

UCR Research and Economic Development Newsletter: October 4, 2012

Michael Pazzani

Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development

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Research and Economic Development Update

It's now my fourth month as Vice Chancellor of Research and Economic Development. I need to thank the UC Riverside community for the warm welcome I have received. During this time we've received quite a bit of good news. The School of Medicine has received accreditation and the School of Public Policy has been launched. Within the past few weeks, we've received notice that three grants for Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need have been funded (PIs Victor Rodgers of Bioengineering, Yingbo Hua of Electrical Engineering and Christopher Bardeen of Chemistry) to provide fellowships for Ph.D. students. Uta Barth, a professor emeritus at UC Riverside, known for her abstract photography is among the 23 recipients of the 2012 MacArthur Foundation "genius grants."

Within the Research and Economic Development Office, I am pleased to announce Randy Black has accepted the offer of Senior Grant Facilitator. Among his first assignments will be assisting more departments to apply for these fellowships. With his help, I'd like to UCR double its number of successes this fall. (UCI, where he comes from was awarded six, and Rutgers, my former institution was awarded five). UCR might have had more GAANN awards, but many eligible programs did not apply. In the words of Wayne Gretzky: "You miss one hundred percent of the shots you don't take." (See <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/gaann/index.html> for information on GAANNs)

We have also begun the process of updating our web site. One area that we have worked on is "Quick Start Guides" that contain concise instructions on submitting proposals to NSF (<http://or.ucr.edu/spa/lifecycle/proposal-preparation-submission/quick-reference-submitting-nsf-proposals.aspx>) and NIH (<http://or.ucr.edu/spa/lifecycle/proposal-preparation-submission/quick-reference-submitting-nih-proposals.aspx>).

While I'm sure there will be some bumps in the road, I remain optimistic about the future of UCR. Please consider setting up a meeting with me to discuss your research or your thoughts on research or economic development.

NSF Talk: 11/2-- Jane Silverthorne, Director, Division of Integrative Organismal Systems

Title: “Grand Challenges in Organismal Biology”

DATE: Friday, November 2nd, 2012

LOCATION: Genomics Auditorium, RM 1102A

TIME: 10:10 am

The Division of Integrative Organismal Systems (IOS) supports research aimed at understanding why organisms are structured the way they are and function as they do. The research supported by IOS focused on organisms as a fundamental unit of biological organization, using systems approaches that will lead to conceptual and theoretical insights and predictions about emergent organismal properties. Areas of inquiry include, but are not limited to, developmental biology and the evolution of developmental processes, nervous system development, structure, and function, physiological processes, functional morphology, symbioses, interactions of organisms with biotic and abiotic environments, plant genomics, and animal behavior.

Organismal biology is undergoing a transformation brought about by new research resources, technologies and computational tools. Long-standing questions about the evolution and development of organisms and the bases for emergent properties are receiving renewed attention as the grand challenges in organismal biology are defined and tackled by a diverse research community. In this talk, I will discuss community efforts to define the grand challenges in organismal biology and some of the resulting opportunities for discovery, learning, broadening participation, and engaging the broader public.

Dr. Silverthorne received her B.Sc. degree in Biology from the University of Sussex, Brighton, England and the Ph.D. degree in Biochemistry from the University of Warwick. Her research training is in the area of plant biology and her research has focused on the role of the phytochrome system in regulating plant growth and development. Dr. Silverthorne came to the National Science Foundation in 1999 as a Program Director from the University of California, Santa Cruz, where she served as Professor of Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology. She subsequently accepted a permanent Program Director position in 2003 and served as a Cluster leader responsible for the management of the Plant Genome Program in the Division of Biological Infrastructure (DBI). Between November 2006 and March 2008, Dr. Silverthorne was on detail at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy as a Senior Policy Analyst in the Life Sciences. In November 2007, Dr. Silverthorne was appointed Acting Deputy Director for DBI, and she became Deputy Director in December 2008. In June 2009, she moved to the Division of Integrative Organismal Systems where she currently serves as the Division Director.

Funding for Public Policy

UCR has subscribed to COS PIVOT a search engine for grant opportunities (<http://pivot.cos.com>). Here's one example of an opportunity I found when searching for “public

policy.” Of course, this one might not be right for most faculty in public policy, but COS also lists more than 100 others.

Policy Research Centers Grant Program (PRC) - USDA-NIFA-FAPR-003632

<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/policyresearchcenters.cfm>

A Policy Research Center (PRC) is defined to have the analytical capacity to either perform policy analysis across multiple sets of public policy issues or have a specialized capacity in a single policy area. A center may reside in a single institution or be a collaborative effort across multiple institutions.

The purpose of the grant program is to support rigorous and comprehensive research and education programs on the impact of public policies and trade agreements on farmers, ranchers, consumers and taxpayers. In addition, proposed research and education programs should be objective, operationally independent, and external to the Federal Government and focus on the effect of public policies and trade agreements specifically on the following emphasis areas: (1) The farm and agricultural sectors (including commodities, livestock, dairy and specialty crops); (2) the environment; (3) rural families, households, and economies; and (4) consumers, food, and nutrition. Research may be either disciplinary or interdisciplinary concerning policy research activities identified above and include activities that (1) quantify implications of public policies and regulations; (2) develop theoretical and research methods; (3) collect, analyze, and disseminate data for policy makers, analysts, and individuals; and (4) develop programs to train future analysts.

Centers will include the development or enhancement of existing capacity to perform public policy analysis. Funds will support development of theoretical and empirical research methods and models to evaluate and quantify the economic impact of existing or proposed alternative policies and regulations on the agricultural sector, consumers, the environment and taxpayers, (as appropriate). Approaches may include econometric or large-scale simulation models which provide baseline and outlook projections of near- and long-term economic activity and policy impacts. Funding may also be used to collect, analyze, and disseminate data for policy makers, analysts, and individuals. Finally, centers should include training opportunities for new analysts to develop skills in public policy analysis and dissemination.

Free Conference Calls

Many research groups use conference calls to coordinate projects. Freeconferencecall.com provides a free service for making conference calls. It has a disadvantage that it does not provide a toll free number, but if your callers use cell phones or other phones with unlimited minutes, the price is right. I have no affiliation with the company, but I do use <http://freeconferencecall.com> because the price is within our budget.

Birding at UCR Botanic Gardens

My wife and I went on the Fall Bird Walk and Breakfast with Janet Clegg and Norman Ellstrand at the Botanic Gardens last weekend. Here's a photo of an Orange-crowned Warbler from the event



(click to enlarge)

Michael Pazzani
Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development
Professor, Computer Science & Engineering
University of California, Riverside
200 University Office Building
Riverside, CA 92521
pazzani@ucr.edu

Assistant: Gloria Gallego
gloriag@ucr.edu
951-827-4800