Office of Grants & Sponsored Research

Grants Bulletin
September, 2015

NEWS

The Office of Grants and Sponsored Research (OGSR) represent the Pre-award administration office at St. John’s University. Reporting directly to the Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Research, we provide service and support related to research activities across all schools and units at the University and work closely with the Office of Business Affairs regarding post-award items such as the financial management of sponsored projects. Sponsored programs include research, instruction and training, public service, evaluative testing, and other scholarly and creative activities conducted under the direction of University faculty and staff and funded by organizations external to the University in accordance with award regulations. The OGSR welcomes the entire SJU community back to begin a prosperous new academic year.

The Office of Grants and Sponsored Research, 1st floor of Newman Hall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Jared Littman, M.P.A.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:littmanj@stjohns.edu">littmanj@stjohns.edu</a></td>
<td>(718)990-2920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Director</td>
<td>Christopher Egan, M.S.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eganc@stjohns.edu">eganc@stjohns.edu</a></td>
<td>(718) 990-1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants Specialist</td>
<td>Elenora Levin, B.S.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:levine@stjohns.edu">levine@stjohns.edu</a></td>
<td>(718) 990-8225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>Adrianna Berlingerio, B.S.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:berlinga@stjohns.edu">berlinga@stjohns.edu</a></td>
<td>(718) 990-6276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB Coordinator &amp; Women in Science Coordinator</td>
<td>Marie Nitopi, Ed.D.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Nitopi@stjohns.edu">Nitopi@stjohns.edu</a></td>
<td>(718) 990-1440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Coordinator for Women in Science</td>
<td>Elise Megehee, Ph.D.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:megeheee@stjohns.edu">megeheee@stjohns.edu</a></td>
<td>(718) 990-5276</td>
</tr>
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GRANTS WORKSHOP SERIES FALL 2015 CALENDER

Navigating the NIH Grant Application Process – Thursday, November 5 (1:50 PM-2:59 PM) at University Center Suite D
This workshop will aid you in identifying select NIH programs complimenting your research agenda, interpreting the SF424 (R&R) Application Guide, enhancing your understanding of sponsor review criteria (with emphasis on NIH and NSF mechanisms), provide constructive proposal building techniques, and much more.
Competitive Budgeting:  Budget Preparation and Management- Thursday, November 12 (1:50 PM- 2:59 PM) in University Center Suite D
Learn the basics on how to create a winning SF424 (R&R and Modular formats) budget and justification for a grant proposal. This session will explore the fundamentals in allocating direct costs, indirect costs, and all that they entail and relate to one another in a grant proposal. In addition, you will learn specifics pertaining to allowable costs vs. unallowable costs, as well as how a budget should properly reflect your narrative.

Grant Mentoring Round Table- Thursday, November 19 (1:50 PM- 2:59 PM) in D’Angelo Center 407
Please join us in an interactive discussion session in which a select panel of esteemed researchers will convey their unique experiences and insights in regard to successfully preparing NIH competitive proposals, establishing network connections with program offices, building institutional collaborations, sponsor review processes, and much more. *The OGSR will name the panelists and provide additional detail in a subsequent communication.

2015 NATIONAL INSTITUTES of HEALTH (NIH) DEADLINES
The following is a list of upcoming deadlines for key NIH proposal mechanisms.

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<th>Program</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tr>
<td>NIH <strong>R01</strong> Research Grants- <em>New</em></td>
<td>February 5, June 5, October 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIH <strong>R01</strong> Research Grants - Renewal, Resubmission, Revision</td>
<td>March 5, July 5, November 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH <strong>R03, R21, R33, R34, R36</strong> Other Research Grants - <em>New</em></td>
<td>February 16, June 16, October 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH <strong>R03, R21, R33, R34, R36</strong> Other Research Grants - Renewal, Resubmission, Revision</td>
<td>March 16, July 16, November 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIH <strong>R15</strong> Grants - <em>New, Renewal, Resubmission, Revision</em></td>
<td>February 25, June 25, October 25</td>
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Please contact an OGSR representative if you wish to apply to any particular mechanism.

AWARDS

**National Science Foundation**

Dr. Dianella Howarth of the St. John’s College Department of Biological Sciences was awarded her third National Science Foundation (NSF) grant in the amount of $367,284 in response to her proposal **Collaborative Research: Transitions and Transcriptomics: A Novel Approach to Understanding Shifts in Floral Developmental Pathways Preceding the origin of the Pentapetalae**. Including funds awarded from her prior awards, Dr. Howarth has secured $1,142,284.00 in NSF funding.
Dr. Howarth’s initial proposal was submitted to the NSF Phylogenetic Systematics program, which is designed to support research that addresses significant questions about organismal evolution using phylogenetic approaches, the primary focus emphasizing the investigation of the origins of biodiversity and to resolve the relationships among species across the hierarchy of life.

In collaboration with the University of Florida, Dr. Howarth’s lab aims to uncover the genetic changes that happened roughly 100 million years ago that reshaped flower form and resulted in the diversification of approximately 170,000 modern species (70% of flowering plants). To do this, they are sequencing genomic information from species that surround this transition to determine how flowers became 5-parted with concentric floral whorls that have clearly defined sepals, petals, stamens, and carpels.

Flowering plants are the most abundant and diverse form of plant life on Earth. This dominance is largely due to the evolutionary success of one group, the Pentapetalae (> 70% of flowering plant diversity), which have flowers with parts in multiples of five arranged in whorls (whorled pentamery). In contrast, flower parts are arranged in multiples of three (monocots, for example), two, or a variable number, either spirally or whorled, in less abundant groups of flowering plants. The shift to the whorled pentamery of the Pentapetalae, which occurred about 100 million years ago, appears to have been the most successful evolutionary innovation of not only flowering plants, but green plants in general. This research will investigate the evolution of the underlying genetic changes that contributed to this ancient evolutionary event. It promises to discover the new and/or modified genetic pathways that produced the typical Pentapetalae flower, one of the major mysteries of plant evolution. The data generated should also provide tools for other researchers to examine questions in this section of the tree of life, and will be shared via online tools for others to explore, and for training new researchers.

Dr. Ales Vancura, Chair of the St. John’s College Department of Biological Sciences stated "We are very proud of Dianella and want to congratulate her on this great achievement. The funding climate has become extremely competitive and Dianella’s new grant is a testament of her research efforts. This NSF grant will enhance the research environment at St. John’s University and will provide undergraduate and graduate students with many opportunities to learn the fundamentals of research in biology."

Research based learning forms an integral part of the education value chain. The University community commends and congratulates Dr. Howarth on this outstanding research accomplishment and impeccable success record, and recognizes her commitment to academic excellence and the pursuit of wisdom flowing from free inquiry.

**National Institutes of Health**

**Dr. Huizhong Xu** of the St. John’s College Department of Physics was awarded his first National Institutes of Health (NIH) Academic Research Enhancement Award (AREA) grant in the amount of $396,000 in response to his proposed research *Nanowaveguide Illuminated Fluorescence Spectroscopy for Studying Membrane Protein Dynamics*.

The AREA program is designed to enable qualified scientists to receive support for small-scale research projects. In addition to supporting Dr. Xu’s meritorious research, this grant will provide students with the opportunity to benefit from exposure to (and participation in) scientific research in the biomedical and behavioral sciences. In turn, this AREA grant will serve to strengthen the ever growing research environment of St. John’s University.

In response to securing the AREA grant, Dr. Xu stated “This grant will not only allow us to develop novel high-resolution microscopy and spectroscopy techniques, but also provide opportunities for our students to participate in cutting-edge research that will expand their scope of knowledge, develop their critical
thinking abilities and problem solving skills. In addition, as this research involves faculties from several disciplines including biological sciences, pharmaceutical sciences, and physics, it will further enhance the collaborative research environment on our campus”.

Dr. Xu proposed an efficient high-resolution nanowaveguide illuminated fluorescence spectroscopy (NIFS) technique to study the dynamics of membrane proteins and their responses to various external stimuli. The study of protein molecules on the cell membrane is significant due to the important roles they play in the function of a cell as well as the fact that membrane proteins are the common target of modern drug development. However, it remains a challenge to study them at the single molecule level (i.e. one by one) as a result of their dense population on the cell membrane and the resolution limit of current microscopy techniques. The proposed technique in this NIH-funded project will overcome this limitation. It is based on the use of a nanowire light-guiding device to create a nanoscopic illumination spot. The spot, which is on the order of tens of nanometers (one nanometer is one-billionth of a meter), can be used to improve the resolution of existing fluorescence spectroscopy techniques and is perfectly suited for studying membrane proteins at the single molecule level. The research is potentially transformative as the technique being developed can be utilized to study a variety of membrane protein molecules and may lead to new therapeutics for cancer and other diseases.

Physics Chair, Dr. Mostafa Sadoqi, stated “First I would like to congratulate Dr Huizhong Xu on his NIH Area R15 grant. We are so excited for Dr Xu’s grant and what it brings to the physics department and St John’s University. Students will benefit tremendously from the research opportunities made available by this grant. St. John’s University as well will benefit from the research resources that will be enhanced by this grant.”

The St. John’s University community commends Dr. Xu on this significant accomplishment and his commitment to academic excellence and the pursuit of wisdom.

SUMMER SUPPORT of RESEARCH AWARD RECIPIENTS

The Summer Support of Research program is designed to foster an institutional culture of faculty research productivity. It is the expectation that this program will lead to scholarly productivity as well as the potential to increase our external funding.

The OGSR congratulates this year’s recipients: Dr. Natalie Byfiled (Sociology & Anthropology), Dr. Xiaojun Chen (Curriculum & Instruction), Dr. Xingguo Cheng (Pharmaceutical Sciences), Dr. Anna Gu (Pharmacy Administration & Public Health), Dr. Katie Lebel (Sport Management), Dr. Phillip Lukeman (Chemistry), Dr. Lin Mantell (Pharmaceutical Sciences) Dr. William McKenna (Education Specialties), Dr. Stephen Miller (English), Dr. William Morel (Art & Design), Dr. Mikhail Ostrovski (Mathematics & Computer Science), Dr. Vladimir Poltoratsky (Pharmaceutical Sciences), Dr. Nicole Rice (English), Dr. David Rosenthal (Mathematics & Computer Science), Dr. Matteo Ruggiu (Biological Sciences), Dr. Mark Terjesen (Psychology).

SEED GRANT AWARD RECIPIENTS

The purpose of the University’s Seed Grant/Venture Capital Fund Program is to provide support for the development of projects and programs that have the potential to attract substantial external grant support to the University. The University’s Seed Grant/Venture Capital Fund Program will provide financial support for projects and programs which further any one or more of the University’s basic missions—education, research and/or public service.
The OGSR congratulates this year’s recipients: Dr. Sandra Reznik (Pharmaceutical Sciences), Dr. Zhe-Sheng Chen (Pharmaceutical Sciences), Dr. Sabesan Yoganathan (Pharmaceutical Sciences), Dr. Lin Mantell (Pharmaceutical Sciences), Dr. Smita Guha (Curriculum & Instruction), Dr. Elizabeth Brondolo (Psychology), Dr. Ming-hui Li (Education Specialties), Dr. Simon Moller (Biological Sciences) Dr. William Morel (Art & Design), Dr. Yong Yu (Biological Sciences).

GRANT MENTORING PROGRAM AWARD RECIPIENTS
In order to provide our new investigators with further incentive to engage in National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation sponsored research activity, the OGSR announced the call for proposals for the 2015 Grant Mentoring Program.

The OGSR congratulates this year’s recipients: Dr. Manouchkathe Cassagnol (Clinical Health Professions), Dr. Preety Gadhoke (Pharmacy Administration and Public Health), Dr. Ishita Khemka (Education Specialties), Dr. Gen Long (Physics), Dr. Jagannath Muzumdar (Pharmaceutical Sciences), Dr. Michelle Pisano (Clinical Health Professions), Dr. Maha Saad (Clinical Health Professions), Dr. Candace Smith (Clinical Health Professions), Dr. Enju Wang (Chemistry), Dr. Sabesan Yoganathan (Pharmaceutical Sciences).

WOMEN in SCIENCE
The St. John’s University Women in Science program supports and encourages women pursuing studies in science, mathematics and computer science. Faculty, students and administrators meet regularly to discuss issues that are important to women in the STEM professions.

In addition to regular meetings during the Fall 2015 semester, the program will host a guest speaker, Mary Ellen Cosenza, Ph.D. as part of the University’s academic lecture series. On October 20, 2015 at 5 pm in DAC 416 A&B, Dr. Cosenza will speak about her journey as a scientist and the unique challenges faced as a woman in science. Dr. Cosenza is a regulatory consultant with over 30 years of senior leadership experience in the biopharmaceutical industry in the U.S., Europe, and emerging markets. Most recently, she served as Executive Director, U.S. Regulatory Affairs, at Amgen, Inc. Mary Ellen received her Ph.D. from St. John’s University, New York, and her MS in Regulatory Science from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. All are encouraged to attend, for further information, please contact: Marie Nitopi, Ed.D. nitopim@stjohns.edu

During the upcoming weeks, the program coordinators and some WIS advisory board members will participate in the second meeting of the NYC Girls in STEM Collaborative at the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum. The initial meeting focused on the need for a collaborative network of organizations that support women in STEM in the New York City area and the expansion of partnerships towards common missions. Stay tuned for further information as this collaborative continues to develop.

Until Next Time

We look forward in working with the entire SJU community to support your research and sponsored project endeavors and to a prosperous academic year.

Sincerely,
Jared Littman and the OGSR Staff