President's Perspective: Supporting the University's Research Agenda

Sidney A. Ribeau, Ph.D.

I am pleased to see the heightened attention and support that Provost Wayne A. I. Frederick, our new Office of Grants Administration team, and the Research Advisory Council are giving to faculty research initiatives. The Research Newsletter will be a valuable addition to the communications stream through which we discuss issues affecting research at the University.

The Howard University community is committed to Howard's continuation and enhancement as a major nationally and internationally recognized comprehensive research university with a rich and unique legacy and tradition. As part of our 2009 Middle States Self-Study and the Presidential Commission on Academic Renewal (PCAR) assessments, the campus community underscored the need for modern facilities and an administrative infrastructure that support interdisciplinary research, and provide an instructional and research environment that breaks down traditional silos.

We are positioning Howard University as a research intensive university to play its role in the achievement of the nation’s higher education research agenda. Building upon Howard’s unique mission and role, we are redesigning our academic programs to enhance our capacity to continue to address the higher education research needs of our nation and the African American community. The Office of the Provost and Chief Academic Officer is the central academic driver of this paradigm shift, and will lead the effort to build collaborative research frameworks to address new challenges and prepare our graduates for the future.

We are working hard to construct a comprehensive umbrella of support over faculty as they engage in interdisciplinary research focused on the complex issues facing the national and global community. Our state-of-the-art Interdisciplinary Research Building, and action to add and renovate lab and instructional spaces will provide faculty, students and staff enhanced learning environments that incorporate the latest technology. The Research Newsletter will facilitate communication with internal and
external constituencies about these initiatives and research at Howard.

The University’s unique mission is carried in the research and scholarly contributions, leadership and service of its diverse faculty, activities of its current students and staff, and the accomplishments of its alumni who occupy leadership roles as research scholars, industry-leading professionals, ground-breaking engineers, visionary political leaders, medical pioneers and award-winning artists. Wherever in the world one finds exciting and innovative research being conducted to address high-profile, high-priority human needs and challenges, Howard University faculty and researchers are there.

I look forward to future editions of the University’s Research Newsletter, and updates from the Office of the Provost, the Office of Grants Management, and the Research Advisory Council on research at the Capstone.

Provoct and Chief Academic Officer’s Vision on Research
Wayne A. I. Frederick, M.D., MBA, F.A.C.S.

Howard University continues to distinguish itself as an institution with a rapidly growing research enterprise that is comprised of external grants and contracts, distinguished scholarly projects, and outstanding creative works. We are making great strides to enhance our research infrastructure by ensuring there is support for faculty, research staff, and students. President Sidney A. Ribeau and the Board of Trustees are committed to strengthening the University’s focus on fundamental and interdisciplinary research activities that address significant issues impacting local, regional, national, and global society. Over the years, faculty members have responded to this trend by developing and participating in the growth of cutting-edge interdisciplinary research and technology that provide practical solutions to complex societal issues.

The University is poised to play a central role, both nationally and internationally, as it strengthens its ties with government agencies, the business community, and foundations. One of our immediate goals is to fortify the University’s competitiveness in research, which includes enhancing our ability to obtain and manage large projects. The implementation of important initiatives such as the construction of the Interdisciplinary Research Building, creation of the Office of Grants Management (OGM) and the University Research Advisory Council (RAC), implementation of the Indirect Cost Recovery (IDC) incentive program, and identification of research priorities are to support faculty members and students as they continue to excel in these efforts and to celebrate their achievements.

Howard University has a rich history of preparing leaders of change and promoters of ideas while also developing a dynamic culture of collaboration. These key strategies will improve our future and way of life, and continue to maintain Howard University as a highly competitive, premier research university.

Research Advisory Council Promotes University-wide Research and Development

A Research Advisory Council (RAC) was formed in August 2012. Its major functions are to promote scholarly productivity and to help nurture a climate that encourages cross-disciplinary research. The RAC also serves as an advisory body to the Provost and Chief Academic Officer on matters pertaining to the development of research, policies, procedures, initiatives and creative activities at Howard University.

The RAC consists of 17 members -- representatives from each of the 13 schools/colleges, three representatives from the Faculty Senate, and the Provost and Chief Academic Officer. They are: Howard University Provost and Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Wayne Frederick, Chair; Dr. Terri Adams-Fuller, Arts and Sciences; Dr. Lisa Crooms, Law; Dr. Tammi Damas, Nursing and Allied Health Sciences; Dr. Rochelle Ford, Communications; Dr. Xinbin Gu, Dentistry; Dr. Marilyn Irving, Education; Dr. Everette
Joseph, Graduate School; Dr. Euni Lee, Pharmacy; Dr. Meirong Liu, Faculty Senate Representative; Dr. Velma Love, Divinity; Dr. Celia Maxwell, Medicine; Dr. Jacqueline Smith, Social Work; Dr. Sonya Smith, Engineering, Architecture and Computer Sciences; Dr. John Tharakan, Faculty Senate Representative; Dr. Charles Verharen, Faculty Senate Representative; and Dr. Anthony Wilbon, Business.

The RAC members were either appointed by their school/college dean or hold research positions in their respective school/college. The members are also responsible for disseminating information with respect to changes and updates in research procedure, policies, and initiatives pertaining to faculty, staff, and administrators in their respective schools/colleges.

The RAC is developing university-wide research priorities that will provide strategic guidance for Howard’s research agenda. These priorities will build upon the University’s mission, emphasize commitments and current research capabilities and strengths, and provide opportunities for increased transdisciplinary collaborations, while identifying areas for future impact. Once the priorities have been created, they will be submitted to the Office of the Provost for transmission to the Board of Trustees. Dr. Rochelle Ford, Chair of the Research Priorities subcommittee, said that the creation of these priorities should in no way discourage faculty who are not conducting research in these areas.

Howard Opens New Office of Grants Management (OGM)

Howard University established the Office of Grants Management (OGM) in September 2012. The OGM is charged with assisting all academic units of the University. It will use a client service model to assist Principal Investigators (PIs), faculty, and students in negotiating the pre-award and post-award funding activities while collaborating with the offices of Research Administrative Services (RAS) and Office of Regulatory Research Compliance (ORRC).

Its mission is to promote the development of a robust research enterprise dedicated to encouraging innovative research, creative, and scholarly activities; to facilitate the planning and development of proposals that secure extramural funding; and to coordinate timely and systematic dissemination of the research and scholarly achievements of faculty and student researchers.

OGM works in consultation with RAS to assist PIs in minimizing administrative tasks. RAS approves all transactions while OGM facilitates the pre-award process and provides assistance with post-award problem resolution. In addition, RAS serves as the

GRANTS MANAGEMENT TIP!

To successfully pursue external funding, it is important to develop a two-year plan and production schedule. Contact OGM at huogm@howard.edu for assistance.
arm for compliance with federal regulations, while OGM handles internal processes for faculty.

“We have formed a team that uses a values-based system to foster success for PIs, faculty and students and ultimately, the University,” said OGM Executive Director, Dr. Constance Ellison. “We are reliable, client-focused, and transparent; and we actively communicate with and are a collaborative partner for the University community. The good news is funding is available. However, we must take a different approach internally and externally to increase funding.”

Traditional education and research funding practices need to be modified to reflect new realities. Howard University schools and colleges are using a multi-disciplinary approach to increase access to funding, as well as to achieve the University’s mission, she explained.

OGM is comprised of a team of individuals who can advise in pre-award and post-award activities. They include Director Maya Shih; Tasha Delane and Dr. Nadine Morris who are available to consult and troubleshoot on financial matters; and Hesam Khalilzadeh, who will review grant processes and identify areas for enhancement. Nicole Retland, Sharolyn Rosier, and Dr. Sharon Waters make up the proposal development team.

Resources and Events

Howard University Hosts NSF Regional Conference

Howard University hosted the second National Science Foundation (NSF) Grants Conference of fiscal year 2013 on March 11-12 in Arlington, VA. Howard was well-represented by a cross section of administrators and faculty, all of whom participated in meetings, breakout sessions and workshops.

The participants had full access to NSF administrators, program officers, and grant officials who addressed a wide range of issues, including the state of current funding given sequestration, new and current policies and procedures, as well as pertinent administrative issues. Particularly, the NSF presenters noted that the agency’s priorities during this federal budget period are to prevent staff furloughs, keep active projects funded at their current levels, and to revise future program announcements. NSF program officers representing each NSF directorate also provided up-to-date information about specific funding opportunities and answered specific questions pertaining to grantee issues.

The major announcement at the NSF grants conference was the transition from FastLane to Research.gov. Principal Investigators were asked to discontinue submitting project reports in FastLane beginning February 1, 2013 to allow the functionality to be transferred to its new home. The progress report service was made available in its new location, Research.gov, on March 18, 2013. NSF has said that the overdue date will be extended for all project reports that are scheduled to become outstanding between Jan. 31 and April 30, 2013.

University Research Day

Howard University sponsored a University-wide Research Day on April 1, 2013 to celebrate the breadth and depth of current research throughout the schools and colleges. More than 300 faculty, researchers, and students showcased their research on posters and in oral presentations. Previously, the College of Arts & Sciences, the Graduate School, and the Health Sciences sponsored individual research day events.

Provost and Chief Academic Officer Dr. Wayne Frederick said some schools and colleges have already developed interdisciplinary research initiatives, and he hoped that the University-wide Research Day help to foster even more collaborations within and across departments, schools and colleges, as well as externally, with government and private funding agencies and with major research institutions.
The keynote speaker was Dr. John Ruffin, Director of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD). Dr. Ruffin oversees the $276 million NIMHD budget and provides leadership for the minority health and health disparities research activities of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Other invited guests included federal and local government officials, as well as business and industry executives.

Poster and oral presentations were presented in the following categories:

- Bio and Biomedical
- Business Research
- Computation and Bio-Modeling
- Computation and Modeling (Non-Bio)
- Education and Outreach
- Ethics and Religion
- Fine Arts
- Health Sciences
- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Physical Science and Engineering
- Translational and Clinical

A panel of judges, comprised of faculty, government officials and industry leaders, selected the winner in each category.
The Howard University *Research Newsletter* is a quarterly service of the Office of Grants Management.

Please send your comments and suggestions for the next issue to huogm@howard.edu. We hope you enjoyed reading the first issue of *Howard University Research Newsletter*. For more information, please contact:

Office of Grants Management

huogm@howard.edu