



COSSA

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Save the Date

**COSSA Colloquium on Social and Behavioral Science
and Public Policy**

November 4-5, 2013, Washington, D.C.

**FY 2014 Funding Recommendations Emerge from Appropriations
Committees for NSF, Census, NIH, and Other Agencies**

Despite the continuing disagreement on how much to spend on discretionary programs in FY 2014, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees have had a busy two weeks. The \$91 billion in additional funds the Senate has to allocate was quite evident in the numbers recommended for various program in the Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) and the Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), Education (ED) bills.

The CJS bill emerged from the Senate Subcommittee, chaired by Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), on July 16 and the full Senate Appropriations Committee, also chaired by Mikulski, on July 18. The House CJS bill, which the Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA), marked up on July 9, was considered by the full House Appropriations Committee, chaired by Rep. Hal Rogers (R-KY), on July 17. The CJS bill includes funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ).

The Senate Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education (ED) bill emerged from the Subcommittee, chaired by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) on July 9, and from the full Appropriations Committee on July 11. The House version of this bill will wait. The allocation process the Appropriations Committee devised leaves its Labor, HHS, ED Subcommittee with funding that would require severe cuts in many programs.

Floor action on the CJS bills will likely not occur in either house until September. Senate floor action on the Labor, HHS, ED bill before the August recess is uncertain.

What follows is a look at these bills and their FY 2014 funding recommendations.

**FY 2014 Appropriations: National Science Foundation Receives Increase
from Both Committees**

The numbers recommended by the Appropriations Committees are noted in the following chart (numbers are in millions of dollars).

	2013	2014	2014	2014
	Final	Req	HCJS	SCJS
2012 Act				

Research & Related Activities	5,758.30	5,543.72	6,212.29	5,676.20	6,018.30
Major Research Equip & Fac.	198.08	196.17	210.12	182.62	210.12
Education and Human Resources	830.54	833.32	880.29	825.00	880.29
Admin Ops and Agency Mngmnt	299.30	293.60	304.29	294.00	298.40
National Science Board	4.37	4.10	4.47	4.10	4.47
Inspector General	14.12	13.19	14.32	13.20	14.32
Total	7,105.41	6,884.11	7,625.78	6,995.12	7,425.89

During the House Appropriations Committee markup Rep. David Price (D-NC) introduced an amendment to further increase NSF funding back up to the President's request level. Despite impassioned support from Rep. James Moran (D-VA), the amendment was voted down. One problem was that Price did not provide any offset to the increase and Chairman Wolf argued successfully that the panel could not pass the amendment without violating the allocation it received from the full Appropriations Committee.

There is no report language concerning the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences directorate or its political science program in either bill. The House report includes language praising NSF for its support for neuroscience and encourages the agency to work with the Interagency Working Group on Neuroscience organized by the White House Office of Science and Technology that is shepherding the President's BRAIN initiative.

However, the House report also tells NSF that it "needs to improve its ability to articulate the scientific merit of its research grants and explain the peer review process that results in research funding decisions." The Committee wants a report from NSF on how it plans to accomplish this.

Both the House and Senate panels reject the Administration's plan to consolidate undergraduate and graduate Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education programs at NSF.

FY 2014 Appropriations: NIJ and BJS

Funding for National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) would also increase over FY 2013 post-sequestration numbers. The House allocated \$37 million for NIJ, the Senate \$43 million. Both panels eliminated the transfer of \$5 million of NIJ funds to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

The House again includes \$4 million from State and Local Law Enforcement funds for NIJ to support research on domestic radicalization. NIJ also gets \$3.25 million from the House and \$4 million from the Senate of the Office of Violence against Women (OVW) budget for research, with the Senate designating \$1 million specifically for domestic abuse research on Indian women. The Senate provides a separate \$2 million for what it calls the Evaluation Clearinghouse, also known as crimesolutions.gov. There is no separate line item in the House report.

Since the House zeroed out the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, it recommends \$75 million as part of the Byrne Justice Assistance Grants (JAG) program, for a Comprehensive School Safety Initiative that NIJ would develop and implement. "The initiative, at a minimum, should provide for research, evaluation, and statistics relating to school safety and youth violence." The Senate, which gave \$394 million to the COPS program, includes \$150 million for its School Safety Program there.

The Senate funds a Forensic Science Initiative at \$6 million. Of that total, \$5 million goes to NSF and \$1 million stays at DOJ for a Forensic Science Advisory Council.

For BJS, the House provides \$42 million, the Senate \$48 million. The House has report language providing \$250,000 of OVW funds for data collection and reporting on "honor violence."

The House and Senate Committees again included a provision that permits up to two percent of OJP's grant or reimbursement funds made available to that office for criminal justice research, evaluation and statistics. The Senate report directs that \$2 million of the set-aside funds should be spent on Gun Safety Technology.

FY 2014 Appropriations: BEA and Census

The Senate fulfilled the President's request of slightly more than \$104 million for the Economic and Statistics Administration (ESA), which includes the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). The House allocation was considerably less at \$93.4 million. The ESA policy shop takes about \$4 million, leaving the rest for BEA.

The Senate panel also funds the U.S. Census Bureau at the President's request level of \$982.5 million. The Senate figure includes \$10 million from the Working Capital Fund. Again, the House number is considerably less at \$844.7 million. For the Salaries and Expenses Account, the Senate number is \$256.0; the House, \$238.9 million.

For Periodic Censuses and Programs, the Senate recommendation is \$726.4 million; the House \$605.9 million. The House provides \$390.9 million for the 2020 Decennial Census and notes that the Committee views research and testing efforts as "vital to the ensuring that the 2020 Census is the most accurate and cost effective decennial yet." The Committee asks for a planning schedule with design choices and cost estimates. The Senate panel asks for a similar report reiterating language from previous years that: "The Bureau shall continue to bring down the cost of the 2020 decennial census to a level less than the 2010 census and to work towards spending less than the 2000 census, not adjusting for inflation."

The Senate Committee also directs the Bureau to incorporate web-based questionnaires into the American Community Survey (ACS) (already done) into its planning for the 2020 count. With regard to the ACS, the Senate panel directs the Bureau "to continue to provide an updated report to the Committee no later than 120 days after enactment of this act on efforts to evaluate questions included in the ACS, and the steps being taken by the ombudsman position established by the Census Bureau in fiscal year 2013 to ensure that the ACS is conducted as efficiently and unobtrusively as possible." The House report says nothing about the ACS.

FY 2014 Appropriations: Senate Bill Provides \$31 Billion to NIH

On July 11, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved its FY 2014 version of the bill approved two days earlier by its Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education and Related Agencies. Subcommittee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA), who has announced his retirement, emphasized that the bill "includes priorities from both sides of the aisle." Committee Chairwoman Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) stressed that the bill is "such an important bill, the largest non-defense bill this Committee does, the bill that focuses on compelling human needs-- health care, medical research, education, worker's rights, energy assistance." Mikulski cited the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and early childhood education as two particularly important areas in the bill.

She highlighted several advances by the NIH and pointed out that "these medical breakthroughs didn't just happen, they occurred because this Committee supported NIH, and the NIH supported dedicated scientists who sought knowledge and medical breakthroughs." She added, "I believe that investments in NIH are investments in health, in jobs and our economy, in our universities and in

our future."

The measure provides the NIH with \$30.955 billion in funding, an increase of \$207 million, slightly less than the President's request of \$31.1 billion. This sum also includes \$40 million for the new Brain Research through Application of Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative. The Committee also provides the agency \$8.2 million in transfers/evaluation taps available via the Public Health Services Act (PHS). The Committee, however, rejected the Administration's proposed increase in the evaluation tap, making the Committee's recommendation effectively equal to the budget request. In another Republican attempt to hamper implementation of the Affordable Care Act, Ranking Republican on the Subcommittee Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS), claiming NIH is "a higher priority," offered an amendment to transfer \$1.35 billion from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services program management to the NIH. The panel rejected the amendment by a party line a vote of 14 -16, demonstrating that sometimes there is a willingness to vote against NIH.

In the accompanying report to the bill, the Committee notes that other countries are beginning to close the gap between NIH's success and similar entities in other countries. Accordingly, the report observes that "in real terms since the end of the five-year doubling in fiscal year 2003," the funding for the agency has "dropped significantly." Report language pertaining to the social and behavioral sciences in the report include the following:

"The Committee commends NIH for its commitment to the Basic Behavioral and Social Science Opportunity Network (OppNet) initiative launched in 2009. Basic behavioral science research helps improve human health by contributing to the understanding the complex factors that influence individuals. As FY 2014 is the fifth year of this initiative, the Committee requests an update in the FYr 2015 congressional budget justification on the contributions made by the initiative along with recommendations on how best to continue the program and the OppNet mission."

"The President's budget recommends the elimination of the Science Education and Partnership Awards (SEPA) program within the NIH Office of the Director (OD) and consolidating it within the Education Department as part of a government-wide reorganization of STEM education activities. The proposed consolidation would also affect the Office of Science Education within the OD and several other smaller STEM programs throughout NIH. The Committee directs NIH to continue these programs in FY 2014 and includes sufficient funding within the OD to support SEPA and the Office of Science Education."

"The Committee strongly commends NIH for leading the Brain Research through Application of Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative, a multi-agency effort that also involves the National Science Foundation and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency as well as several private sector partners. The Committee supports the President's budget request of \$40 million as an initial investment and awaits more detailed budget projection for future years."

"The Committee recognizes the importance of rehabilitation research and commends the agency for its work to evaluate the performance of the National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research. The Committee further recommends the NIH continue to implement the recommendations included in the final December 2012 report titled, 'Blue Ribbon Panel on Medical Rehabilitation Research at NIH.'"

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) - "The Committee understands that mind-body interventions such as meditation have the potential to contribute to the prevention of cardiovascular disease (CVD). It urges the Institute to support multicenter, phase III randomized controlled trials, and pilot studies to prepare for such trials, of mind-body interventions that have shown promise in phase II trials to reduce CVD risk factors, surrogate endpoints, and clinical events such as mortality, nonfatal myocardial infarction, and stroke." The Committee also noted its continued support for the implementation of the National Sleep Disorders Research Plan, including the emphasis on cross-Institute collaborations.

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) - The Committee

expressed its support for the NIH strategic plan for obesity research, noting that the plan emphasizes a transdisciplinary approach to addressing the growing obesity problem in the United States. At the same time, the Committee believes that "additional efforts are needed to increase the involvement of high risk communities in obesity studies and preventative research, particularly in rural areas, among low-income and racial minorities." NIH is urged to "prioritize its efforts on those areas of the country with the highest obesity rates by utilizing the existing resources of NIH-funded Nutrition Obesity Research Centers and academic schools of public health located in high-risk areas."

National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) - "The Committee continues to recognize the importance of the IDeA program and its focus on improving the necessary biomedical research infrastructure and capacity of research within IDeA states." It expressed its belief that the program "has made a significant contribution to biomedical research and efforts to create a skilled workforce" in those states receiving IDeA funding. Accordingly, the Committee rejected the President's proposal to cut IDeA funding to \$225.4 million and instead recommends \$275.9 million in funding, the same as the fiscal year 2012 level. The Committee also pointed out its concern that the eligibility criteria for IDeA established when the program was created two decades ago are no longer relevant and have led to inequities. It is noted that no states have been added to or dropped from the list of states eligible for funding since 1997; the same 23 states remain eligible. The report language also notes that the program does not conform to the authorizing statute regarding the state's eligibility. Several IDeA states have higher success rates than those of non IDeA states. Acknowledging the ongoing National Academy of Sciences (NAS) study of the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) and related programs such as IDeA across the Federal Government, "the Committee directs the NIH to provide a report to the House and Senate Committee on Appropriations, as well as the relevant authorizing committees, that responds to the NAS analysis of IDeA and addresses whether changes to its eligibility criteria are warranted." The report is due 120 days after the release of the NAS study.

National Institute on Aging (NIA) - NIA is recognized for its investment in long-scaled longitudinal surveys, including the National Health and Aging Trends Study and the Health and Retirement Study. The Institute is applauded for its contribution to the recent the National Academies' report, "Shorter Lives, Poorer Health," which found that Americans live shorter lives and are in poorer health than people in other high-income countries and that behaviors and social circumstances are major contributing factors.

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) - The Committee understands that drug abuse and addiction continue to fuel the spread of HIV/AIDS and that drug abuse prevention and treatment intervention can be very effective in reducing HIV risk. According to the Committee, research should continue to examine every aspect of this relationship. It is also expressed concern about drug abuse and HIV/AIDS in criminal justice populations. Research efforts to empirically test and expand the "seek, test, and retain" paradigm are encouraged by the Committee. NIDA is also encouraged to continue to fund research on preventing and treating marijuana abuse and addiction, as well as the possible health and policy implications of proposals to implement "medical marijuana" or marijuana legalization programs. The Committee remains concerned about the continuing crisis of prescription drug abuse and strongly urged the Institute to continue its support of research on pain, including the development of pain medications with reduced abuse liability. NIDA is also directed to continue to fund research to better prevent and treat prescription drug abuse.

National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) - NIMHD is urged to support research and other activities with respect to pre-diabetes and diabetes, particularly type 2 diabetes in minority populations. The Committee notes that the lack of access to mental health services in rural areas presents unique challenges in providing services to an especially vulnerable population. Greater poverty rates in rural areas, cultural attitudes toward mental illness and limited transportation options all contribute to isolating individuals with mental health needs from access to care. In addition, individuals with mental health needs are at greater risk of poverty as the situation becomes part of a cycle of poverty and mental illness. The use of telemedicine in cooperation with community mental health programs in rural areas presents a new and effective

way of providing for diagnosis and treatment of mental health problems. NIMHD is encouraged to fund research efforts to find innovative ways to address mental health disparities in underserved populations.

National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) - The Committee expressed its strong endorsement of the Institute of Medicine (IOM's) recommendation in the June 2013 report, "The CTSA [Clinical and Translational Science Awards Program] at NIH: Opportunities for Advancing Clinical and Translational Research" (see story below). It agrees that NCATS should provide leadership to help the CTSA's function more as a network than as a collection of discrete centers; only then will the full potential of the program be realized. Additionally, the Committee agrees with the IOM that the CTSA program should address the full spectrum of clinical and translational research. This should include research on changing behaviors that impact the prevention and outcome of diseases and conditions such as obesity and type 2 diabetes.

FY 2014 Appropriations: International Education Up; Special Education Research Boosted

The Senate's advantageous budget situation allowed for increases to some education programs that had not seen any for a few years. The Senate Committee provides \$80.9 million, the President's request, for International Education and Foreign Language Studies programs authorized by Title VI of the Higher Education Act and the Fulbright-Hays law. This is the first significant increase for these programs since they lost 40 percent of their funding in FY 2011. The Domestic programs receive \$73.5 million, while the Fulbright-Hays Overseas programs get slightly over \$7 million.

The Committee report emphasizes "the preservation of the program's longstanding focus on activities and institutions that address the nation's need for a strong training and research capacity in these subjects." This includes, the Committee continues, "increasing the pool of international experts in areas that are essential to national security and economic competitiveness."

The Senate panel again rejects the Administration's "First in the World" proposal, which would have transformed the agency with a budget proposed at \$257.6 million, and keeps the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) as a small program, whose recommended budget is \$5.9 million. Included in that recommendation is \$1 million for the National Research Council to "conduct a study on the impacts of Federal regulations and reporting requirements on institutions of higher education."

The combined Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need and Javits Fellowship program receive \$30.8 million for FY 2014. This includes funds for continuation costs for previously awarded Javits Fellows in the social sciences, arts, and humanities.

Funding for the Institute of Education Sciences by the Senate panel is \$652.9 million, some \$18.2 million below the President's request. The Research, Development and Dissemination account gets \$195 million; \$7.3 million below the request. The panel provides \$112 million for Statistics, \$10.7 million below the request; the proposed level of \$132.2 for Assessments under the NAEP program; and \$75 million, \$10 million below the request, for Statewide Data Systems to help states produce longitudinal data collections for students. The big increase goes to Research and Innovation in Special Education whose \$69.9 million would enable funding of roughly \$20 million in new awards. The allocation for Special Education Studies and Evaluations is \$11.4 million. The Regional Labs receive \$57.3 million.

FY 2014 Appropriations: Bureau of Labor Statistics

For FY 2014, the Senate Committee recommends \$609.9 million for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), slightly under the President's request of \$613.8 million. The report includes a directive to commission a study of and a report on "a comprehensive assessment of the proper purpose,

structure, methods, and operations of the Federal-State cooperative statistics system, particularly regarding the appropriate roles of the BLS, BEA, Employment and Training Administration, the State Labor Market information agencies and the system's relationship with the Census Bureau, the National Center of Education Statistics, State workforce agencies, State education agencies, and private vendors." The Committee recommends the National Academy of Sciences or the National Academy of Public Administration as two possible organizations to produce the report. It should include, the Committee declares, "a rigorous assessment of the Current Employment Statistics Program."

Census Nominee Faces Friendly Committee

On July 9, John Thompson, President Obama's nominee to lead the Census Bureau, appeared before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, to allow Senators to query him about his plans for the 2020 Census, the American Community Survey, and other facets of the agency he seeks to lead. (For Thompson's background see [Update, May 28, 2013.](#))

Committee Chairman Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE) welcomed Thompson and referenced the law enacted to create a five year term for the Bureau's director. Carper noted that since the term established by the law began in January 2012, if confirmed, Thompson would serve out its remainder. He would, however, be eligible for another term. The Chairman also indicated that another provision of that law "requires that nominees to be Census Director have a demonstrated ability in managing large organizations and experience in the collection, analysis, and use of statistical data." He expressed his strong belief that Thompson satisfied this requirement.

Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL), from Thompson's home state of Illinois, introduced the nominee to the Committee and called him superbly qualified to move the Census to the digital world.

Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK), a strong critic of the cost of the 2010 Census, while at the same time an admirer of previous director Bob Groves, who did a good job of "redirecting the organization," also expressed support for Thompson in his opening statement.

In his remarks to the committee, Thompson characterized the Census Bureau as "an important component of the information infrastructure" of the United States statistical system. It is a system, Thompson said, "guided by principles of non-partisanship, protection of individual privacy, and provision of high quality information to inform decision makers and the public on the important issues facing our society and nation."

Citing his experience as the head of operations for the 2000 Census, Thompson promised "to take the Census Bureau into the future." What would this mean? According to the nominee it would include: using the internet as the primary self-response option; taking advantage of technology and operations research methods to re-engineer the field data collection operations; making better use of Federal records to further reduce the dependence on in-person visits for data collection; and drawing on the extensive array of emerging geographic tools and data sets to eliminate the need to physically canvass large portions of the U.S. to prepare the address lists for the 2020 count. He promised to leave "a legacy of innovation."

With regard to the American Community Survey, which has come under attack, including a 2012 House vote to eliminate it, Thompson responded to concerns from Coburn, Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) and Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI). Those Senators raised the issues of intrusive questions, invasion of privacy, the threat of fines for non-cooperation, and making the survey less burdensome. Thompson agreed to examine the survey, to seek input from stakeholders, and to protect privacy. At the same time, he defended the survey as important as a replacement for the decennial Census long form, agreeing with Carper who pointed out, that the ACS serves as a "dress rehearsal" for the 2020 count. Thompson also noted that the ACS serves as a test-bed for the research and experimentation necessary for planning a more efficient and cost-effective decennial. He also told Ayotte that the Bureau has a "well laid out planning process for 2020" whose most important goals are to provide an

accurate count, while controlling costs.

There did not appear to be any opposition to the nomination and the question now is, how fast can the Senate move the confirmation process?

NSF Updates Impact of Sequestration

On July 17, the National Science Foundation (NSF) issued an update to the impact on the agency of the FY 2013 budget sequestration.

The sequester reduced NSF's current fiscal year funding by \$356 million. After this reduction and two government-wide FY 2013 across-the-board reductions, the NSF funding level of \$6.88 billion represents a decrease of 2.1 percent from last year, with more significant reductions in the research accounts for new awards.

NSF reiterated its commitment announced in an earlier notice to honor the following guiding principles:

- Protect commitments to NSF's core mission and maintain existing awards;
- Protect the NSF workforce; and
- Protect STEM human capital development programs.

At the same time, the agency indicated: "While sequestration does have a significant impact on NSF's budget, the impact on existing programs has been partially mitigated due to FY 2013 Congressional appropriations, combined with difficult choices including limits to new research that would have been initiated otherwise."

The agency comments that even at this funding level, it can "sustain its emphasis on pursuing key national and scientific policy priorities, advancing innovation, economic growth, and national security through NSF's broad-based support for science and engineering research and education at the nation's colleges and universities."

Specifically:

- NSF will fully fund all existing continuing grant increments in FY 2013;
- NSF directorates have now received full-year funding allocations (see [Update, July 8, 2013](#)) which will allow funding decisions to be made prior to the end of the fiscal year on September 30th;
- NSF expects to make fewer new awards in FY 2013;
- NSF will fully fund all FY 2013 major research equipment and facilities construction projects;
- Competitions for some programs and solicitations may not be conducted in FY 2013; and
- NSF staff will not be furloughed, allowing for no interruptions to the NSF proposal review and award decision making processes.

Finally, NSF notes that while the budgetary situation for FY 2013 has stabilized, the situation for the FY 2014 remains somewhat uncertain.

NIH Releases Annual Report on Well-Being of Nation's Children and Youth

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has released its annual report on the state of children's well-being. The report utilizes studies conducted by various federal agencies to address many indicators of overall status including, but not limited to, health care, economic circumstances, education, and behavior. This year's edition includes updated and improved data on various subjects, including lead exposure, education, and family reading behaviors.

For the complete report, as well as highlights and other resources, visit childstats.gov.

Highlights:

The proportion of children to adults in the United States has actually declined. Additionally, the proportion of Hispanic, Asian, and multiracial children increased, while that of non-Hispanic Caucasian and black children decreased.

A national behavioral study of 12th graders found that 24 percent of them had taken part in binge drinking (consuming five or more alcoholic beverages in a row) in the past two weeks. That number is up two percent from 2011.

Sixty-four percent of children ages 0-17 lived with two married parents in 2012. 24 percent lived with only their mother and four percent lived with their father. Four percent lived with neither parent.

In 2012, 22 percent of children ages 0-17 lived in poverty, a number that hasn't changed significantly from 2010.

In 2011, 91 percent of young adults aged 18-24 had completed high school with either a diploma or GED.

Sixty-eight percent of high school completers enrolled immediately in a two or four year college in 2011. That number is down from 70 percent in 2009.

The CTSA Program at NIH: Opportunities for Advancing Clinical and Translational Research - IOM Report Makes Recommendations

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) Program was established in 2006 in recognition of the need to spur clinical and translational research. Specifically, the program was designed to "provide integrated intellectual and physical resources for the conduct of original clinical and translational science." An outgrowth of the NIH's General Clinical Research Center Program, the CTSA Program, over a seven-year time span, grew from 12 sites to the current 61 sites and is housed at academic health centers and other institutions.

Individual CTSAs are funded through five-year cooperative agreements. Their budgets range from \$4 million to \$23 million annually. The total budget for the Program was \$461 million in FY 2012. The CTSAs provide an array of training and research support to help researcher identify promising therapeutics and interventions. "Research support is provided in areas that include core facilities; biomedical informatics; pilot funding; regulatory knowledge and support; biostatistics, epidemiology, research design, and ethics; participant and clinical interaction resources; and community engagement efforts and resources." In 2011, a CTSA Consortium Coordinating Center was established at Vanderbilt University which has taken steps to standardize and coordinate consortium activities. The Coordinating Center is also working to ensure the availability of best practices, facilitate the uptake of available tools and resources, and promote collaboration.

In 2012, NIH sponsored an Institute of Medicine (IOM) consensus study to assess and provide recommendations on the appropriateness of the CTSA Program's mission and strategic goals and whether changes were needed. The IOM Committee, led by Alan Leshner, Chief Executive Officer of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), was also asked to provide an independent appraisal of and advice on the implementation of the program by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS), while exploring the contributions of CTSA in accelerating the development of new therapeutics, facilitating disease-specific and child health research, and enhancing the integration of research funded by NIH institutes and centers. The Committee's overarching conclusion is that "the CTSA Program is contributing significantly to the advancement of clinical and translational research and is therefore a worthwhile investment that would benefit from a variety of revisions to make it more efficient and effective."

The IOM Committee, in its recently released report, "The CTSA Program at NIH: Opportunities for Advancing Clinical and Translational Research," noted that it "envision[s] a transformation of the CTSA Program from its current, loosely organized structure into one that is more tightly integrated network that works collectively to enhance the transit of therapeutics, diagnostics, and preventive interventions along the developmental pipeline; disseminate innovative translational research, methods and best practices; and provide leadership in informatics standards and policy development to promote shared resources." It identified four key opportunities for action: (1) Adopt and sustain active program leadership. (2) Engage in substantive and productive collaboration. (3) Develop and widely disseminate innovative research resources. (4) Build on initial successes in training and education, community engagement, and child health research.

The Committee made four recommendations:

Strengthen NCATS leadership of the CTSA program. NCATS should: Increase active involvement in the CTSA cooperative agreements and the CTSA Consortium; Conduct a strategic planning process to set measurable goals and objectives for the program that address the full spectrum of clinical and translational research; Ensure that the CTSA Program as a whole actively supports the full spectrum of clinical and translational research while encouraging flexibility for each institution to build on its unique strengths; Form strategic partnerships with NIH institutes and centers and with other research networks and industry; Establish an innovations fund through a set-aside mechanism that would be used for collaborative pilot studies and other initiatives involving CTSA institutions, other NIH institutes, and/or other public and private entities; Evaluate the program as a whole to identify gaps, weaknesses, and opportunities and create mechanisms to address them; and Distill and widely disseminate best practices and lessons learned by the CTSA Program and work to communicate its value and accomplishments and seek opportunities for further efforts and collaboration.

Reconfigure and streamline the CTSA Consortium. NCATS should establish a new multi-stakeholder NCATS-CTSA Steering Committee that would be chaired by a member of the NCATS leadership team and have a CTSA principal investigator as vice chair; and provide direction to the CTSA Coordinating Center in developing and promoting the use of available shared resources.

Build on the strengths of individual CTSA's across the spectrum of clinical and translational research. CTSA's should drive innovation and collaboration in methodologies, processes, tools and other resources across the spectrum of clinical and translational research; emphasize interdisciplinary team-based approaches in training, education, and research; Involve patients, family members, health care providers, and other community partners in all phases of the work of the CTSA; Strengthen collaboration across the schools and disciplines in their home institutions; Build partnerships with industry, other research networks, community groups, and other stakeholders; and Communicate the resources available through the CTSA Program.

Formalize and standardize evaluation processes for individual CTSA's and the CTSA Program. The evaluation should use clear, consistent and innovative metrics that align with the program's mission and goals and that go beyond standard academic benchmarks of publications and number of grant awards to assess the CTSA Program and the individual CTSA's.

Advance innovation in education and training program. The CTSA program should champion the reshaping of career development pathways for researchers involved in the conduct of clinical and translational science; and ensure flexible and personalized training experiences that offer optional advanced degrees.

Ensure community engagement in all phases of research. Among other things, the CTSA Program should explore opportunities and incentives to engage a more diverse community.

Strengthen clinical and translational research relevant to child health. NCATS should collaborate with the CTSA Consortium Child Health Oversight Committee to strengthen clinical and

translational research relevant to child health.

The IOM Committee concluded that because the CTSA Program is not disease-specific in its orientation, strong collaboration must be forged across disciplinary units within individual CTSA institutions and with other government funders, industry, philanthropies, and community organizations.

USDA to Establish Regional Climate Hubs

In line with President Obama's Climate Action Plan (see [Update, July 8, 2013](#)) the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will establish seven Regional Hubs for Risk Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change. Ann Bartuska, USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics, and William Hohenstein, Director of the USDA Climate Change Program Office, briefed stakeholders on what these hubs will do and how they will be selected (slides available [here](#)). More information about the hubs is available on the [USDA website](#).

Bartuska explained that the mission of the hubs is "to develop and deliver science-based, region-specific information and technologies to agricultural and natural resource managers that enable climate-smart decision making." The seven regions are the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Northern Plains, Southern Plains, Pacific Northwest, and Southwest. Bartuska acknowledged the regional climate work being done by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) regional climate centers and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA)'s Regional Integrated Science and Assessments (RISA) program, and asserted that the climate hubs will complement, not duplicate those efforts. The hubs will take advantage of the USDA's wide distribution of 2,000 offices nationwide, established partnerships with land-grant universities, long history of climate research, and ability to implement practices in national forests through the National Resource Conservation Service.

The three main functions of the hubs will be to provide: 1) technical support, 2) assessments and forecasts, and 3) outreach and education. They will provide technical support by testing and delivering new management practices with local partners, supporting research and development and innovation partnerships, developing suites of strategies for stakeholder use, and developing new systems for sustainable agricultural production and increased resilience. The hubs will conduct period regional assessments in support of the National Climate Assessment (NCA), provide usable regional climate and forecasts through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) being finalized with NOAA, and analyze the economic impacts of exposure to climate-induced risks. As part of their outreach and education function, the hubs will work with land grant universities and Extension Services and other USDA agencies, educate local stakeholders, and provide information to the public. USDA expects the hubs to work within and across regions as a network, support USDA programs to ensure continued delivery of services in the face of climate change, and "operationalize" climate science.

Hohenstein explained how USDA will create the hubs. An internal Department Request for Applications was announced in June for USDA facilities to apply to serve as a regional hub. The deadline for applications is August 21, and selection is expected to take place in October 2013. The selected offices will serve as the "nodes" of the hub. Over the next year, USDA plans to reach out to local partners and stakeholders who will become the "spokes." The hubs will be a launching point for broader efforts within each region to integrate climate change into agriculture decision-making.

New NCHS Data on Racial Disparities in Life Expectancy

A new [National Center on Health Statistics \(NCHS\) data brief](#) focusing on racial disparities in life expectancy between the black and white populations finds that such differences have narrowed over the past 30 years, but still exist. In 2010, life expectancy for the black population was 3.8 years lower than the white population (down from 7.8 in 1970). The difference was attributable to

higher rates of death from heart disease, cancer, homicide, diabetes and perinatal conditions in African Americans. The data was drawn from the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS).

Briefing Looks at Prescription Drug Abuse

On July 10th, the Friends of NIDA (National Institute on Drug Abuse), which includes COSSA, in conjunction with the Congressional Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus and the Congressional Caucus on Prescription Drug Abuse hosted *Preventing Prescription Drug Abuse: Applying Science to Solve a Community Epidemic*. Experts in local and federal prescription drug abuse prevention came together to share their experiences dealing with the growing epidemic. With 6.1 million Americans abusing prescription pharmaceuticals, health and law enforcement officials are struggling to meet the unique challenges that come from drugs that are legally produced and readily available.

NIDA Director Nora Volkow spoke on the different types of prescription drugs as well as the ways in which professionals from various fields are coming together to combat this epidemic. Volkow explained that there are opioids (like OxyContin and Vicodin) and stimulants (like Adderall and Ritalin). While the two types of drugs are perfectly legal and relatively safe if used under the direct care of a doctor, their chemical compounds (and effects) are staggeringly similar to hard drugs such as heroin (an opioid) and methamphetamine (a stimulant). Volkow noted that the 500 percent increase in treatment center admissions for prescription painkillers over 10 years and the 300 percent increase in prescription drug overdoses since 1990 have left experts looking for new solutions to combat both abuse and overdoses. Volkow and her colleagues are working on numerous methods to make prescription drugs safer and less addictive. First, it is important to educate doctors on the signs of prescription drug addiction. Researchers are also working on developing new drugs that release lower doses of medicine over longer periods of time, making them significantly less addictive. Finally, healthcare professionals are working to distribute Naloxone, a lifesaving drug that can instantly counter the effects of opioid overdoses. While none of these efforts will be completely stop drug abuse and addiction, Volkow believes that they can save many lives.

Lisa Marsch of Dartmouth College spoke to guests about a program that was developed to apply technology to prevent the abuse of prescription drugs. With the support of NIDA funding, Marsch and her colleagues developed web-based programs to teach about and discourage the abuse of prescription drugs. Marsch suggested her research showed that technology-based behavioral intervention is a cost-effective method that can have as much success as programs that are implemented by highly trained educators and clinicians. One of the three interventions that Marsch developed targeted high school students and created a fake documentary/blog. As the documentary developed, the young woman (an actress) described the experiences that her friend had when she became addicted to pain killers. The story includes key messages that Marsch tried to communicate to the students. These messages included the risks of abusing prescription drugs, how to know if a friend is abusing prescription drugs, and how to refuse offers from friends. Marsch said that the success of these programs, even in their developmental stages, is very promising and could lead to future programs of a similar nature.

Visiting from West Virginia, Amy Haskins talked about her role as the project director of the Jackson County Anti-Drug Coalition. After noticing a dramatic increase in prescription drug related deaths between 2006 and 2008, Haskins applied for, and received, a Drug Free Communities Grant from the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America. Using this funding, Haskins was able to set up a coalition that included law enforcement officials, youth groups, substance abuse treatment providers, educators, and business leaders. The coalition developed a multidimensional strategy to fight prescription drug abuse. Educators and students created presentations about the dangers of prescription drugs and methods to avoid them. Police were trained on how to identify addiction as well as the actual prescription pills themselves. The coalition even purchased a drug incinerator so the coalition could dispose of the drugs collected at strategic take-back sites. As a result of this effort, reported prescription drug abuse in Jackson County has fallen over the past year, a

staggering notion given the dramatic increase on a national scale.

Phil Bauer had opened the briefing by sharing the very personal and tragic story of the death of his youngest son Mark. Bauer explained that at the time of his son's death in 2004, he knew practically nothing about the dangers and warning signs of prescription drug abuse. He lamented the fact that his lack of knowledge kept him from seeing some warning signs that he may have picked up on had he known more about the issue. Since his son's death, Bauer has worked as a national advocate for prescription drug safety. He hopes that his loss can be used to motivate policymakers to support funding for prevention research and education.

Science and Human Rights Coalition Meets on Right to Benefit from Scientific Progress

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) [Science and Human Rights Coalition](#) held its biannual meeting on July 11 and 12. The Coalition is comprised of 50 member and affiliated organizations, including COSSA, that share an interest in making human rights more central to the practice of science and pursuing ways science can assist in the promotion of human rights. The meeting focused on Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, which stipulates that every person has the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications (the text of the Article is available [here](#)).

Defining Article 15

In the opening session, Jessica Wyndham, AAAS Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program and coordinator of the coalition, gave some background on the existing guidance for implementing Article 15. One hundred and sixty countries have ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, but the United States is not among them. Wyndham explained that the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights issues General Comments for the provisions in the Covenant, which serve as guidelines for how states should approach implementing a given right. However, the Committee has not yet issued comments for Article 15. In the absence of a General Comment, 117 states have released reports outlining how they choose to interpret the Article. Other approaches include the 2009 Venice Statement issued by UNESCO, a 2010 statement by AAAS "On the Right to the Benefits of Scientific Progress," and a 2012 report by UN Special Rapporteur on cultural rights Farida Shaheed. Despite these reports and statements, Wyndham explained, there remain several unanswered questions and concerns for approaching Article 15. First, how do we define the "benefits" of scientific progress-- are they purely material or do they go beyond that? Second, from what scientific fields are benefits derived? Finally, is this a right relevant to the scientific community or the general public? What is the relationship between those groups?

Margaret Vitullo, American Sociological Association, shared the preliminary results of a study she and Wyndham conducted to determine how scientists and engineers understand their rights vis-à-vis Article 15. They held 16 focus groups of U.S.-based scientists and engineers (148 participants in total), with each focus group representing a specific discipline across the social and behavioral, physical and chemical, biomedical, and engineering and technology sciences. Participants were asked to identify some of the benefits of science, and their answers were fairly consistent across disciplines. The most frequently listed benefits were health, knowledge, environment, education, economic, evidence for policies and programs, technology and infrastructure, behavior, and cultural influence. The participants felt that the benefits of science extended beyond material goods. There was also consensus that all fields of science contribute to these benefits. Vitullo explained that when the scientists were asked who has the right to access the benefits of scientific progress, their responses represented a spectrum based on level of scientific knowledge. In other words, the general public has the right to access the applications and the general knowledge produced by the scientific enterprise. At the same time, scientists have the right to access the data, materials, and equipment they need to conduct research.

International Scientific Cooperation and Article 15

Sharon H. Hrynkow, Global Virus Network, moderated a plenary session on International Scientific Cooperation and Article 15. E. William Colglazier, Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State, shared his outlook on the relationship between international scientific cooperation and diplomacy. He argued that such cross-borders cooperation can be an asset for diplomacy, and that it is in the U.S.'s interest to improve the scientific capacity of other countries. Cooperation and collaboration among scientists can contribute to many diplomatic issues, including climate change, energy, health, natural disasters, and national security. Colglazier suggested that such cooperation fits within former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's strategy of "smart power," which holds that all U.S. assets have a place in the diplomatic realm. He described some of the programs the State Department has established to facilitate trans-national cooperation among scientists, such as the Science, Technology, and Innovation Expert Partnership, which encourages scientists travelling abroad to assist with public diplomacy efforts; partnerships between NASA, USAID, and private companies to spark innovation in areas like health, energy, water, and fabric materials; and USAID's Grand Challenges for Development initiative. Colglazier concluded by noting that connections between American scientists and those in countries that do not have diplomatic relations with the U.S., like Syria, North Korea, Iran, and Cuba, can provide a foundation for opening relations when opportunities arise.

Herman Winick, Stanford University, shared his personal experience as a physicist working with scientists from other countries. He explained that meeting an Iranian scientist who was later imprisoned for several months made him realize that there are opportunities for scientists in the promotion of human rights. Winick pointed to the SESAME (Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East) Project as a model for international scientific cooperation. SESAME is a major research facility located in Jordan governed by a Council of nine member countries that experience considerable political tensions: Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Israel, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, and Turkey. He also discussed some U.S. policies that impede international scientific collaboration, such as restrictions that make it difficult for scientists from countries classified as State Sponsors of Terror to visit American laboratories.

Frank La Rue, UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Expression, discussed the relationship of the right to freedom of expression to the rights enshrined in Article 15. He reminded the audience that human rights represent the minimum standard of freedom, so there is no room for cultural relativity. Freedom of expression facilitates the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress, in that it establishes the right to present the products and results of scientific research. La Rue suggested that Article 15 rights are related to other rights as well, for example, the rights to potable water and nutrition. He also discussed the relationship between expression and the internet. Barriers to free expression over the internet exist for different reasons-- in China, the infrastructure is there, but content is restricted, while in India, the content is available, but only a small percentage of the population has access.

Conserving, Developing, and Diffusing Science

The final plenary session, on Article 15 and Open Access, was moderated by Kevin Finneran, National Academy of Sciences. Molly Land, University of Connecticut, discussed open access from a human rights-legal standpoint. She noted that Article 15 stipulates the freedom to access information and share and exchange knowledge. Rights to education, health, freedom from hunger, adequate standard of living also rest in part on the free flow of ideas (improving conditions via scientific knowledge). Land also noted that people's needs for scientific knowledge vary according to context and capacity; parents and researchers both have the right to scientific knowledge, but exactly what information they need differs.

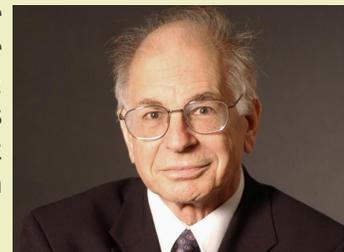
Alan Leshner, AAAS Chief Executive Officer and Executive Publisher of *Science*, shared a non-profit publisher's perspective on open access. He asserted that if it were feasible to make all content in *Science* available for free immediately, he would. However, publishing *Science* costs \$50 million a year, and there is not an existing business model for how to support those costs and give the content

away for free (the journal currently runs entirely on revenue from subscriptions). As it is, AAAS, as part of larger coalitions, makes *Science* available for free to poor countries. It also freely releases any research relevant to public health, public safety, or especially important to the advancement of science and encourages authors to make manuscripts available for free on their own websites. He noted that the access issue is complicated further by the fact that restrictive policies like internet censorship mean that making all information freely available would still not guarantee free access.

Felice Levine, American Educational Research Association (AERA) and COSSA Board member, noted that the scientific community's self-regulatory institutions such as peer review make it especially well suited to vet knowledge in an open access environment. She noted that the push towards open access has put pressure on scientists to write in a more readable style. Levine detailed AERA's progress on open access. In 2000, AERA put its journal online, and in 2005, it created an online repository for annual meeting papers (originally a member benefit, but now available free). AERA now provides authors with toll-free links to direct readers to their articles for free. And in 2014, AERA will establish an entirely open access journal. AERA has also run workshops to show the press and policymakers how to use data. Levine acknowledged that affordability is a challenge, especially since collected revenue is used to continue the knowledge-production cycle (by funding fellowships and the like).

Daniel Kahneman Adds Inaugural SAGE-CASBS Award to his Prize Collection

Daniel Kahneman, winner of the 2002 Nobel Prize in Economics, is the recipient of the first SAGE-CASBS (Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences) award. The prize "recognizes outstanding achievement in advancing the understanding of the behavioral sciences as they are applied to pressing social issues." He received the award at Center for the Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences Summit on July 11.



Kahneman is a Senior Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. He is also Professor of Psychology and Public Affairs Emeritus at the Woodrow Wilson School, the Eugene Higgins Professor of Psychology Emeritus at Princeton University, and a fellow of the Center for Rationality at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Author of the award-winning best-seller *Thinking Fast and Slow*, Kahneman is widely credited with creating the field of behavioral economics. His seminal research on decision-making with the late Amos Tversky led to the infusion of psychological research that questioned the economic version of the "rational man."

Thinking Fast and Slow explained to a lay audience how our minds work using two systems that drive the way we think-- one that is fast, intuitive, and emotional while the other is slower, deliberative, and logical. It won the National Academy of Sciences *Best Book Award* in 2012.

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Since its founding in 1954, the [Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University](#) has brought together distinguished scholars in the behavioral sciences to confront societal problems worldwide. Fellows have helped develop new policies and practices in fields as diverse as medicine, education, electoral politics, crime prevention, and international development. And they've played key roles in starting new interdisciplinary fields such as cognitive science and behavioral economics.

Applications Wanted for Secondary Analyses of Alcohol and Chronic Disease

Alcohol consumption has a significant effect on chronic disease from the probable benefits of moderate drinking to the detrimental effects of heavy drinking. According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), research is needed to better understand the impact of alcohol on chronic disease and the myriad factors that may interact with alcohol to modify chronic disease risk.

Accordingly, NIAAA is seeking applications (investigator-initiated, small grant, and exploratory/developmental) to conduct secondary analyses of alcohol as it relates to chronic disease etiology and epidemiology. The funding opportunities (FOA) Secondary Analyses of Alcohol and Chronic Disease ([PA-13-260](#), [PA-13-261](#), and [PA-13-251](#)) encourages use of existing datasets to examine associations between alcohol and chronic disease. Alcohol-related chronic diseases and conditions include: Alzheimer's disease, cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic liver disease, chronic pancreatitis, type 2 diabetes, fetal alcohol syndrome, HIV/AIDS, hypertension, age-related macular degeneration, metabolic syndrome, obesity, osteoporosis, and psychiatric disorders such as depression and schizophrenia.

NIAAA is also interested in exposures such as: Drinking patterns such as quantity/frequency, binge, or drinking with meals; Changes in drinking over time; Alcohol dependence/abuse; Gene-environment interactions; Lifestyle factors such as smoking, nutrition/eating behavior, physical activity; Concurrent use of prescription drugs particularly among moderate drinkers or the elderly; and Concurrent use of illicit drugs. Populations of interest include, but are not limited to those defined by: stage of life, race/ethnicity, pregnancy, menopausal status, and cancer survivorship.

Applications may be submitted on September 5, 2013.

Implications of New Digital Media Use for Underage Drinking-Related Behaviors and Prevention Research

The use of digital media has increased dramatically among adolescents over the past decade. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) is seeking to stimulate research into adolescent alcohol activities in two areas through via the funding opportunity announcement, *Implications of New Digital Media Use for Underage Drinking-Related Behaviors, and Prevention Research* ([PA-113-262](#)/investigator-initiated and [PA-13-263](#)/exploratory/development grant).

The first area of research focus is: Understanding social media-related underage drinking, drinking-related norms and expectancies, and drinking related problems. This includes exploring possible avenues through which underage drinking patterns may be influenced by social networking sites (SNS) and social media usage, which was explored at a NIAAA-sponsored workshop convened in September 2010. Suggested research topics:

- Is the display of underage alcohol use on SNSs increasing over time, and are SNS communications concerning alcohol use increasing as a proportion of total communications?
- Net of other influences, is exposure to depictions of alcohol use on SNSs associated with earlier onset of drinking or to increased likelihood of involvement in alcohol misuse or binge drinking?
- What are the relatively most important aspects of SNSs and social media use in influencing alcohol-related risk behavior, and what are the characteristics of SNS users who are most likely to be vulnerable to pro-drinking messages as conveyed by each of these features?
- Do SNS postings increase offline communications about alcohol, and are these associated with increased intentions to drink?
- Are those adolescents whose online "profile" displays many images of alcohol use at elevated

risk of being labeled by other network members as a heavy drinker or to have a drinking problem, and does this encourage their further substance use?

- How might SNS communication promote 21st birthday celebrations that involve drinking, Spring Break drinking behaviors, and pre-partying drinking behavior?
- To what extent can Facebook and Twitter be used to provide valid and reliable estimates and surveillance of alcohol use and alcohol-related problems?
- Regardless of the role of social media and SNSs as contributors to adolescent drinking and drinking-related problems, it should be clear that they offer an exciting platform for preventive interventions aimed at underage drinking and related problems. These are discussed next.

The second research area includes the use of social media and SNS in the prevention of underage drinking and related problems. According to the announcement, SNS-based preventive interventions might usefully build upon any of the various primary and secondary prevention approaches long utilized in offline settings, such as peer-led, family-based, and community-wide prevention strategies. Suggested examples of potential social media-based interventions for preventions include:

- Subjects recruited on a SNS might be directed to a webinar, or network friends might be utilized in an interactive intervention;
- SNSs might play a role in parent support networks that address underage alcohol use;
- SNSs might play a role in enhancing community communication, strategizing, and activation aimed at reducing alcohol availability in the community local coalitions and health departments might use Twitter to promote health messages;
- Smart phone applications might provide prevention or treatment advice; and
- SNSs might play a role in promoting alcohol screening among college students.

Applications may be on submitted September 5, 2013.

High Priority Behavioral and Social Research Networks

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) have issued a funding opportunity announcement, High Priority Behavioral and Social Research Networks ([RFA-AG-14-007](#)), designed to provide infrastructure support for advancing development of specific emerging and high priority interdisciplinary areas of behavioral and social research of relevance aging.

High priority emerging areas include:

Reversibility: Assessing the prospects for mid-late life reversibility of phenotypes associated with early life adversity and subsequent later life health and socioeconomic disparities.

Epigenetics: Advance research from a life course perspective that elucidates how epigenetic processes translate the effects of social environments into behavioral or behaviorally mediated outcomes that may persist throughout life into middle and late adulthood.

Valuing Health Research: Facilitate a network to study the production of biomedical and behavioral science research and its impact on health, especially healthy aging, and the economy.

Stress Measurement: Advancing the science of psychosocial stress measurement to enhance behavioral and social surveys of aging and strengthen lab-survey linkages in this area.

Economics and Psychology: Stimulate new interdisciplinary thinking on policy-relevant behavioral science topics such as the long-term consequences of educational attainment for health and well-being at older ages, and public health approaches to behavior change in later life.

Replicability: Facilitating the process of replication of research results in the behavioral and social sciences of aging.

Letters of intent are due September 22, 2013. Applications are due October 22, 2013.

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