

LADEN DOWN WITH PORK; FIPSE CANCELS COMPETITIVE GRANTS *HS*

As noted in an earlier edition of *UPDATE* (see November 9, 1998), the 105th Congress burdened the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) program with massive amounts of directed spending or "pork" in its Fiscal Year (FY) 1999 appropriation. There was so much of it, that on January 13, the Department announced it was canceling the annual grant competition.

FIPSE awards grants and contracts to a variety of institutions concerned with higher education to support projects that enhance postsecondary education quality and cost effectiveness. From budgets that hovered in the \$15-17 million range in the 1980s and early 1990s, FIPSE's budget increased to \$25.2 million in FY 1998 as Congress began to direct its spending, in particular on exchange programs with the European Community and NAFTA countries.

In FY 1999, Congress appropriated \$50 million to the agency. In the Omnibus Appropriations bill Congress instructed the agency to support projects at particular institutions of higher education, such as policy institutes named for recently retired Senators such as Robert Dole, Paul Simon, and Mark Hatfield, and other demonstration programs Congress deemed worthy.

Congress did give FIPSE \$9.5 million for a broad based competition to be administered "in a manner consistent with current departmental practices and policies." Thus, FIPSE thought it had funds to move ahead with its competitive grants program. According to the agency, almost 1,700 grant applications had been received in the competition that commenced in August, before Congress had finished the appropriations process. However, Congress had also suggested to FIPSE where, how, and on what to spend the \$9.5 million.

Thus, no funds were left for those who had not played the congressional pork game.

OERI Field Initiated Studies Competition

One U.S. Department of Education competition still open is the Office of Educational Research and Improvement's (OERI) Field Initiated Studies program. OERI expects to have \$9.6 million available for the FY 1999 competition for grants to conduct education research on topics and methods of study suggested by investigators. Awards have ranged from \$450,000 to \$1 million for one-to-three year projects.

The deadline is February 19, 1999. For more information contact Veda Bright 202/219-1935 or veda_bright@ed.gov.

HOUSE COMPLETES ROSTERS FOR FUNDING SUBCOMMITTEES *DA*

The House Appropriations Subcommittee rosters have been finally filled (See accompanying chart on page 6 for rosters of subcommittees that affect the social and behavioral sciences). These subcommittees will soon begin work considering President Clinton's numbers for Fiscal Year (FY)

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2000; the administration's budget request is expected to be released on February 1. With regard to the subcommittee assignments, the big story is the ascension of James T. Walsh (NY) to the chair of the VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee. In addition, Alan B. Mollohan (D-WV) has ended months of speculation and has moved from the Commerce, Justice, State, and The Judiciary (CJS) Subcommittee to become Ranking Member of the VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee. The CJS Subcommittee has jurisdiction over the Census Bureau's budget. Mollohan, though, will retain a slot on the CJS Subcommittee, and, thus, will continue to be a leading proponent of the Census Bureau's plan to use statistical sampling in 2000.

New Faces Join CJS Subcommittee

The CJS Subcommittee has a new face for the 106th Congress — at least on the Democratic side. The Subcommittee will still be chaired by Harold Rogers (KY), a strong opponent of the Census Bureau's proposed use of statistical sampling in the 2000 Census. The Democrats, however, with Mollohan's move, have a new Ranking Member. Jose Serrano (NY) is now the Subcommittee's leading Democratic member. The Subcommittee ratio has also changed, to 7 to 4 in the 106th Congress from 6 to 3 in the 105th Congress.

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Serrano's movement to the Subcommittee's top Democrat slot is an interesting development. In the 1990 Census, Serrano's 16th District in New York was subject to a large undercount in the 1990 Census. In fact, a study by an independent research group last year concluded that Serrano's district was the most undercounted district in the country. Serrano, a member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and an associate member of the Congressional Black Caucus, will undoubtedly be a strong supporter of the Census Bureau's and Clinton Administration's planned use of statistical sampling in the 2000 Census. Last year, Serrano said, "undercounting is the same as ignoring and ignoring is never healthy. We need to put politics aside. It's not about how many Congressional Republican districts there are. It's about having every resident in this nation counted properly."

Serrano will be joined on the Subcommittee by Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA), another vocal and active supporter of the use of statistical sampling in 2000. Roybal-Allard, like Serrano, is a member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, which has been extremely active in promoting the Census Bureau's use of statistical sampling in 2000.

THE UNEQUAL BURDEN OF CANCER *AS*

According to an Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, the *Unequal Burden of Cancer: An Assessment of NIH Research and Programs for Ethnic Minorities and the Medically Underserved*, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) "should expand its effort to understand why poor Americans and some ethnic minorities are more likely to develop and die from certain types of cancer."

M. Alfred Haynes, the chair of the 15-member IOM Committee, emphasized that with "the population becoming increasingly diverse it is critical that we learn why some ethnic minorities and the medically underserved are more prone to cancer and less likely to survive it." Haynes is the former president and dean of Drew Postgraduate Medical School, and former director of Drew-Meharry-Morehouse Consortium Cancer Center in Los Angeles.

At a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education and Related Agencies hearing chaired by Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) and attended by Full Appropriations Committee Chair Ted Stevens (R-AK) the following day, Specter lauded the promptness of the report. It was Specter's Subcommittee which asked the IOM to examine the issue. "We have to approach health issues with a sense of urgency," Specter noted.

The IOM Committee reported that while the NIH has funded "an impressive array of research" related to cancer, there is not an "overarching strategy" to guide its efforts in studying ethnic or socioeconomic differences.

Accordingly, the IOM Committee recommends that the National Cancer Institute (NCI) "place a greater emphasis on the differences in cancer among the ethnic groups, with a view to determining the roles that diet, lifestyle, and customs play in varying rates of cancer." Studies within and between ethnic groups should be conducted to provide insights into how these factors may affect cancer risk. In addition, the IOM Committee advocates that data collection be expanded across a wider geographic range to include such groups as lower-income or poverty-level whites; Hispanics not currently in the database; southern/rural African American communities; and the "culturally diverse American Indian populations."

The IOM Committee also noted that the use of racial categories was not intended for epidemiological research and furthermore is "not consistent with the current scientific thinking. There are no known biological boundaries that justify the division into race." According to the Committee, a "blueprint or coordinated" plan is needed for addressing questions related to cancer in these populations.

NCI Should Increase Behavioral Research

Noting that the NCI was generous in providing information to the IOM Committee, Haynes said that it is clear that the institute, is "undergoing dynamic change." The Committee also commended NCI for its plan "to increase its commitment to behavioral research, especially if some of that research is specifically targeted toward minorities and the

medically underserved." In July 1997, NCI appointed Barbara K. Rimer to its newly created Division of Cancer Control and Population Science. The focus of the division is to conduct research on populations, behavior, surveillance, special populations, outcomes, and other aspects of cancer control.

The Committee, however, disputed the amount of funding that NCI reports spending to address cancer in ethnic and medically underserved populations. NCI reports spending \$124 million in fiscal year 1997, but IOM puts the figure at about \$24 million. The discrepancy comes from NCI's inclusion of the percentage of minorities enrolled in research studies, while the IOM Committee only counted those funded projects that are focused specifically on minority health issues. At the Senate hearing, Specter noted that the Congress has been generous with the NIH in its appropriations to the agency which received a \$2 billion dollar increase in FY 1999. He further emphasized that he "wanted to get to the bottom of this." I want to ensure that minorities are being fairly treated, he added. He indicated that he would like NCI to examine the issue and to determine if allocations could be directed more specifically.

Stevens praised Specter for convening the oversight hearing and suggested that additional oversight hearings be held before allocation of the FY 2000 appropriations. He also indicated that he believes that too little information is aimed at the "people who need help — the uninsured and the low-income." Stevens added that Alaska is made up of "a series of minorities" with no dominant group. Using his own survivorship of cancer as an example, he emphasized that the poor "do not have the network" that he had available to him as a U.S. Senator.

Richard Klausner, Director of the NCI, noted that the categorization of "societally underserved people by their socioeconomic class, insurance status, or cultural background" is a subject for research. According to Klausner in his written testimony, NCI is pursuing this area of research. He explained that NCI has funded several new initiatives that will enhance its health services and economic research. He closed by saying that NCI alone will not solve the problem. The unequal burden of cancer is rooted in the "reflection of unequal resources, access, power

and opportunities in our society." Ultimately, this uneven burden will only be readdressed by taking responsibility to correct both historic and persistent inequities, he said.

Additional recommendations include:

- ◆ Develop and implement a "uniformed definition of 'special populations' with cancer."
- ◆ Include survival data for all ethnic groups in the annual reporting of cancer surveillance and population-based research.
- ◆ Emphasize "ethnic groups rather than race in NIH's cancer surveillance and other population research."
- ◆ More adequately assess research and training relevant to cancer among ethnic minorities and medically underserved populations.
- ◆ Identify as "one of its highest priorities a focus on the cancer prevention, control, and treatment needs of ethnic minority and medically underserved groups."
- ◆ Expand the number of ethnic minority investigations "in the broad spectrum of cancer research to improve minority health research; including assessing the relevant areas of research needs and ensuring that trainees represent these disciplines and areas of inquiry."
- ◆ Increase the authority of the NCI's Office of Special Populations Research, providing it with the authority and the resources to coordinate "an extensive program of research on cancer among ethnic minorities."
- ◆ Establish a formal reporting system to Congress and the public on cancer studies of these groups.

NSF ANNOUNCES CHILDHOOD TO WORKFORCE INITIATIVE HS

The National Science Foundation's (NSF) Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate has announced an initiative to help current grantees gain supplemental funding to help "stimulate and facilitate cross-disciplinary actions among researchers who share the common goal of understanding children's learning and transitions to the workforce."

Only current NSF grantees are eligible for funding under this initiative. The expectation is that the grants will support meetings of investigators, their colleagues, and students already working in the

areas of children, learning, and workforce transition, but who are not necessarily NSF funding recipients.

A minimum of \$800,000 is budgeted for this initiative. Each supplemental grant will be around \$50,000, but proposals for larger meetings will be considered. **Requests for the supplements are due by March 29, 1999.** For more information contact the special NSF Website: <http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/tcw>.

OBSSR PROGRESSES TOWARD CREATION OF MIND/BODY CENTERS AS

The multi-billion dollar Fiscal Year 1999 Omnibus Appropriations bill included language calling for the creation of "Mind/Body Centers" within the National Institutes of Health (NIH)'s Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research (OBSSR). The OBSSR is moving closer to the development of these centers through the development of a Request for Applications (RFA) which "will foster multidisciplinary research on the interactions among the mind/body and health." The RFA is expected to be released by the end of January 1999.

At a Fall 1998 hearing of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, Subcommittee Chairman Arlen Specter (R-PA) emphasized that mind/body approaches to health are "an important part of medical treatment." The Senate subsequently included report language encouraging the OBSSR to "establish pilot mind/body medical centers."

The RFA will emphasize both basic and clinical research in three areas:

- 1) research on the influence of beliefs, attitudes, and values on physical health, including research on psychological, behavioral, affective, and biological factors mediating these effects;
- 2) determinants or antecedents of health-related beliefs, attitudes, or values; and
- 3) how psychological stress influences physical health, including (a) basic research investigating how attitudes, beliefs, and values influenced perceived stress, individual differences in the biology of stress, and interactions between stress and behavioral risk

factors for disease; and (b) the evaluation of behavioral, psychological, or social stress-management interventions for physical illness and/or biological functioning.

The NIH anticipates making up to five awards at a maximum total cost of \$2 million per award using the Specialized Centers (P50) funding mechanism. The announcement of the RFA will be published in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts. General inquiries may directed to: Ronald P. Abeles, Ph.D., OBSSR, NIH, 7201 Wisconsin Avenue, Room 2C234, MSC 9205, Bethesda, MD 20892-9205; Telephone: 301/594-5943; FAX: 301/402-0051; or Email: Ronald_Abeles@nih.gov.

NIH SEEKS RESEARCHERS FOR FEBRUARY WORKSHOP *AS*

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Workgroup on Child Abuse and Neglect will sponsor a technical assistance workshop on February 17 and 18, 1999 to encourage the development of career award applications in child abuse and neglect.

Organizers of the workshop, which will be held in Bethesda, MD, are seeking two groups of researchers. The first group will consist of beginning and experienced child abuse and neglect researchers who have not received NIH funding. The second group will be composed of experienced researchers who have received NIH funding but do not conduct research on child abuse and neglect. These individuals should have received NIH funding for research in areas that are relevant to child abuse or neglect and are interested in extending their research to abused populations or making their research more relevant to understanding abuse and neglect. This research could include, but is not limited to, physical, behavioral, and sexual development and behavior in children and adolescents; risky behavior in adolescence; childhood adversity, including poverty and malnutrition; and environmental influence on child and adolescent mental health.

Workshop participants will be selected on the basis of research experience, and the quality of the research plan and career development plan proposed.

It is anticipated that the NIH will provide full support for participants' travel.

For more information, contact Margaret Feerick, National Institutes for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), Email: feerickm@nih.gov; FAX: 301/480-7773; Mail: Margaret Feerick, Child Development and Behavior Branch, NICHD, Building 6100, Room 4B05F, 9000 Rockville Pike MSC 7510, Bethesda, MD 20892-7510.

NIDA LOOKING TO INCREASE COGNITIVE-BASED RESEARCH *AS*

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is currently recruiting a scientist administrator to increase the amount of research NIDA funds using cognitive models, techniques, and theories. The Institute, said Jaylan Turkkan, Chief of the Behavioral Sciences Research Branch, is seeking to examine the use of drugs from a cognitive science perspective.

Turkkan noted that it is extremely important to understand how drugs affect cognitive functions and behavior, but it is also important to understand the cognitive factors underlying why people begin to take drugs. According to Turkkan, NIDA is looking for someone to fill the position on a permanent basis. She explained that this would be the Institute's third attempt to find the individual with the expertise it is seeking — someone with extensive research experience. Currently, an impressive amount of NIDA's research, she said, is behavioral and social science research, very little of it is cognitive.

The individual selected will serve as a grants program officer within the Behavioral Sciences Research Branch in the Division of Basic Research and will be responsible for developing and administering a portfolio of research grants in the cognitive and related behavioral sciences. Extramural funding from this branch supports laboratory-based research concerning drug effects on cognitive and behavioral functions, and studies investigating the influence of cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and other psychological factors on the vulnerability to drug use, dependence, and relapse in both animal and human model systems. Detailed information regarding the position can be found at <http://www.nida.nih.gov/Employment.html>.

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SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT

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

**National Institute of Justice (NIJ)
1999 Visiting Fellowship Program Solicitation
Deadline: Open**

The NIJ is currently seeking applicants for its Visiting Fellowship Program which supports research and development on high-priority topics that enhance the capabilities of criminal justice systems to combat crime, violence, and substance abuse. The Visiting Fellowship Program offers criminal justice professionals and researchers an opportunity to undertake independent research on criminal justice issues relevant to NIJ and public policy. Through the program, Fellows may investigate new approaches for resolving operational problems and become involved in NIJ's criminal justice research national program. Fellows study topics of mutual interest to the Fellow and NIJ while in residence for at NIJ for 6 to 18 months. The solicitation for 1999 is open and interested persons can submit applications/concept papers at any time, but applicants should anticipate a 6 to 9 month time period between submission to award. For more information on the program and the application process, contact Edwin Zedlewski at 202/307-2953.

**National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
National Drug Abuse Treatment Clinical Trial Networks
Request for Applications (RFA): #DA-99-004
Deadline for Letter of Intent: March 13, 1999**

NIDA is taking a major step forward in establishing a critically needed research infrastructure that will test and disseminate science-based addiction treatments in real life settings throughout the country. NIDA is pleased to announce the establishment of its National Drug Abuse Treatment Clinical Trials Network (CTN). This Network will allow NIDA to establish a research infrastructure that is able to efficiently and effectively test a variety of pharmacological and behavioral treatment modalities in real life settings and diverse patient populations. NIDA will make four awards in 1999, and invites grant applications from established clinical investigators wishing to participate. For a copy of the RFA, call NIDA's Office of Extramural Program Review at 301/443-2755, or print a copy from the Web at <http://www.nih.gov/grants/guide/RFA-DA-99-004.html>.

**Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR)
Request for Application (RFA): HS-99-005
Letter of Intent Receipt Deadline: February 25, 1999
Application Receipt Deadline: April 22, 1999**

The AHCPR and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation (Packard) invite applications for cooperative agreements to conduct research that will generate information useful to purchasers and designers of health insurance and health care delivery systems for low-income children. Specifically, answers are sought to the policy question: How do features of U.S. health care insurance and delivery systems improve health care access and quality for low-income children, particularly racial and ethnic minority children or those with special needs. AHCPR and Packard expect to contribute up to \$1 million in fiscal years 1999, 2000, and 2001, for a combined total of \$2 million per year or \$6 million over the three-year period to fund five to eight projects under this RFA. Application kits are available from the Division of Extramural Outreach and Information Resources, Office of Extramural Research, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, MSC 7910, Bethesda, MD 20892-7910; Telephone: 301/435-0714; Email: Grantsinfo@nih.gov.

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