Grant (R01)-- PA-12-255, and Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Award (R21) - PA-12-254) designed to encourage research on the economic costs of Alzheimer's disease (AD) and related dementias, including direct and indirect costs to public and private health care payers, families and other informal caregivers, as well as labor market costs from reduced productivity or labor force participation.

Estimates of current prevalence of Alzheimer's disease vary, with one estimate finding that as many as 5.1 million people in the U.S. currently suffer from AD. The estimate, however, includes persons with relatively mild cases who still function fairly normally. About 2.4 million people appear to have moderate-to-severe AD and must depend on others for help with daily living.

The announcement notes that in addition to the severe medical and psychological costs to patients and their families, AD and related forms of Dementia impose great economic costs in the U.S. These costs come in many forms, including the direct costs of providing medical care and basic nursing care to persons with moderate to severe AD/dementia. As the number of persons with moderate and severe AD/dementia rises in the coming decades, the costs of caring for those patients will add greatly to the already-severe budget pressures which Medicare and Medicaid are imposing on federal and state budgets.

The Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) are designed to encourage research which would develop reliable estimates of the current economic costs of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and also project future costs in the coming decades, including direct and indirect costs to public and private health care payers, costs faced by families and other informal care givers, as well as labor market costs from reduced productivity or labor force participation.

Topics that would fall within the purview of these FOAs include:

- How will rising expenditures on dementia-related care impact spending on other types of health care and non-health public expenditures?
- What will be the personal out-of-pocket costs to individuals and families of covering formal care needs for dementia sufferers?
- How well-prepared are households to meet future needs given current savings behavior and wealth accumulation?
- How will spending on formal long-term care services affect other types of consumption in retirement, including other out-of-pocket health care costs and non-health care consumption?
- How does providing informal care to dementia sufferer affect one's work, earnings, and wealth?
- How will projected changes in family support structure in the coming decades affect the availability of informal care and the nature of informal care and its associated costs?
- How do levels of dementia-related medical care expenditures vary by regions within the U.S.?
- Are variations in spending per capital attributable primarily to differences in services used or prices?
- How does dementia affect spending on health care in different countries?
- For many types for preventive medical services, expanded utilization has been shown to lead to higher, not lower, medical spending overall. What are the prospects for savings of an effective therapy for AD/dementia?

Letters of intent are due on September 16, 2012. For more information and/or to apply, see: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-12-254.html>; <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-12-255.html>; or <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-12-253.html>.

AHRQ Individual Awards for Postdoctoral Fellows NRSA

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) seeks applicants for its individual postdoctoral research training fellowship designed to provide support to promising fellows with the potential to become productive, independent investigators in health services research, with a research interest in areas and priorities relevant to the mission of AHRQ. The Funding Opportunity (FOA) (PA-12-261) will use the Individual Postdoctoral National Research Service Award (NRSA) grant mechanism.

AHRQ sponsors and conducts research regarding all aspects of health care in the U.S. It addresses issues of organization, delivery, financing, utilization, patient and provider behavior, outcomes, effectiveness and cost. AHRQ is especially interested in applications that propose to train researchers to address healthcare disparities and quality measurement and improvement. Applicants are required to address training in research issues critical to the agency's priority population, including: individuals living in inner city and rural (including frontier) areas; low-income and minority groups; women, children, the elderly, and individuals with special health care needs, including those with disabilities and those who need chronic or end-of-life health care.

AHRQ will begin accepting applications on November 8, 2012. For more information and/or to apply see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-12-261.html>.

COSSA Has New Staff Member

Julia Milton has joined COSSA's team and will assist with COSSA's lobbying efforts. She will also contribute to COSSA's published materials, including editing and producing the *COSSA Washington Update*. Julia previously served as a Research & Editorial Assistant at The George Washington University's Institute for Communitarian Policy Studies. She holds a dual B.A. in Government and English from Wesleyan University. She replaces Gina Drioane, who left COSSA at the end of July.

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is an advocacy organization promoting attention to and federal support for the social and behavioral sciences.

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