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FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS

Social Scientist among National Medal of Science Winners

On October 3, President Obama [named](#) the winners of the 2014 National Medal of Science and National Medal of Technology and Innovation. Among the recipients of the National Medal of Science is University of Michigan political scientist [Robert Axelrod](#), honored for his work on the "evolution of cooperation," which holds applications for conflict de-escalation. Dr. Axelrod will be awarded the Medal of Science at a White House ceremony later this year.

SMRB Continues Discussion of Pre-College Engagement in Biomedical Science

During its October 14 meeting, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Scientific Management Review Board ([SMRB](#)) continued its examination of the NIH grant review, award, and management process, and its discussion of the evidence base for successful approaches for pre-college biomedical science programs designed to strengthen the biomedical workforce pipeline. Clyde Yancy, chair of the SMRB's Working Group on Pre-college Engagement in Biomedical Science (PEBS) presented the group's draft report to date, including findings and recommendations. The NIH's [charge](#) to the SMRB is for it to recommend ways to optimize NIH's pre-college programs and initiatives that align with the agency's mission and ensure a continued pipeline of biomedical science students and professionals (see [Update, July 28, 2014](#)).

[Read on](#) for more details.

NCHS Brief Looks at Depression and Obesity

A new [data brief](#) from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) examines the relationship between obesity and depression. It found that 43 percent of adults with depression were obese and that adults with depression were more likely to be obese, particularly women. In addition, as the severity of depression symptoms increased, so did the proportion of those with obesity. And over half of people whose symptoms were not relieved by medication were obese. The report observes, "It is not clear whether depression or obesity occurred first because they were both measured at the same time. Other studies have shown a bidirectional relationship, meaning obesity increases risk of depression and depression increases risk of obesity." The data is drawn from the *National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), 2005-2010*.

Public Comment Period for Healthy People 2020 Open through November 7

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is [soliciting written comments](#) regarding new objectives proposed to be added to Healthy People 2020. The previous public comment period occurred in fall 2013. The proposed new objectives to be included in one of the 42 existing Healthy People 2020 topic areas are:

- Arthritis, Osteoporosis, and Chronic Back Conditions
- Early and Middle Childhood
- Heart Disease and Stroke
- Maternal, Infant, and Child Health
- Tobacco Use

Healthy People 2020 also seeks suggestions of additional objectives for consideration that address

critical public health issues within the existing 42 topic areas of Healthy People 2020. To participate in the public comment period, visit HealthyPeople.gov. Comments will be accepted through 5:00 p.m. ET on November 7, 2014.

PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNITY EVENTS

National Academies SBS Policy Roundtable Seminar, "Stimulating Effective Innovation in Government" -- October 30

The National Academies Policy Roundtable of the Behavioral and Social Sciences will conduct at its next meeting a seminar and discussion on stimulating effective innovation in government. The seminar will be held from 1:30 to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 30, 2014, in Room 120 of the National Academy of Sciences building at 21st and Constitution Avenue, N.W. The Policy Roundtable is chaired by David Ellwood, Dean of the Harvard Kennedy School.

Presenters will include Scott Cody, Vice President, Mathematica Policy Research; Robert Gordon, The Brookings Institution; Evelyn M. Kappeler, Director, Office of Adolescent Health; Robert Slavin, Chairman of the Board, Success for All Foundation; Howard Rolston, Abt Associates; and Mark F. Testa, School of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Presentations will focus on how innovations are stimulated, how we can learn whether they produce positive impacts, and how to use the lessons of innovations to manage, reshape, and expand programs. Among the programs to be discussed are Investing in Innovation (i3) and Race to the Top in the Department of Education, Public Assistance and Child Welfare waivers and the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program in the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in the Department of Agriculture.

The seminar is open to the public, but [registration](#) is required. More information on the Policy Roundtable is available [here](#) or from Miron Straf at mstraf@nas.edu.

2015 MCAT Includes New Social and Behavioral Sciences Section

Starting in spring 2015, the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) will test prospective medical students' knowledge of the social and behavioral sciences. The MCAT2015, the first update to the MCAT since 1992, includes a new section on "Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior."

[Read on](#) for more information.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

NSF: RAPID Proposals Sought to Address Ebola Crisis

The National Science Foundation has issued a [Dear Colleague Letter](#) requesting research proposals "to conduct non-medical, non-clinical care research that can be used immediately to better understand how to model and understand the spread of Ebola, educate about prophylactic behaviors, and encourage the development of products, processes, and learning that can address this global challenge." NSF's Rapid Response Research (RAPID) funding mechanism will be used to

fund the proposals.

DOD: 2015 Minerva Deadline Extended

As previously [reported](#), the Office of the Secretary of Defense within the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) has issued the Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) for the 2015 Minerva Research Initiative, DOD's signature social science research program. DOD recently extended the deadline for the 2015 competition. White papers are now due November 10 and full proposals are due February 10. See the [BAA](#) for full details.

COSSA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

SPSSI Seminar Explores the Psychology of Human Rights

The [Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues](#) (SPSSI), a COSSA member, held the last seminar in its 2014 series, *Psychological Insights into Legislative Issues*, on October 8. The topic was "[Who Cares about Human Rights? The Psychology of Human Rights Support](#)," and featured Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Sam McFarland of Western Kentucky University.

[Read on](#) for more on the seminar.

EVENTS CALENDAR

[11th Annual Brown Lecture in Education Research](#), American Educational Research Association, October 23, 2014

[Measuring Dimensions of Subjective Well-Being: The Role of Official Statistics](#), National Academies Committee on National Statistics, October 24, 2014

[Stimulating Effective Innovation in Government](#), National Academies Policy Roundtable of the Behavioral and Social Sciences, October 30, 2014

[NSF Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Advisory Committee Fall Meeting](#), October 30-31, 2014

[The City: 2014 Behavioral and Social Science Summit](#), Stanford University, November 8, 2014

A list of COSSA member conferences and annual meetings can be found on the COSSA [website](#).

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

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