

Research & Graduate Studies @ KU

News of Interest to the University Community

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December 2013

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KU Ranks 38th in Federal Research Expenditures, but Ongoing Sequester an “Ominous Sign”

Among all national public research universities, KU rose to 38th last year in the National Science Foundation’s annual ranking of federally funded university research expenditures. This was up one place from 2011 – and up 17 places since 1996.

KU registered \$171 million in this one funding category in 2012, up from \$162.7 million in 2011. The NSF survey included 655 public and private institutions. “National public research universities” is a sub-group of the whole list. It includes comprehensive universities such as KU but excludes stand-alone medical research centers.

Among all institutions on the survey, KU ranked 72nd, up from 75th in 2011. This places KU second among the Big 12 universities, below the University of Texas at Austin (30) and above the University of Oklahoma (86).

“Research is never about the money,” said Steve Warren, vice chancellor for research and graduate studies, “but objective rankings such as this reflect well on KU researchers at all campuses.” He noted that, while research expenditures increased at KU in 2012, they decreased for 60% of the institutions above KU on the list.

“Overall,” he said, “federally funded university research expenditures fell by \$640 million in 2012, and that didn’t reflect the federal budget sequester that began in March. That’s an ominous sign for KU and every other research university. The U.S. now lags most countries in research funding. That situation will worsen unless Congress acts to reverse the trend.”

Higuchi Award Nominations are Due January 31

Each year, the Higuchi-KU Endowment Research Achievement Awards honor outstanding researchers at Kansas Regents universities working in four broad fields of inquiry. Nominations are made by faculty and staff, and the **deadline for the 2014 awards is Friday, January 31.**

Selection criteria for each award, along with nomination guidelines and information about past recipients, is [available online](#). By the deadline, a complete nomination includes a one-page letter, the names and contact information of four references, and the nominee’s CV.

Each award includes \$10,000 in research support and public recognition at a ceremony in the fall semester. The awards were first presented in 1982 and are the highest honor accorded in Kansas for university research excellence.

Obama Cites KU Research in Major Policy Address on the Economy

During a nationally televised [December 4 speech on the topic of economic mobility \(left\)](#), President Obama referenced pioneering research published in the 1990s by KU researchers Betty Hart and Todd Risley. The President noted:



“Rising inequality and declining mobility are also bad for our families and social cohesion – not just because we tend to trust our institutions less, but studies show we actually tend to trust each other less when there’s greater inequality. And greater inequality is associated with less mobility between generations. That means it’s not just temporary; the effects last. It creates a vicious cycle.

“For example, by the time she turns three years old, a child born into a low-income home hears 30 million fewer words than a child from a well-off family, which means by the time she starts school she’s already behind, and that deficit can compound itself over time.”

Hart and Risley published *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children* in 1995. It was based on their seminal study of early experience and language acquisition by

children at home. Much of their work took place in inner-city Kansas City, Kansas at the Life Span Institute’s Juniper Gardens Children’s Project. It showed a stunning 30-million-word difference between the number of words children from the least and most affluent homes heard by age three. At the time of her death in 2012, [Hart was eulogized in the *New York Times*](#) and remembered by Chancellor Gray-Little as someone whose “ground-breaking research changed the lives of countless children.”

March 1 Deadline for Next Strategic Initiative Grant Level I Review

It’s not too soon to begin thinking about writing and submitting a Level I Strategic Initiative Grant proposal. The deadline for the third and final review cycle of the 2013-14 year is 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 1. Complete information about the program is [available at the Provost’s website](#), including the secure, online application forms for both Level I and Level II proposals. The review of proposals from the November 1 cycle is now under way and the results will be announced in January.

KU Alumnus Roy Chin Leads “Boot Camp” Entrepreneurship Presentation

KU Innovation and Collaboration’s third formal “boot camp” program of the semester on November 26 morphed afterwards into an intense and informal box lunch conversation around a table at Nichols Hall (below).

The presenter was Roy Chin, a KU electrical engineering graduate and serial entrepreneur. He discussed the development of medical devices and the regulatory path necessary to get the product to market, as well as related issues.



Chin, shown at top left between engineering faculty members Paulette Spencer and Arvin Agah, is a Silicon Valley start-up veteran who holds more than 100 patents. He is a leader in the medical devices industry, having risen through positions with Stryker Endoscopy, Cardiothoracic Systems, AFx, and SpineView, where he served as CEO. He founded and was CEO of Intrepid Medical and is founder, chairman and CEO of Chest Innovations, Inc.

KUIC Announces Request for Proof of Concept Pilot Project Proposals

KU Innovation and Collaboration seeks pilot feasibility proposals for potentially commercializable research projects. This announcement invites proposals to fund translational research to allow for quicker commercialization to the market. The program will support research/development in all areas of technology, including electronics, software, communications, engineering and projects not eligible for Institute for Advancing Medical Innovations support. Funding is scheduled to begin March 2014.

The duration of funding is one year, and the budget should not exceed \$50,000. Sufficient funds are available for up to four proposals annually. Proposals funded by KUIC cannot exhibit scientific overlap with other funded projects or projects where the background intellectual property is licensed or committed to a company.

Final applications are due by January 3, 2014 at 5 p.m. The body of the proposal should not exceed three pages, excluding cover page, biosketches, and budget page/justification. Cover and budget page templates are available from KUIC and at the [KUIC website](#). Proposals must follow formatting guidelines (12-point font or larger and one-inch margins). Refer to the program description, available at the site or by contacting [Bethany Scothorn](#) at KUIC, (785) 864-6457, for detailed information on proposal requirements. Applications should be sent to Bethany electronically as a single PDF document.

A committee composed of internal and external members will review all applications. External members will conduct their review under a confidentiality agreement. Oral presentations to the review committee will take place the week of January 27 and award notification will take place in February. The overall evaluation criterion is the potential of the technology for commercial success.

KUIC Save-the-Date: February 24 Kansas Research-to-Products Summit

Join speakers from all aspects of the medical device research-to-product continuum in a TED-like summit on Monday, February 24, at the KU Medical Center. The free event, sponsored by KU Innovation and Collaboration, is scheduled for 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Nursing Auditorium at Murphy Hall. Lunch will be provided.

Participants will hear perspectives from the CEO of Medtronic, the CEO of the KU Hospital, and a serial medical device entrepreneur from Silicon Valley. Also featured will be case studies of academic research developing into a commercial opportunity. The goal of the summit is to inspire attendees to help build and grow a robust medical device industry in this region. For more information, contact [Bethany Scothorn](#) at KUIC, (785) 864-6457.

December 17 “Water Issues in Kansas” Presentation Features Rep. Tom Sloan



The KU Water Research Planning Committee invites KU researchers and others to attend a Tuesday, December 17 discussion of “Water Issues in Kansas.” The program will take place in the Apollo Room at Nichols Hall from 3-4 p.m. The speaker will be State Representative Tom Sloan of Lawrence.

Sloan will provide an informed perspective on policy issues affecting water, based on his long experience as chair of the Legislature’s Vision 2020 long-range planning committee and his work organizing the Kansas Reservoir Sustainability Summit. He will offer his thoughts on the upcoming legislative session and the challenges laid out by the Governor in his October 24th call to action for a [“50-Year Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas.”](#)

For more information about the program, contact [Tricia Bergman](#) of KU Innovation and Collaboration, (785) 864-3303. She works closely with the committee, which organized the September 13 Water Research Workshop and is championing the ongoing development of a KU water research community.

Medicinal Chemistry's Blake Peterson Elected an AAAS Fellow



Blake Peterson, Distinguished Professor of Medicinal Chemistry at KU, has been named a 2013 Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world's largest general scientific society. Honorees were announced November 29 and will be recognized February 15 at the AAAS Fellows Forum during the AAAS Annual Meeting in Chicago.

Peterson was the only KU honoree this year, joining 35 other active or emeritus members at KU.

Fellows are nominated and selected by their peers for distinguished achievements that advance science or its application. According to the AAAS, Peterson was "honored for distinguished contributions to the field of bioorganic chemistry, particularly the development of synthetic mimics of cell surface receptors and fluorescent probes of biological systems." His research focuses on studies of biologically active small molecules. His laboratory works in the fields of organic chemistry and chemical biology to create compounds that can be used to probe cellular biology, understand mechanisms of disease pathways and discover new therapeutic agents.

Ken Audus, dean of the School of Pharmacy, said, "Blake Peterson continues to distinguish himself as an important and influential leader in the chemical biology field. We're fortunate to have him as a member of the faculty." He added that "the much-deserved recognition of Blake and his research group also serves as a reminder that we have some of the world's best researchers working right here at the University of Kansas."

Reminder: Nominations Sought for University Scholarly Achievement Awards

December 20 is the nomination deadline for the 2014 University Scholarly Achievement Awards. Up to four awards will be made, recognizing mid-career faculty members' significant scholarly or research contributions, using four criteria: advances the field of scholarship; exhibits novelty and originality; promotes scholarly and research activity at KU; and enhances the university's national and international reputation.

A complete nomination includes a 750-word letter of nomination, the person's vita, documentation of the person's scholarly or research contribution, and two letters of reference (at least one from outside KU). The letters must be received by January 13, 2014. Nominations and letters should all be sent to: Office of the Chancellor, 1450 Jayhawk Boulevard, Room 230 Strong Hall, Lawrence, KS 66045, ATTN: Scholarly Achievement Award Committee, or sent electronically to kuchancellor@ku.edu, with "Scholarly Achievement Award" in the subject line.

Natural History Museum Exhibit Conservation Assessment Under Way



One of KU's most popular and significant visitor destinations is about to receive some long-awaited attention. The Panorama at the Natural History Museum in Dyche Hall (left), prepared by Lewis Lindsay Dyche for the 1893 World's Fair, is undergoing the first of three phases designed to ensure the future of the exhibit.

Tuckerbrook Conservation LLC is conducting a chemical analysis of the Panorama's animal mounts, plants and backgrounds. Taxidermy, construction materials and other elements inside the Panorama will be evaluated for toxins such as arsenic and mercury. The group will also

begin photographing conservation details of the exhibit. Funding for phase one was raised privately, starting in 2012 with a challenge grant of \$50,000 from alumni Kent and Janet Martin McKinney.

Phase two of the conservation assessment will begin in March. It will apply the information learned about toxins to an in-depth analysis of the animal mounts and surroundings. The team will also lightly clean the animals, which have endured years of exposure to fluctuating temperature, humidity and light. Next summer, the Biodiversity Institute (of which the museum is a part) will use the analysis to develop a conservation and exhibition plan for the Panorama.

Congratulations to 30 Graduates of Research Administration 101

The following individuals successfully completed the 10-session Research Administration 101 course on November 13. The course educates campus administrators and support staff about the management of externally-sponsored grants or contract accounts. The free course, offered each fall by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, consists of weekly two-hour sessions. Each session addresses topics related to externally-sponsored projects, including submitting grant proposals, award spending and monitoring, intellectual property issues, and the responsible conduct of research. Staff who complete the course receive a certificate and participation is noted in their personnel files.

- Penny Anderson, Higuchi Biosciences Center
- Cynthia Beall, Higuchi Biosciences Center
- Krista Benton, Financial Aid and Scholarships
- Aimee Bergmann, Higuchi Biosciences Center
- John Biersack, Hall Center for the Humanities
- Diane Bracciano, Higuchi Biosciences Center
- Lauren Coleman, TRIO Supportive Educational Services
- Ashley Coles, RGS Contract Negotiations
- Paige Deathe, Achievement and Assessment Institute
- Daniel DePardo, Information and Telecommunication Technology Center
- Ben Duncan, Center for Research Methods and Data Analysis
- Christy Edmonds, Provost's Office
- Judy Eyerly, Achievement and Assessment Institute
- Laura Hanigan, Life Span Institute at Parsons
- Laura Irick, RGS Innovation and Collaboration
- Jammie Johnson, School of Journalism
- Paul Johnson, Center for Research Methods and Data Analysis
- Molly Kirk, Applied English Center
- Kate Lorenz, Institute for Policy & Social Research
- Israel Hermes Montes de Oca, RGS Financial Services
- Katelynn Moore, RGS Financial Services
- Nanik Rahayu, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
- Emily Ramsey, Higuchi Biosciences Center
- Teresa Reiter, RGS Financial Services
- Royetta Rodewald, Center for Excellence in Health Communication to Underserved Populations
- Shannon Royer, KU Libraries
- Bill Saltmarsh, RGS Research Information Systems
- Tammy Schoenhofer, Life Span Institute at Parsons
- Ramia Whitecotton, Department of Geography
- Jenni Wiles, RGS Pre-Award Services

Recent Research Community Personnel Updates

Pat Kuester has been named director of the Campus Administration & Operations Shared Service Center, effective January 6. Pat has 15 years of experience in the public and higher education sectors and is currently director of finance and planning for the KU School of Law. Prior to that, she held other administrative leadership positions at KU and with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Her background includes B.A. and M.P.A. degrees from KU.

Larry Dodson joined KU as its first full-time export control officer and facility security officer. In that role, he will ensure that activities on all KU campuses comply with applicable U.S. export control regulations. He will also ensure that sensitive government information entrusted to the university is safeguarded properly, as outlined in the National Industrial Security Program Operating Manual. Larry was previously with Cree, Inc. in North Carolina as its trade and security compliance officer, and held similar positions in industry and the U.S. government. His background includes a B.S. degree in science from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and a 20-year career as an officer in the Navy.

Kimberly Scamardo joined the Research Integrity staff in September as compliance coordinator in the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), which ensures research at KU is conducted in compliance with federal regulations, accreditation standards, and university policy and procedures surrounding the use of animals in research. Kim has 26 years of experience in the laboratory animal research community, including the past nine as associate director for the Department of Comparative Medicine at Tulane University.

Jessica Brown is a new grants specialist in Pre-Award Services, assigned to Team 2. She was previously a senior staff auditor at Summers, Spencer & Company, P.A., where she audited primarily not-for-profit organizations in the Douglas County area. Her background includes bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting from KU.

BTBC at KU Names President, Chief Operating Officer



The Bioscience & Technology Business Center (BTBC) at KU has named business professional and entrepreneur G.R. Underwood as its new president and chief operating officer. He will manage daily operations and implement long-term strategies for the BTBC system, which comprises three facilities housing 29 tenant companies, and will report to LaVerne Epp, executive chairman of the BTBC. He will also work closely with KU Innovation and Collaboration, which manages the university's entrepreneurship, commercialization and technology transfer activities.

"The BTBC has become a powerful tool for KU and economic development leaders to create new companies and recruit existing ones to Lawrence," said Underwood. "I look forward to advancing the BTBC's mission of growing the economy, creating jobs, increasing the local tax base and stimulating wealth creation in the community."

Underwood was vice president of client services for the Lawrence Regional Technology Center from 2007 to 2010. He spent the past three years in Austin, where he co-founded and served as CEO of a University of Texas spin-off company specializing in software for the oil and gas industry. His background includes B.S. and M.B.A. degrees from the University of Oklahoma.

December "TRT" Session to Address "Cyber Security Awareness"

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies offers a monthly "Thursday Research Topics" program that's open to all interested persons. On December 12, Rick Whitmore, senior IT security analyst with KU Information Technology, will speak on "Cyber Security Awareness." Whitmore is a member of [KU's Cyber Security Awareness Group](#), which promotes information security and privacy awareness among faculty, staff and students. Its goal is to help faculty and staff understand cyber security risks, your responsibilities as a KU employee, and the services KU provides to help you comply with the relevant KU policies. TRT begins at 11:10 a.m. and concludes at 11:50 a.m. in the auditorium at Simons Biosciences Labs. All TRT presentations are recorded and available online.



Once again this year, Vice Chancellor Steve Warren served breakfast to RGS staff in Youngberg Hall who paid for the privilege. All proceeds (including tips) went to the KU United Way Campaign. Steve was assisted by staff members Jenni Stinnett, Patti Steffan and Joanne Eden, and the early morning project on December 4 raised more than \$450 for United Way.

RGS staff, including staff in the research centers, organized a number of other activities this fall in support of the campaign. Examples include:

December 13: White Elephant Sale at 246 Youngberg Hall, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

December 10: Soup and Chili Feed, Multidisciplinary Research Building

December 9: Chili Cook-Off and Bake Sale at Youngberg Hall (\$200)

Thanks to RGS bakers and chefs: Bill Sharp, Joanne Eden, Kim Reynolds, Anita Abel, Elena Semyonova-Smith, Jhunu Thapa, and Sylvia Dupuis.

RGS fundraisers through December 13 include: "Jeans Day" tickets, United Way t-shirt sales, and a spare change collection competition involving RGS, the Kansas Geological Survey, Higuchi Biosciences Center, Center for Research on Learning, Life Span Institute, and staff in the Shankel Structural Biology Center and Multidisciplinary Research Building.

Upcoming Events

News of interest to the research community. Additional details are available at the [KU Calendar](#).

December 12

Thursday Research Topics:

“Cyber Security Awareness”

11:10 – 11:50 a.m.

Auditorium, Simons Biosciences Labs

December 13

KUCR, Inc. Annual Meeting

3 p.m.

Pavilion, Lied Center of Kansas

December 17

Presentation: “Water Issues in Kansas,” Rep. Tom Sloan

3 p.m.

Apollo Room, Nichols Hall

December 20

Deadline: University Scholarly Achievement Award Nominations

January 3

Deadline: KUIC Proof of Concept Fund Proposals

January 31

Deadline: Higuchi-KU Endowment Research Achievement Award Nominations

February 24

Save the Date: KUIC Kansas Research-to-Product Summit
8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Nursing Auditorium, Murphy Hall, KU Medical Center

March 1

Deadline: Strategic Initiative Grant Level I Proposals

March 3

Save the Date: Large Data Management Summit
9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

The Commons, Spooner Hall



United Way of Douglas County

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