



COSSA Washington Update

Consortium of Social
Science Associations

May 2, 2005

Volume 24, Issue 8

DALTON CONLEY, NYU SOCIOLOGIST, WINS NSF'S WATERMAN AWARD

For the second time in its 30-year history, the Alan Waterman Award, the National Science Foundation's (NSF) annual prize recognizing an outstanding young researcher, has been given to a social scientist. Dalton Conley of New York University becomes the first sociologist to win the award, which includes a medal and a grant of \$500,000 over a three-year period for scientific research or advanced study. Conley will receive the award at the National Science Board's Annual Dinner on May 25.

In 1987, the award went to Lawrence Summers, then a young economist at Harvard, who would later become Secretary of the Treasury and return to Harvard as its president.

Conley is a Professor of Sociology and Public Policy at NYU and is the Director of its Center for Advanced Social Science Research. He is also adjunct Professor of Community Medicine at Mount Sinai School of Medicine and a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research. His research focuses on how socio-economic status is transmitted across generations and on the public policies that affect that process. He has studied: sibling differences in socio-economic success; racial inequalities; the measurement of class and social status; and how health and biology affect and are affected by social position.

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KINCANNON, CENSUS STAKEHOLDERS ADDRESS HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE

With the 2010 Decennial Census halfway here, the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Federalism and the Census, chaired by Rep. Michael Turner (R-OH), held a hearing on its progress. Each of the five witnesses, including Census Bureau Director Louis Kincannon, reiterated their unequivocal support for the American Community Survey (ACS) and its importance in revising the traditional long-form decennial census.

Jacqueline Byers, Director of the National Association of Counties, pointed out several local uses for census data, including planning for school classrooms, constructing

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He was a recipient of an NSF CAREER Award to study Sibling, Cousin, and Neighbor Differences in Child Development that resulted in his book, entitled *The Pecking Order: Which Siblings Succeed and Why*, published last year. Conley has also received a Robert Wood Johnson (RWJ) Investigator Award in Health Policy Research to examine Family, Community, and Health. From 1996-1998, the RWJ Foundation supported Conley's post-doctoral work in health policy research at the University of California, Berkeley.

He received his B.A. from U.C. Berkeley and both his Master's in Public Policy and Administration and his Ph.D. in Sociology from Columbia University. Conley received the American Sociological Association's Best Dissertation Award in 1997. In addition, the New York City native was a semifinalist in the Westinghouse Science Talent Search in 1986.

In announcing the award, NSF Director Arden Bement noted that Conley's research "is filled with new and untried ideas, carved into a creative path toward solving fundamental questions of society. He communicates his findings directly and eloquently, reaches varied audiences, and by so doing, opens new avenues of interest and study, not to mention he keeps government policy makers on their toes."

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roads and major highways, as well as planning strategies to attract business and economic development. "All of this information is necessary for a county to plan effectively for the future," Byers added. Witness Joan Gentili Naymark, Director of the Target Corporation and representative for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, maintained that accurate census data was necessary for businesses to determine optimal locations, employee prospects, and community needs. She also extolled the virtues of the Partnership Program, which used business and private sector resources to publicize the 2000 census.

In her testimony, Byers went on to emphasize that accurate, timely data is needed for both heavily populated and small areas in order to effectively implement federal funding on the local level. She concluded by arguing that the largest hurdle for the decennial census will be education and outreach: "The very people who are often missed in a census are the most likely to require services from county governments. People who need additional education,

additional affordable housing, additional healthcare and other social services are likely to fail to respond." Kathleen B. Cooper, the U.S. Department of Commerce Undersecretary for Economic Affairs, also stressed the importance of higher response rates and accurate data: "... to be successful, people must respond. It only takes about twenty minutes. A quarter of a million surveys are going out each month nationwide – that's three million per year." Cooper even touched upon two slightly more controversial topics, including the assurance that census responses were secure and guarded closely by the Bureau, as well as a forceful defense of some of the more probing, "intrusive" questions included in the survey.

Kincannon argued that preparations for the decennial census were in good shape, pointing out that the Bureau had learned several important lessons from the 2000 census, and is moving forward with those in mind. He informed subcommittee members that at this particular stage, the 2010 census is further along in its preparation than any other previous census.

Turner brought up an aspect of the census that is particularly important to Congress itself: "The constitutionally-mandated enumeration of residents is politically important in that it directly affects the reapportionment of representatives in Congress, the redistribution of tax dollars for programs and services, redrawing state legislative districts, and public policy and business decisions."

Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY), while praising the census for its crucial work, was quick to criticize those in the Administration and Congress who would not fund the ACS at its full implementation level of \$165 million: "... almost full funding is not good enough. If Congress will not commit to full funding for the American Community Survey, we should just plain kill it and begin planning for another long survey form in 2010... partial funding will result in numbers that are less accurate." She also criticized the Census Bureau for its slow release of how it will measure accuracy and error in the 2010 census. She demanded that the Bureau present to Congress a "fully developed plan" for these measurements so that they can be openly debated by all parties involved. Maloney ended on what she called a "discouraging note," bringing up the recently-disbanded Decennial Census Advisory Committee and the formation of the new 2010 Census Advisory Committee, a decision which has been controversial in ACS and decennial census stakeholder circles for its new rules and higher exclusion factor.

During the question and answer periods, several themes seemed to dominate the discussion: coverage and error rates, public-private partnerships, stakeholder involvement, as well as education and outreach on the local level.

Maloney continued to press Kincannon and others on their measurement of errors. The Director mentioned that the Bureau is awaiting findings from a National Academy of Sciences' panel, commissioned to examine the best ways to measure error and whose report is anticipated in the summer of 2006. Rep. Charles R. Dent (R-PA) also inquired about efforts to cover Spanish-speaking communities, to which Kincannon responded by pointing out the ongoing bilingual questionnaire testing, translated questionnaires in five to six other languages, as well as language guides to accompany the English questionnaires in areas where people speak multiple languages.

In responding to questions about potential areas for further development in the partnership program, Byers pointed out that "many of our newer residents in the country find it completely foreign to take a piece of paper and fill it out with a lot of information about themselves and then turn it into the government. That is not the reality that they've lived in their former countries." She went on to explain, "So to be able to penetrate into these communities and get the gatekeepers... you have to involve the stakeholder groups... the community organizations... maybe the priest that is speaking at the church or the school teachers that are teaching in the schools."

Maloney's criticism of the 2010 Census Advisory Committee and Byers emphasis on the need to continually seek involvement from a wide array of stakeholders continued to echo throughout the hearing. Naymark added: "... in the context of working with the Bureau, I'm wondering if the current restructuring of the decennial advisory committee that's currently underway may alter some of the longstanding relationships with stakeholders... I think they were important – stakeholders sitting at the table understanding what was happening with the Bureau's plans and it will be important to continue to have them be members for partners in 2010 as well."

When Turner asked how the education and outreach aspects of the census could be improved, panelist Andrew Reamer of the Brookings Institution responded by going beyond the other witnesses' calls for wider publicity, calling for better data utilization education for local officials. This is especially true,

he said, when looking at rolling or moving averages and confidence intervals in the published data. "[The Bureau is] saying that these are estimates, and people in the past have taken the number... as the gospel truth... And so planners need to learn how to work within this notion of a confidence interval." For more on data usability and outreach, the next issue of *UPDATE* will cover the National Academies of Science seminar on ACS data users.

MARBURGER: "SOCIAL SCIENCE OF SCIENCE POLICY NEEDS TO GROW UP"

Speaking at the Science and Technology (S&T) Forum of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) on April 21, presidential science adviser John Marburger declared that the framework for evaluating S&T policies and assessing their strength is "primitive." He called for building an econometric model that would "provide a basis for understanding the enormously complex dynamic of today's global, technology-based society." In accomplishing this, he declared, "the nascent field of the social science of science policy" would "grow up" and become "a new interdisciplinary field of quantitative science policy studies."

Marburger, who heads the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), also noted: "Much of the available literature on science policy is being produced piecemeal by scientists who are experts in their fields, but not necessarily in the methods and literature of the relevant social science disciplines needed to define appropriate data elements and create econometric models that can be useful to policy experts." His perception of science policy "is that it is to a great extent a branch of economics, and its effective practice requires the kind of quantitative tools economic policy makers have available."

His remarks reflected several conclusions of a recent National Research Council report entitled *Measuring Research and Development Expenditures in the U.S. Economy*. This report was undertaken by the Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT) at the request of the National Science Foundation's Science Resources Statistics Division (SRS). This division produces and disseminates numerous data collections regarding R&D in the U.S. and around the globe. Its signature publication is the biannual *Science and Engineering Indicators* series. The NRC report

concluded that: “The NSF R&D expenditure data are often ill-suited for the purposes for which they are employed. They attempt to quantify three traditional pieces of the R&D enterprise – basic research, applied research, and development – when much of the engine of innovation stems from the intersection of these components, or in the details of each.” CNSTAT recommended significant redesigns of the SRS surveys, which NSF is implementing.

In addition to rethinking R&D measurement, Marburger also defended the President’s S&T budget proposals, and noted that the government portion of the U.S. R&D budget “has been a practically constant fraction of the U.S. domestic discretionary budget for decades,” at around 11 percent. He went on to tout the President’s R&D funding boosts over the past five years, a 45 percent increase from \$91.3 billion in FY 2001 to a proposed \$132.3 billion in FY 2006. Marburger also approvingly quoted Roger Pielke, Jr., Director of the Center for S&T Policy Research at the University of Colorado, who has written, “Few seem to be aware that over the past decade S&T has experienced a second golden age, at least as measured by federal funding, which has increased dramatically in recent years at a pace not seen since the 1960s.” Of course, those who are in the know recognize that much of that increase went to doubling the National Institutes of Health’s budget.

SAMHSA, NIDA, NIAAA, AND NIMH DISCUSS COMING YEAR WITH HOUSE COMMITTEE

On April 27, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education convened a hearing on FY 2006 appropriations for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). The witnesses provided information in their testimonies about their respective agencies’ social and behavioral research priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

In his testimony, SAMHSA Director Charles G. Curie pledged to Congress that his agency is collaborating with federal, state, and local partners to ensure that the 22.2 million Americans with a serious substance abuse problem, 19.6 million Americans with serious mental illness, and 4.2 million Americans with

co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse problems receive the latest interventions and treatment.

Curie told panel Members, “Our common goal is to more rapidly deliver research-based practices to the communities that provide services. SAMHSA has partnered with the pertinent National Institutes of Health (NIH) research agencies – NIDA, NIAA, and NIMH – to advance a ‘Science to Service’ cycle.” He added: “Working both independently and collaboratively, we are committed to establishing pathways to rapidly move research findings into the community-based practice and reducing the recognized 15-20 year gap between the initial development and widespread implementation of new and effective treatments and services.”

Curie pointed out one important tool to accelerate the “Science to Service” agenda: SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP). He explained that SAMHSA has prioritized making NREPP the leading national resource on effective interventions to prevent and/or treat mental and addictive disorders. Presently, NIH institutes are working in conjunction with SAMHSA to identify both an array of potential programs for review by the Registry as well as a cadre of qualified scientists to assist in the actual program review process.

According to Curie, SAMHSA’s data strategy for NREPP will ultimately result in snapshots of national and state progress in ten different areas, called “National Outcome” measures: 1) abstinence from drug use and alcohol use, or decreased mental symptomology/ improved functioning; 2) increased or retained employment and school enrollment; 3) decreased involvement with the criminal justice system; 4) increased stability in housing conditions; 5) increased access to services; 6) increased retention in services for substance abuse treatment or decreased utilization of psychiatric inpatient beds for mental health treatment; 7) increased social connectedness; 8) client perception of care; 9) cost-effectiveness of services; and 10) use of evidence-based practices.

Data for reporting on the measures will come primarily from states with data infrastructure and technical assistance support from a new agency-funded State Outcome Measurement and Management System. Data from the National Survey on Drug Abuse and Health, which collects information on the prevalence, treatment, and consequences of substance abuse and mental illness in the United States, will also be used to complement the findings of the National Outcome measures.

“While each state is in a different stage of readiness and some measures themselves are still in development, SAMHSA’s partnership with the states has developed an implementation plan that is expected to be complete in FY 2009,” said Curie. “Ultimately, SAMHSA will be able to report consistent, cross-year data allowing us to examine the impact of all their programs and changes over time.”

NIMH: Need to Optimize Treatment

Thomas Insel, Director NIMH, testified that “A major goal for NIMH is to identify the biological basis of mental disorders to more precisely pinpoint targets for prevention and treatment. This means understanding the neural basis of the illness at all levels, from molecular to behavioral.” He went on to say that “A central focus of NIMH treatment research has been finding a more tailored, individual approach to therapy. To personalize treatments, we need to know predictors of treatment response... Ongoing research seeks to find markers that will guide individual treatment to optimize recovery.”

Another focal point of NIMH’s research portfolio was last year’s completion of “the first of several large NIMH-funded clinical studies testing various treatment options for those with serious mental illnesses: a 13-site trial aimed at defining the most effective and safe treatment for children and adolescents with major depressive disorder.”

Also, as part of the proposed “Science to Service” research activities with SAMHSA, NIMH has awarded nine one-year grants to state mental health agencies for planning service and science agendas related to the implementation of evidence-based practices. The research activities of award recipients will include: development of measures to assess the fit of specific evidence-based practices to local mental health service settings; determining relevant evidence-based practices for specific ages, such as children and adults; managing medication for those with schizophrenia; and providing cognitive behavioral therapy for people with depression. Insel said, “Each grant is expected to result in future research and science development initiatives.”

NIAAA: Finding Risk Factors is Paramount

Fay Calhoun, Deputy Director of NIAAA, elaborated on alcohol abuse: “The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention rank alcohol as the number three preventable cause of death in the United States. Alcohol’s biological and social reach is

remarkably pervasive and requires research collaborations with many fields, from social policy and behavior to genetics. The problems attributed to alcohol abuse and alcohol dependence exceed the scope of any single institute or agency.”

Calhoun explained that NIAAA’s advances are accelerated by collaborations with other Institutes, such as NIDA and NIMH, whose diseases of interest have some common underlying biological and behavioral pathways. She provided subcommittee members with highlights of the agency’s recent research activities and collaborations:

- In March, NIAAA held its second meeting of experts to guide the field of research on underage drinking, including research on strategies to ensure that relevant study results are incorporated into clinical practices and community prevention efforts.
- Several initiatives on preventing underage drinking are underway, including a Center to Prevent Alcohol-Related Problems Among Young People, which is a research collaboration with colleges to provide rapid responses to those with urgent alcohol problems.
- NIAAA and NIDA have begun a new collaboration to examine the consequences of drug abuse and alcohol exposure on development of the brain and behavior.

During her testimony, Calhoun emphasized that NIAAA recognizes the varying risks in different populations for alcohol abuse disorders, and strives to conduct research specific to them. According to her, NIAAA is therefore funding the alcohol component of a NIDA project on how Mexican family culture affects risk for and resilience to substance abuse, and is also funding another study in conjunction with the NIH Office of Research on Women’s Health that examines women’s risks for alcohol addiction and possible interventions.

NIDA: Understanding Patterns of Abuse

Nora Volkow, Director of NIDA, continued on the theme of substance abuse and delineated the differences between NIDA and NIAAA: “NIDA’s comprehensive research portfolio focuses on all drugs of abuse, both illegal and legal, including nicotine, but with the exception of where the primary focus is alcohol. In addition, because drug abuse is a major vector for the spread of HIV/AIDS in this country, NIDA supports a robust AIDS research portfolio.”

According to Volkow, we are now entering an era where drugs are being abused to enhance performance and cognition, as well as increase the abuser’s standing in society. Medications are being used not just to cure ailments, but to improve perceived deficiencies, deter

normal aging, and increase one's competitive edge. Volkow assured members that, "NIDA will rise to this new challenge by supporting research to understand the changing patterns of abuse across the nation in order to ensure that our message and our research efforts target emerging health problems and attenuate their progression." Research priorities for NIDA in FY 2006 include:

- Attaining a better understanding of adolescent decision making, which will ultimately lead to more effective prevention. Research shows that addiction is a developmental disorder that begins in adolescence, sometimes even childhood. For NIDA to develop more effective prevention messages, it needs to understand both the cognitive and emotional processes that adolescents at various stages of maturity use to decide whether or not to smoke their first cigarette or use marijuana and other substances.
- Using information gained from genetic research and brain activity imaging to help identify individuals with a predisposition to addiction.
- Devoting resources to develop interventions that are geared toward children and adolescents who may be at high risk for co-morbidity of mental and substance abuse disorders. NIDA is in the process of launching a large clinical study later this year to test whether treatment of ADHD will improve substance abuse outcomes in people who suffer from both conditions, and they are also working with NIMH and NIAAA to support research that will increase their fundamental knowledge about substance abuse and mental health co-morbidity, as well as advancing efforts to prevent this destructive combination.

Furthermore, Volkow explained that NIDA has also launched an initiative specifically focused upon reducing HIV rates among African Americans, including conducting more studies in geographic areas where rates are highest and developing interventions that are ethnically appropriate. In fact, NIDA recently announced two new funding opportunities targeting methamphetamine addiction and its related medical consequences: one to encourage studies on drug-resistant HIV in methamphetamine users and the second focusing on behavioral and integrative therapies for methamphetamine abuse and addiction.

Finally, in an attempt to substantially shorten the length of time it takes for research results to affect treatment delivery, NIDA created the National Abuse Treatment Clinical Trials Network (CTN) to provide the infrastructure needed to test research-based treatments in real world settings. NIDA is also working with SAMHSA's Centers for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) to stimulate and support innovative research to determine the components necessary for adopting, adapting, delivering, and maintaining effective evidence-

based programs and practices in state-sponsored treatment programs.

With respect to cultivating the best research to treat those who are afflicted with mental disorders and substance addiction, Insel said it best when he told the members, "Collaboration such as this across the NIH and with other government agencies will provide the synergy needed to create potent strategies for recovery and prevention from mental disorders."

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT

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

NIH Methodology and Measurement

Recognizing that the behavioral and social sciences offer significant fundamental insights into a comprehensive understanding of human health, including disease etiology and treatment, and the promotion of health and well-being, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) and 11 of the NIH Institutes and Centers are seeking research grant applications on methodology and measurement in the social and behavioral sciences.

The goal of the program announcement (PA-05-090, a re-issuance and revision of PA-02-072) is to encourage research that will improve the quality and scientific power of data collected in the social and behavioral sciences relevant to the mission of the participating NIH Institutes and Centers: Cancer; Complementary and Alternative Medicine; Heart, Lung, and Blood; Child Health and Human Development; Environmental Health Sciences, Neurological Disorders and Stroke; Nursing, Aging; Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism; Deafness and Other Communication Disorders; and the Office of Dietary Supplements.

The announcement especially encourages research that addresses methodology and issues of: measurement in diverse populations; sensitive behaviors study; ethics in research; confidential data and the protection of research subjects; and developing interdisciplinary, multi-method, and multilevel approaches to behavioral and social science research. It also encourages research that addresses approaches to integrate behavioral and social science research with biomedical, physical, or computational science research or engineering. Four general areas of methodology and measurement research in the social and behavioral sciences are encouraged:

Research Design: Research design determines how well a research plan can accomplish stated purposes and test hypotheses.

Measurement Issues: Developing and validating research instruments and questions are vitally important for collecting reliable information and have obvious impact on data validity and reliability.

Data Collection Techniques: Data collection techniques are the tools and procedures that scientists use for implementing research designs and obtaining measurements. Methods for collecting research data have an important impact on data validity and reliability. Additional research is needed to understand how various methods work in diverse populations, and how they can be modified to address the specific needs of populations.

Analytic Methods: Analytic methods encompass the concepts and techniques used in analyzing data and interpreting and reporting results. The goal of new and improved analytic methods is to improve estimation, hypothesis testing, and causal modeling based on scientific data.

For general inquiries regarding the scope and content of this PA, contact Deborah Olster, OBSSR, at 301-451-4286, via email at olsterd@od.nih.gov, or see: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-05-090.html>.

FIC Seeks Obesity-Related Research for Specified FIC Programs

Recognizing that obesity has become a leading cause of morbidity and mortality in the world and that the burden of obesity-related illnesses is rapidly rising in the developing countries, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Fogarty International Center (FIC) is encouraging applications for FIC research awards to include studies related to obesity in low- and middle-income countries. FIC notes that the generation of new knowledge on obesity and its impacts will have benefit both to those in the United States and in foreign countries in the global community.

The Center emphasizes that several of its programs could be used to conduct research on obesity. These include the Global Health Research Initiative Program for New Investigators (GRIP), which is managed as direct grants to the foreign country institution; the Fogarty International Research Collaboration Award (FIRCA), a collaborative program between a U.S. institution and a foreign institution; and the International Research Scientist Development Award for US Postdoctoral Scientists (IRSDA), a career development program that provides support to U.S. scientists wishing to gain research experience in a low- or middle-income country.

For more information contact: <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-TW-05-003.html> or contact Aron Primack, (301) 496-4596 or via email primacka@mail.nih.gov

CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS (COSSA)

Executive Director: Howard J. Silver
Dep. Dir. Health Policy: Angela L. Sharpe
Public Affairs: Tracey S. Lesetar
Gov't Relations: Julie A. Egermayer
President: Myron Gutmann

The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), an advocacy organization for Federal support for the social and behavioral sciences, was founded in 1981 and stands alone in Washington in representing the full range of social and behavioral sciences.

Update is published 22 times per year. Individual subscriptions are available from COSSA for \$80; institutional subscriptions - \$160; overseas mail - \$160. ISSN 0749-4394. Address all inquiries to **COSSA**:

1522 K Street, NW, Suite 836
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 842-3525
Fax: (202) 842-2788

www.cossa.org