



STUDENT *Spotlight*

DERRICK PLATERO

NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY



Derrick participated in uranium contamination research at the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology and worked with New Mexico EPSCoR scientists to examine how uranium from abandoned uranium mines on Native American land is transported through water, dust and air.

[Read more](#) about Derrick's background and research on the EPSCoR/IDeA Foundation's webpage.

EPSCoR

IDeA

FY₂₀₁₈ FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE
SEPTEMBER 2017



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A NOTE FROM STU VAN SCOYOC



The federal fiscal year (FY) is coming to a close and Congress has spent much of September addressing spending issues to insure government operations beyond September 30th.

We have very good news from the United States Senate. Last week, the Senate approved the FY2018 National Defense Authorization Act which included an amendment sponsored by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Mike Rounds (R-SD) that would reconstitute the EPSCoR program! This is an exciting development and brings us one important step closer to the Department of Defense once again administering an EPSCoR program. Everyone at the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition extends our sincere appreciation to both senators and their staffs for all of their hard work on this initiative.

We also have good news related to appropriations for the EPSCoR/IDeA programs. As it currently stands, both the House and Senate have recommended overall funding levels for the five programs that exceed current year funding of \$582.7 million. It is because of the time and strong advocacy from you and your colleagues in the EPSCoR/IDeA community that makes this success possible. There is still a long

way to go before the FY2018 spending bills are enacted and the Coalition will continue working with Capitol Hill to protect and grow these programs.

Prior to the August congressional recess, the House of Representatives approved a "Security-bus" that included the FY2018 Defense, Energy & Water Development, Legislative Branch, and Military Construction/Veterans Affairs spending bills. The legislation also included \$1.6 billion to begin construction of a border wall. Since returning, the House approved another "minibus" spending bill that includes the FY2018 Agriculture, Commerce-Justice-Science, Labor-HHS, Transportation-HUD, Interior, Homeland Security, State-Foreign Operations and Financial Services spending bills. During consideration of this "minibus," Congressman Bill Foster (D-IL-11) once again attempted to target the NSF EPSCoR program but his amendment was blocked in the House Rules Committee.

The Senate Appropriations Committee (SAC) has approved seven spending bills through full committee to date and it is unclear when they will continue to consider spending bills in the Committee.

Finally, there is no talk about a government shutdown right now as Congress approved a Continuing Resolution through December 8th. The stopgap spending bill was coupled with an emergency spending bill to address needs related to Hurricane Harvey as well as a temporary extension of the debt ceiling, also until December 8th. We anticipate a bigger showdown in December, when the dual threats of a government shutdown and a debt limit default re-emerge.

As you can see, there are many challenges between now and the end of the year. We appreciate all of your hard work and advocacy. The EPSCoR/IDeA team will continue to provide updates as we move forward.

Sincerely,

H. Stewart "Stu" Van Scoyoc
President, Van Scoyoc Associates

EPSCoR/IDEA BUDGET UPDATE



FEDERAL RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT SNAPSHOT

FY 2018 Appropriations Highlights

- House Appropriations Committee (HAC) and SAC rejected the Trump Administration proposal related to USDA extramural research project terminations and laboratory closures
- SAC included \$330 million to continue ARPA-E
- HAC and SAC increased funding for NIH research and rejected the proposal to cap Facilities & Administration costs included in President's Budget Request
- HAC and SAC provided \$7.3 billion for NSF in FY2018, \$100 million less than the current fiscal year but \$600 million more than was requested by the Administration
- HAC and SAC preserved the NASA Education Office as well as NASA EPSCoR and Space Grant
- HAC and SAC maintained support for the DOE Office of Science and DOE EPSCoR

EPSCoR/IDEA BUDGET SUMMARY

amounts in millions

Agency	FY16 Omnibus	FY17 Omnibus	FY18 Budget Request	FY18 Coalition Goals	FY18 HAC Approved	FY18 SAC Approved
NSF	\$160.0	\$160.0	\$100.0	\$170.0	\$170.0	\$160.0
NIH	\$320.8	\$333.4	\$288.0	1% of NIH Budget	\$373.6	\$344.3
DOE	\$15.0	\$15.0	\$0	\$20.0	\$15.0	\$20.0
USDA	\$52.5*	\$56.25*	n/a	15% Language	\$56.25*	\$56.25*
NASA	\$18.0	\$18.0	\$0	\$25.0	\$18.0	\$18.0
Totals	\$566.3	\$582.65	\$388.0		\$632.85	\$598.55

*Represents 15 percent of the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) budget

ACTING – NSF EPSCoR SECTION HEAD

Dr. Denise Barnes retired from NSF effective August 31, 2017. The EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition appreciates all of Dr. Barnes' hard work on behalf of NSF EPSCoR and offers congratulations on her retirement.

NSF announced that Dr. Uma Venkateswaran will serve as the Acting Section Head on a detail assignment while a nation-wide search for the next NSF EPSCoR Section Head continues.

Many of you may already be familiar with Dr. Venkateswaran who has been a Program Director in NSF for over twelve years and joined NSF EPSCoR in March 2009.

Dr. Venkateswaran received her Ph.D. in Experimental Condensed Matter Physics from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She was a Program Director in the Division of Materials Research, in the Condensed Matter Physics program and in the Office of Special Programs before joining the EPSCoR Office in 2009.

You can find Dr. Venkateswaran's complete NSF biography and contact information [at this link](#).



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ESTABLISHED PROGRAM TO STIMULATE COMPETITIVE RESEARCH (DEPSCoR)

The DEPSCoR program is now one step closer to returning. As many in the EPSCoR community are aware, Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and Senator Mike Rounds (R-SD) have been working to update the DEPSCoR program, in an effort to strengthen and expand the defense research base.

We are excited to report that the amendment offered by Senators Reed and Rounds was accepted by unanimous consent during Senate consideration of the FY2018 National Defense Authorization Act, which was ultimately approved 89 to eight last week.

The amendment focuses on expanding the Department of Defense (DOD) research base. It would specifically authorize DOD labs to use funds to host researchers from DEPSCoR states, ensure that states would receive at least two years of program eligibility in order to remove swings in eligibility from year to year, and recognize the new name for the program, the Defense Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research.

DEPSCoR will make significant contributions towards ensuring the availability of a workforce prepared to support the many scientific and technological challenges facing the U.S. military today and in the years ahead. Whether it be in communications, electronics, artificial intelligence, sensors, cybersecurity or a host of other areas, the challenges for defense research and those who support it are widespread.



Thank you Senator Reed and Senator Rounds for your support of DEPSCoR!

RECENT EVENTS

The EPSCoR/IDeA Foundation and Coalition Staff Appreciates the Opportunity to Engage Other Organizations and to Participate in Discussions About the Importance of Federally Funded Scientific Research

On August 1st, EPSCoR/IDeA Foundation Executive Director Jessica Molesworth gave the keynote address at the 2017 Idaho INBRE Statewide Research Conference in Moscow, Idaho. Two hundred thirty people attended the conference including faculty, graduate and undergraduate students from 11 Idaho institutions of higher education (University of Idaho, Idaho State University, Boise State University, North Idaho College, Lewis-Clark State College, The College of Idaho, Idaho Veterans Research and Education Foundation, Northwest Nazarene University, College of Western Idaho, College of Southern Idaho, Brigham Young University-Idaho). The conference events included a large student scientific poster session, science talks, and career development panels and workshops. Ms. Molesworth's talk covered the early history of the EPSCoR and IDeA programs as well as present challenges and successes of the IDeA program.



The INBRE Program increases Idaho's competitiveness for biomedical research funding and improves the quality of biomedical education in the state. It is a collaborative effort of research-intensive institutions to sponsor research and science-based educational opportunities with primarily undergraduate institutions (PUIs) and community colleges. Ten Idaho institutions and the Idaho Veterans Research and Education Foundation participate in an unprecedented network of research and educational collaborations.

INBRE impacts all regions of Idaho by delivering innovative, state-of-the-art biomedical research that contributes to improving human health. The INBRE program sponsors mentored, collaborative research to strengthen faculty careers and provides intensive, competitive research experiences for students who are training as Idaho and the nation's next generation of biomedical scientists.



Dr. Leslee Gilbert addressed Association of Public Land Grant University's Council on Governmental Affairs Summer Conference in August 2017. Dr. Gilbert's talk focused on successful advocacy in a changing Washington environment.

If You are Interested in Having a Representative from the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition or Foundation Speak at your Event, Please Contact Us

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

AWARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

Track 1 Awards

NSF announced five new Track 1 EPSCoR awards on September 19th. "These investments by NSF promise to yield fundamental understanding in research areas of regional and national importance while catalyzing new educational and training opportunities for students and researchers," said NSF Director France Córdoba. "This year's EPSCoR awards continue to demonstrate the vitality of scientific inquiry and innovation, which is present in universities and research laboratories across the nation."

Congratulations to Alabama, Kansas, Rhode Island, South Carolina and Wyoming! You can read NSF's press release [at this link](#).

Track 2 Awards

NSF EPSCoR announced eight Track 2 awards totaling \$41.7 million for projects aimed at understanding the relationship in organisms between genetic material, or genotype, and physical characteristics due to gene expression and environmental influences, or phenotype. This year's eight awards are for four years each and involve 21 institutions in 16 EPSCoR-eligible jurisdictions.

You can read more about these eight Track 2 awards [at this link](#).

Track 4 Awards

NSF EPSCoR announced that it will provide 30 non-tenured researchers with fellowships, partnering them with premier research centers and enhancing their ability to work at the frontiers of science and engineering. Awardees will make extended collaborative visits to laboratories and scientific centers, establish partnerships with researchers, learn new techniques, have access to sophisticated equipment, and shift their research focus in new directions with these awards.

The NSF EPSCoR Track-4 fellowship awards total roughly \$5.6 million and are distributed to researchers across 20 states. You can view the full list of awards and read the NSF announcement [at this link](#).

Congratulations to the EPSCoR community!

FY2018 APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

Labor, Health & Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

Status of Legislation

The House of Representatives approved its version of the FY2018 Labor-HHS-Education spending bill as part of a larger appropriations package on September 14th. The SAC approved its version of the legislation on September 7th. It is unlikely that the Senate will consider this legislation on the floor. All final spending decisions related to this legislation are expected to be made in December.

Institutional Development Awards (IDeA)

The House-approved bill includes \$373.6 million for the IDeA program, \$40 million above FY2017. The Committee notes in its report that “IDeA supports high-quality research and investigators throughout the country in States in which the success rate for NIH grants has been historically low.”

The SAC-approved bill includes \$344.2 million for IDeA, \$11 million above FY2017. The Senate report includes the following language:

Institutional Development Award (IDeA) - The Senate Appropriations Committee provides \$344.3 million for the IDeA program, an increase of nearly \$11 million over FY2017. The SAC believes the IDeA program has made significant contributions to biomedical research and has led to the creation of a skilled workforce and made the program an essential component of NIH's research portfolio. The SAC supports this important investment, which extends NIH's reach nationwide. Further, the SAC recognizes the importance of the Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence and the IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence programs and expects funding to be maintained for both. These programs are essential to the overall success of the program.

IDeA States and Cancer Clinical Trials - The Senate Appropriations Committee recognizes that NCI supports clinical trials across the country through its National Clinical Trials Network (NCTN) and the NCI Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP). The SAC understands that there are more than 270 NCORP component sites and 14 NCORP awardees across the country located in IDeA States, and that NCI supports several NCI-designated cancer centers in IDeA States. At the same time, the Committee recognizes that there are still opportunities for academic medical centers in IDeA States to become more engaged in these networks. Therefore, the Committee encourages NCI to coordinate with NIGMS in helping Clinical and Translational Research award sites in IDeA States that do not currently have NCORP or NCTN awards build capacity in these regions to conduct cancer clinical trials. The Committee also encourages NCI to continue to support NCORP in its mission to increase diversity among patients participating in NCI clinical trials, especially with regard to rural and minority populations. Finally, the Committee urges NCI, in consultation with NIGMS, to encourage collaboration between

NIH IDeA Funding (amounts in millions)

FY2016 Enacted	FY2017 Enacted	FY2018 Budget Request	FY2018 Goal	FY18 HAC	FY18 SAC
\$320.8	\$333.4	\$288.0	1% of NIH Budget	\$373.6	\$344.3

FY2018 APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

Commerce, Justice, Science, & Related Agencies

Status of Legislation

The House of Representatives approved its version of the FY2018 C-J-S spending bill as part of a larger appropriations package on September 14th. The SAC approved its version of the legislation on July 27th. It is unlikely that the Senate will consider this legislation on the floor. All final spending decisions related to this legislation are expected to be made in December.

National Science Foundation (NSF)

- ♦ The HAC and SAC both provided \$7.3 billion for NSF in FY2018, \$100 million less than FY2017 and \$600 million more than was requested by the Administration.
- ♦ Research and Related Activities: The HAC provided \$6.033 billion, the same amount of funding enacted in FY2017. The SAC included \$5.9 billion.

NSF EPSCoR Funding (amounts in millions)

FY16 Enacted	FY17 Enacted	FY18 Budget Request	FY18 Goal	FY18 HAC	FY18 SAC
\$160.0	\$160.0	\$100.0	\$170.0	\$170.0	\$160.0

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

- ♦ The HAC recommended \$19.9 billion for NASA in FY2018, \$200 million more than FY2017 and \$800 million more than was requested by the Administration. The SAC provided \$19.5 billion for NASA.
- ♦ Both the HAC and SAC rejected the President's request to eliminate the Office of Education at NASA, and with it the NASA EPSCoR and Space Grant programs. Both Committees provided \$18 million for NASA EPSCoR and \$40 million for Space Grant.
- ♦ The HAC and SAC both included provisions limiting the administrative fees for programs like EPSCoR and Space Grant to no more than 5 percent.

NASA EPSCoR Funding (amounts in millions)

FY16 Enacted	FY17 Enacted	FY18 Budget Request	FY18 Goal	FY18 HAC	FY18 SAC
\$18.0	\$18.0	\$0	\$25.0	\$18.0	\$18.0

FY 2018 APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

Energy & Water Development

Status of Legislation

The House of Representatives approved its version of the Energy & Water Development spending bill on July 27th as part of a “National Security” spending package. The SAC approved its version of the legislation on July 20th. It is unlikely that the Senate will consider this legislation on the floor. All final spending decisions related to this legislation are expected to be made in December.

Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science

- ♦ The HAC included \$5.4 billion for the Office of Science while the SAC recommended \$5.5 billion. This is about equal to FY2017 and a little more than \$900 million above the President’s Budget Request.
- ♦ Both the House and Senate Appropriations Committee rejected the Administration's proposal to eliminate DOE EPSCoR.

DOE EPSCoR (amounts in millions)

FY16 Enacted	FY17 Enacted	FY18 Budget Request	FY18 Goal	FY18 HAC	FY18 SAC
\$15.0	\$15.0	\$0	\$20.0	\$15.0	\$20.0

Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Food & Drug Administration & Related Agencies

Status of Legislation

The House of Representatives approved its version of the Agriculture spending bill on September 14th as part of a larger spending package. The SAC approved its version of the legislation on July 20th. It is unlikely that the Senate will consider this legislation on the floor. All final spending decisions related to this legislation are expected to be made in December.

Agricultural Research

- ♦ The House and Senate versions of the spending bill provide roughly \$2.5 billion for agriculture research programs, this is a reduction of a little more than \$350 million below FY2017 but more than \$380 million above the FY2018 budget request.
- ♦ Both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees included report language directing that not less than 15 percent of the competitive research grant funds be used for USDA's agricultural research enhancement awards program, including USDA-EPSCoR.

USDA EPSCoR (amounts in millions)

FY16 Enacted	FY17 Enacted	FY18 Budget Request	FY18 Goal	FY18 HAC	FY18 SAC
\$52.5*	\$56.25*	\$52.35*	15% Language	\$56.25*	\$56.25*

*Represents 15 percent of the AFRI budget

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition Protects NSF and NASA EPSCoR from Amendments in House of Representatives

Rep. Bill Foster (D-IL-11) submitted an amendment to the House Rules Committee that targeted NSF EPSCoR during House consideration of H.R. 3354, the Make America Secure and Prosperous Appropriations Act. H.R. 3354 was a large appropriations package that included the FY2018 Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Act, among other spending bills.

Rep. Foster's amendment sought to "decreases and then increases the NSF EPSCoR program by \$18 million in order to instruct the NSF to determine EPSCoR eligibility based on per-capita funding." While the amendment technically would not have reduced funding from the NSF EPSCoR program, it was an attempt to use the appropriations process to advocate for change to NSF's long-standing eligibility criteria which would negatively impacted many EPSCoR/IDeA states.

We are happy to report that the House Rules Committee did not make Rep. Bill Foster's amendment in order for floor consideration. Thank you to everyone who reached out to your House Delegations. We really appreciate the tremendous support from the EPSCoR-state members on the House Rules Committee, Reps. Tom Cole, Bradley Byrne, and Liz Cheney.

Also during consideration of H.R. 3354, Rep. Brian Mast (R-FL-18) submitted an amendment that he ultimately withdrew that would have sought to reduce funding for NASA EPSCoR and redirect it towards NSF research focused on removing or reducing contaminants from polluted water that cause harmful algal blooms. While we agree with Rep. Mast on the importance of this type of research, the EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition reached out to his office and highlighted the ongoing work of several EPSCoR states that are currently engaged in NSF and NASA EPSCoR-funded initiatives on the topic.

Rep. Bill Foster Introduces Legislation Targeting the NSF EPSCoR Program Eligibility Criteria

On September 13th, Rep. Bill Foster introduced H.R. 3763, the "Smarter EPSCoR Act." The legislation mirrors his amendment that was ruled out of order. Specifically, this legislation would seek to change the formula that determines eligibility for EPSCoR program funding so that it is based on a per-capita basis instead of a per-state basis. This change would make several of NSF's top funded states EPSCoR-eligible.

You can view Rep. Foster's press release [at this link](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 16, 2017

**COALITION AND FOUNDATION BOARD CONFERENCE CALL
DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED**

NOVEMBER 5-8, 2017

**25TH NSF EPSCoR NATIONAL CONFERENCE
MISSOULA, MONTANA
DETAILS AVAILABLE [HERE](#)**

DECEMBER 6, 2017

**COALITION AND FOUNDATION BOARD MEETINGS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED**

The EPSCoR/IDeA Coalition will be scheduling conference call in October to provide an appropriations and legislative update, open to everyone in the EPSCoR/IDeA community. Details will be provided via email in the coming weeks.

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