

FACULTY GRANTS NEWS

Published by the Office of Foundation, Corporate and Government Relations, *Faculty Grants News* reports on funding and research trends of public and private sources, as well as the grant and scholarly activities of Hamilton's faculty members.

Owen uses NFS-supported conferences to foster research connections among liberal arts economists

MACROECONOMISTS at liberal arts colleges are often isolated from their peers, both within their home departments and from those at other liberal arts institutions. To address this, Ann Owen and colleagues from Colgate University, Drew University, Smith College and Vassar College petitioned the National Science Foundation to support a series of conferences. The \$53,745 grant, awarded in spring 2007, enables macroeconomists from liberal arts colleges across the country to convene annually for summer conferences where participants can present, discuss and receive feedback on their work.

Faculty at small liberal arts institutions are familiar with the challenges of balancing heavy teaching loads with the need to maintain active research programs. Owen and her colleagues argued that their relative isolation exacerbates these challenges.

"Macroeconomists often constitute a small minority within their departments," Owen said. "If you examine the economics departments at the 50 most selective liberal arts institutions, the average department has two macroeconomists, making collaboration within the department quite difficult." At the same time, most of the existing national conferences and workshops simply do not meet the needs of macroeconomists from small institutions.



Ann Owen

"The type of workshop we envisioned seemed like it could provide an immensely valuable outlet to present one's findings to a group of economists who face similar teaching and research demands," Owen explained. "Conferences and workshops are the most likely place for macroeconomists at liberal arts schools to present their work, discover related papers and research agendas, and make connections to other academics sharing similar research and teaching interests."

Invigorating the research of macroeconomists at liberal arts colleges has broader implications as well. Liberal arts colleges produce a disproportionate share of economics Ph.D. students, and having faculty at these colleges engaged in research helps to increase the success of their students in graduate school. In addition, these conferences will bolster the careers of female economists, an underrepresented group in the economics profession, especially among those specializing in macroeconomics.

GRANTS NEWS

RESEARCHERS FACE STIFFER COMPETITION

After nearly doubling NIH's budget between 1998 and 2003, Congress has only minimally increased the agency's budget — the appropriations have not kept up with inflation. With more researchers competing for funding, the actual amount available for awards has dropped (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 2007). While this budget crunch is hitting established researchers, it is particularly problematic for young scientists. In 1995, 25 percent of R01 grants, considered to be NIH's premier grant program, went to scientists 40 or younger. By 2005, only 15 percent of R01s went to that group, while researchers 51 and older were awarded nearly half of the agency's grants. The National Science Foundation — the nation's second largest grantor after NIH — is also experiencing a budget crunch. From 2000 to 2006,

the proportion of applications that the NSF funded dropped from approximately one-third to one-fifth (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 2007). NSF is reporting a 50 percent increase in grant applications, while its budget increased by 44 percent. In order to fund all the applications that received high ratings by reviewers, the agency claims it would need an additional two billion dollars.

NSF REVISES ITS *PROPOSAL & AWARD POLICIES & PROCEDURES GUIDE* AGAIN

If you are planning to submit a proposal to NSF, be advised that its *Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* has been updated yet again. NSF revised its guide last year and has released a new version for all grants submitted on or after Jan. 5, 2008. Among the changes is a revision to the intellectual merit review criterion, which now specifically includes evaluation of proposals for potentially transformative concepts. Also, further changes have been made to fonts and margin requirements. The new guide can be accessed at www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=papp.

continued from page 1

The workshops funded by NSF will rotate among the five collaborating institutions, but will solicit participation from a database of 188 macroeconomists at top-tier liberal arts institutions and other venues likely to reach underrepresented groups in economics. Topics that will be highlighted include monetary policy, economic growth, fiscal policy,

macroeconomic theory, applied macroeconomics and international finance. The group will also hold "advice-oriented" panel discussions on specific topics, such as how to get published, integrating research elements into undergraduate classrooms, balancing research and teaching, and using data in the classroom.

"While not explicitly designed for junior faculty, we hope we can provide a welcoming environment for junior macroeconomists to get high-quality feedback on their scholarship and teaching." — Ann Owen

ONLINE NETWORK ESTABLISHED FOR SCHOLARS IN THE HUMANITIES

The Social Science Research Network (www.ssrn.com), an online clearinghouse popular among social scientists, has created a Humanities Research Network to make it easier for philosophers, classicists and literary scholars to share works in progress (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 2007). Initially the network will cover three areas — philosophy, classics, and English and American literature — but will soon expand to other areas.

NIH OFFERS GRANTS AIMED AT INCREASING PUBLIC'S TRUST IN SCIENCE

The National Institutes of Health is offering grants under a new program, "Partners in Research" (*Federal Grants and Contracts Weekly*, October 2007). The agency is attempting to address issues revolving around the confusion caused by the increased complexity of the research enterprise and concerns about scientific misconduct. The new grants will provide up to \$50,000 over two years to teams that would like to pilot programs designed to improve public understanding of health care research and promote collaboration between scientists and community organizations.

NEH APPOINTS THREE NEW DIVISION DIRECTORS

Bruce Cole, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, recently announced the appointment of three new directors for the endowment's divisions of Preservation and Access, Education Programs and Public Programs. Suzanne M. Lodato became director of the Division of Preservation and Access in September.

Lodato comes to the NEH from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, where she served as an associate program officer in the Scholarly Communications Program since June 2000. William Craig Rice became director of the Division of Education Programs in September. He had served as president of Shimer College since 2004 and as a professor of English, education and humanities.

Thomas C. Phelps was appointed director of the Division of Public Programs. Phelps had served as the division's acting director since November 2006. He has been at the NEH since 1980, serving as a program officer for grants to libraries, library associations, systems, consortia and library schools, as well as to historical societies and museums, and to independent producers and publicly supported radio and television stations. □

"While not explicitly designed for junior faculty, we hope we can provide a welcoming environment for junior macroeconomists to get high-quality feedback on their scholarship and teaching," Owen said.

Although two pilot workshops were at Colgate and Vassar, the first of the NSF-funded workshops was held this past summer at Smith College. The co-organizers welcomed 32 macroeconomists from 28 institutions across the country.

Preliminary feedback indicated the conference was very successful, with several participants noting the high quality of comments received on their research and the benefits of discussing research and teaching with others in similar positions. Hamilton will be hosting the workshop in the summer of 2009.

The NSF is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1950 "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity and welfare; to secure the national defense..." With an annual budget of about \$5.92 billion, NSF is the funding source for approximately 20 percent of all federally supported basic research conducted by America's colleges and universities. In many fields such as mathematics, computer science and the social sciences, NSF is the major source of federal backing. □

SELECTED AWARDS AND SUBMISSIONS

Please join the Office of Foundation, Corporate and Government Relations as we extend congratulations to the following faculty members who have recently received awards or submitted proposals.

WEI-JEN CHANG, assistant professor of biology, submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation's Research in Undergraduate Institutions program, requesting \$488,811 for his project *RUI: Evolution and expression of TBE related transposable elements in spirotrichous ciliates*.

NATALIA V. CONNOLLY, assistant professor of physics, submitted a proposal to Research Corporation's Cottrell College Science Award program requesting \$28,683 for her project *Developing New Computational Tools for the Study of Dark Energy*.

EUGENE DOMACK, the Joel W. Johnson Family Professor of Geosciences, has been awarded a \$516,715 grant from the National Science Foundation's Office of Polar Programs for his project *Collaborative Research in IPY: Abrupt Environmental Change in the Larsen Ice Shelf System, a Multidisciplinary Approach*. Domack also submitted two other proposals to NSF. The first requested \$71,130 for the project *Collaborative Research: Pilot program for phytoplankton/particulate monitoring of the Drake Passage and northern Antarctic Peninsula*, while the second requested \$49,546 for the project *Collaborative Research: A Marine Geologic Survey of the Totten Glacier System*.

JINNIE M. GARRETT, director of the Diversity and Social Justice Project and professor of biology, and **MICHAEL L. MCCORMICK**, assistant professor of biology, submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation Research in Undergraduate Institutions requesting \$691,241 for their project *An Integrated metagenomic and geochemical analysis of meromictic Green Lake, Fayetteville, NY*.

MARIANNE JANACK, the Sidney Wertimer Professor of Philosophy, submitted two proposals for her project *The Educability of*

Experience: Value, Theory and Objectivity. The first proposal requested \$198,788 from the National Science Foundation's Ethics and Values in Science, Engineering and Technology program. The second requested \$40,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship program.

HONG GANG JIN, the William R. Kenan Professor of East Asian Languages and Literatures and director of Associated Colleges in China, submitted a proposal to the Department of Education's Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program requesting \$1,204,602 to create *The ACC Intensive Language Training Program for Students and Language Professionals*.

GORDON L. JONES, associate professor of physics, and Brian Collett, associate professor of physics, submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation's Research in Undergraduate Institutions program requesting \$125,374 for their project *RUI: The aCORN Experiment to Measure the Beta-Neutrino Asymmetry in Neutron Decay*.

SETH A. MAJOR, associate professor of physics, submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation's Research in Undergraduate Institutions program requesting \$115,195 for his project *RUI: Discrete Geometry Phenomenology*.

MICHAEL L. MCCORMICK, assistant professor of biology, has been awarded a \$35,336 grant from the National Science Foundation's Office of Polar Programs for his project *Collaborative Research in IPY: Abrupt Environmental Change in the Larsen Ice Shelf System, a Multidisciplinary Approach – Marine Ecosystems*.

William Billiter
Director of Foundation,
Corporate & Government Relations
wbillite@hamilton.edu
315-859-4384

Amy Lindner
Associate Director of Foundation,
Corporate & Government Relations
alindner@hamilton.edu
315-859-4678

Colleen Bennett
Assistant
ctbennet@hamilton.edu
315-859-4064