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Stough Named Vice President for Research

Roger Stough, Vice President, Research and Economic Development, NOVA Endowed Chair and Professor

With my recent appointment as Vice President for Research and Economic Development at Mason, I am increasingly asked – what do I plan to do? While this question was a theoretical one until the first of July, it will take a couple of months for me to better understand the research, innovation, knowledge transfer, and technology transfer potential of Mason. It is clear that we must face some hard realities if we are to significantly improve the quantity of our sponsored research, innovation, transfer of knowledge and technology. There are two major issues we face at this juncture that are worthy of some discussion.

First, Mason will not increase its research standing among the U.S. university community very much unless it creates at least one or two large and integrated research centers/programs. Based on existing strengths, there are some candidates; such as homeland security/security, international development, entrepreneurship, bioscience, global climate change and carbon trading, to name a few possibilities. At this point, my intent is that we will try to develop as many as six or seven major research centers/programs. By “major,” I mean sponsored research concentrations on the order of \$10 million in funding per year or more. With some good wind to our back, we may be able to create a couple of these large scale programs out of the various attempts that will be made. We may be able to establish even more programs/centers on the order of \$1 or \$2 million in funding per year.

Second, Mason has made considerable progress developing the ingredients necessary to achieve a strong knowledge and technology transfer presence. However, the ingredients are more like those of a cake for which the recipe is a bit vague and thus, has yet to be made. This is of course to be expected at the nascent stage of development of the Mason program. Mason has strong or emerging capability in such areas as intellectual property, business start ups, business assistance programs, incubation centers, student entrepreneurship support programs and related linkages to various organizations in the community of its service area. Some of these elements exist, in one way or another, in nearly every school, college or institute, throughout the various Mason campuses. In short, there is considerable institutional infrastructure in place to enhance the conversion of knowledge at Mason into economically useful knowledge, and thus, commercialization at a much higher level than today. However, the evolution of this capability to a much higher level will not occur unless we create a more integrated and linked framework among these elements and fill in the gaps. Achieving a more integrated capability while preserving the integrity and motivation of existing programs and efforts will involve considerable creativity and willingness to collaborate and share knowledge. With some luck and focused work, we may be able to create the right incentives to make it rewarding for all involved.

While efforts are underway to implement the growth of the research and technology transfer programs, increased stress and pressure will be placed on the various research support programs such as the Office of Sponsored Programs, the Human Subject Review Board and staff, the policy development initiative, and the Office of Environmental Safety.



Stough Named Vice President for Research continued

These programs have developed nicely over the past year or two and are in position to perform at a high level under present conditions. However, as success occurs with large research center evolution and the maturing of the technology transfer effort, these supporting elements will be called on to ratchet up their service functions while continuing to maintain a high level of quality and strong and positive customer relations.

A final issue that needs some attention is to articulate the notion of what the research and technology transfer efforts could be. It is my intent to present a draft outline of a vision for Mason in two months that can serve as the starting point of a discussion to come to an agreement on what we could achieve in 5, 10 or even 15 years. To date, our research and technology transfer efforts have tended to evolve in a manner without a concept of what the Mason research and technology transfer programs can be. This is not a critique but rather the reality of the development of a young organization and an approach that has served us well so far. But there is an opportunity to learn from that experience and from other universities in the U.S. and abroad that are at a more advanced stage of development. We can take some pages from the history of those that have achieved success from similar resource bases as that of Mason in an effort to move the research and technology transfer efforts here to the next level. The first step is to create a notion of what the research and technology transfer programs at George Mason University could be. We plan to have the initial draft of that ready for a broad discussion both inside and outside of the University in the next couple of months.

University Policy 410:

University Policy on Financial Conflicts of Interest in Federally-Funded Research

An updated policy for Financial Conflicts of Interest in Federally-Funded Research has been developed by a committee consisting of Associate Deans for Research, Faculty, Research Administrators and University Counsel. It was reviewed and approved by Deans and Directors, the Faculty Senate, the Provost and Senior Vice President. Policy 410 can be found at <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/research.html>.

The policy provides guidance and direction and will help ensure compliance in an area that is receiving increased scrutiny from the federal government. Each investigator (PI, Co-PI and any other person identified by the PI as responsible for the design, conduct or reporting of research) will be required to disclose situations where "significant financial interests" are present through the submission of an online certification form found at

<http://www.randed.gmu.edu/osp/coi/proposal/index.cfm>

This online form is secured using your Mason email login and password. If no significant financial interests are present, the investigator will simply need to identify the proposal number, sponsor name and select the option stating no significant financial interests are present. If the investigator determines a significant financial interest is present the disclosure should be made to the appropriate Dean or Director (or that individual's designee). The details of the process are outlined in the policy.

Submission of the online form must be made prior to the university's proposal submission for Public Health Service and National Science Foundation funding. For all other federal sponsors, the disclosure form is due within 30 days of the proposal submission (no certification is required for non-federal funding). For Federal awards received, the investigator will need to update his or her certification by June 30 of each year (OSP will coordinate this process annually) or more frequently if a new reportable significant financial interest is obtained.

Effective July 1, 2008, OSP will send the link for the conflict of interest certification form with the initial assignment of a Grants Administrator for each proposal request for federal funding. This will allow maximum time for each investigator to review and submit their certification form prior to the proposal deadline.

After reviewing the policy, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Mike Laskofski at 993-4573 or mlaskofs@gmu.edu

Introducing Dr. Freeman, Ebeth, & Ele



What, you may ask, does elephant dung have to do with the advancement of science? Plenty, says Elizabeth Freeman, New Century College incoming Assistant Professor of Conservation Studies. Dr. Freeman, who is also a Research Associate with the Smithsonian's National Zoological Park, has spent years studying elephants - both in North American zoos and Addo Elephant National Park in South Africa - to ascertain the reproductive health of this endangered species. Testing hormone levels is a key step in determining the elephants' ovarian activity, gestation and general well-being. This is typically done by collecting samples of urine, feces or blood and sending them to a laboratory for analysis. In the field overseas obtaining hormone results can be a difficult process and involves shipping samples, clearing export hurdles and waiting weeks to months for results. Dr. Freeman and her colleagues at the Smithsonian developed an on-site field kit for monitoring reproductive activity in elephants, similar to human home pregnancy tests, that eliminates many of these impediments. This allows not only researchers but also park officials to better oversee the status of individual elephants in the wild and support their reproductive health.

Dr. Freeman's trajectory in studying reproductive biology has evolved from researching the mating behavior and pheromones of a tiny parasitic wasp to African and Asian elephants and now on to the even more critically endangered Black rhinoceros. She says studying insects earlier in her career was actually an advantage, allowing her to follow

multiple generations and develop biological questions that she can apply across a variety of species. Her involvement specifically with elephants began while she was a pre-doctoral research fellow at the National Zoological Park in Front Royal, conducting research in the pursuit of her PhD in Environmental Science and Public Policy from George Mason. Elephants have great appeal to people, she believes, because their intelligence and strong family bonds represent things we as humans also value. The increasing fragility of their existence requires a greater understanding of what it will take on the part of both zoos and wildlife preserves to ensure their continued survival. The fate of such endangered species, in both the wild and captivity, guides Dr. Freeman's focus on the reproductive success of elephants, black rhinoceros, red pandas, and kori bustards, among others.

Dr. Freeman's research has been supported by the Smithsonian, the International Elephant Foundation, the Robison Family Foundation, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums Conservation Endowment Fund and the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund. She looks forward to furthering her research at Mason and expanding the awareness of our students through her course on Global Sustainability.

New Research Faculty at SPP

Siona Robin Listokin, PhD

Siona Robin Listokin recently joined the School of Public Policy as an assistant professor. She earned her PhD in business and public policy from the Haas School of Business at the University of California, Berkeley. Her research interests include retirement and welfare policy, public finance, public management and political economy. Dr. Listokin was a research fellow with the Aspen Institute's Business and Society Group 2007. Her "Management of Public Pension Funds" received the award for best paper from the Academy of Management 2006 Proceedings. The Haas School of Business honored her with the Orel Chrisman Crawford Dissertation Fellowship 2006-2007 for the top female Haas PhD student.

Janine Davidson, PhD

Janine Davidson joins SPP as an assistant professor. She earned her PhD in international studies from the University of South Carolina. Her areas of expertise include national and global security policy making and analysis. Dr. Davidson is one of the U.S. Government's leading experts in the field of stabilization operations, reconstruction, counterinsurgency, and conflict transformation. She has served as the Director, Department of Defense Stability Operations Capabilities in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Stability Operations.

Connie L. McNeely, PhD

Connie L. McNeely recently joined the School of Public Policy as an associate professor. She earned her PhD in sociology from Stanford University. Her research interests include various aspects of politics, organizational behavior, public policy and governance, social theory, and culture. Dr. McNeely is currently the principal investigator for a project funded by the National Science Foundation examining the institutional diffusion of policies and practices aimed at increasing the number of women faculty members in the various science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields in U.S. universities.

**Fiscal Year 2008
Sponsored Program
Activity**

We continue to see growth in the number of proposals submitted and awards received. Congratulations to all faculty members who have been successful in their pursuit of externally sponsored funding.

FY 08 Proposals		
	No.	Value
Q1	224	\$108.5M
Q2	206	\$86.1M
Q3	232	\$66.7M
Q4	189	\$82.8M
Total	851	\$344.1M

**Total FY 07
761 for \$268M**

FY 08 Awards & Increments		
	No.	Value
Q1	191	\$24.7M
Q2	166	\$20.9M
Q3	196	\$32.4M
Q4	166	\$17.5M
Total	719	\$95.5M

**Total FY 07
624 for \$84M**

**Expenditures thru
06/30/2008
\$79.9M**

**Total FY 07
\$67.6M**

Take Your Children to Work Day

Thursday, April 24 was not a typical day in OSP. Except for our student assistants and a few graduate students hand delivering research protocols to ORSP, we don't frequently see students in our space. When the nine participants in the Take Your Child to Work Day program arrived with their parents on the morning of the 24th, however, the whole dynamic of the office changed!

We had an overwhelming amount of support from the OSP team and many of the building tenants. Each of the children received a Mason back pack (donated by the Office of Admissions) filled with treats and Mason items. The participants gathered in the OSP conference room to write or draw about what they want to be when they grow up, then shared their thoughts with their new friends as an ice breaker and distraction from the donuts and juice! We had several aspiring mommies, a couple of rock stars, a soldier, a lawyer and a president.

Harold Geller, term assistant professor and associate chair of the Department of Physics and Astronomy, lead the kids on a tour of the observatory in Research I. He was visibly amused by their questions and delighted them with opening the dome and explaining how the telescopes help to tell the story of space.

Jeannie Callahan, former Research I building manager, resumed the tour and showed the group the facilities side of research administration. The generous hospitality of Mark Pullen, Director, C4I Center/Professor, Computer Science, and his GRA, Keith Sullivan in opening the Robotics Lab and giving the children a demonstration was a big hit! This is apparent in the thank you notes and drawings currently on display in the lobby of Research I.

They had some free time to participate in the "Who We Are Wall" and the "Caring Tree." These activities were designed for the boys and girls, along with adults, to learn about each other's lives at school, at work, and at home by writing and drawing in response to the topic of what we enjoy doing outside of work, and to recognize and celebrate some of the caring people in our lives. The "work of caring," while often unpaid, is some of the most important work we get to do for one another in the world. The resulting artwork is still on display in our office!

While we had big plans for the afternoon, including presentations by Lance Sherry, Deputy Director, Center for Air Transportation Systems Research, and Ammon Shepherd in the Center for History and New Media, the children were completely worn out and unable to focus on any more formal presentations. They were content to busy themselves in the conference room – coloring, drawing and watching videos. Some of the younger children went home early while the older ones were able to spend quality time working with their parents, and gaining a real appreciation of the work they do outside the home.

This annual event is sponsored by the Ms. Foundation for Women. The theme this year was "Making Choices for a Better World." From the [foundation website](#): "Exposing girls and boys to what a parent or mentor in their lives do during the work day is important, but showing them the value of their education, helping them discover the power and possibilities associated with a balanced work and family life, providing them an opportunity to share how they envision the future and begin steps toward their end goals in a hands-on and interactive environment is key to their achieving success."

Carol Zeeve, Grants Administrator, said her son Alexander who is 10 years old benefitted from seeing his mother at work. Carol returned to work full-time six months ago when she began working in OSP, and it's been a challenging adjustment for her family. She said, "It's been good for Alexander to now be able to picture me at work. To know where I go when I leave and have a sense of what I do when I'm here."

While it wasn't a typical day in OSP, it was a wonderful experience to share a day in the life of research administration with our children, to collaborate with our neighbors in Research I, and to learn more about each other through the innocent eyes of youngsters. Our day was featured in the [Mason Gazette](#), and we have plans to do it again next year!



Export Control Laws: What They Are and Why We Should Be Concerned

Export Control Laws are a collection of statutes and regulations promulgated by three Federal agencies which impose restrictions on universities from making any oral, written, electronic, or visual disclosures, shipments, transfers or transmissions of commodities, technology, information, technical data, assistance or software to anyone outside the United States, any non-U.S. citizen, or any foreign embassies or affiliates. One of the main issues we face is the involvement of foreign researchers and foreign students in university research projects. The transfer of controlled technology to a foreign person is deemed to be an export to the country where the person is a resident or citizen.

The Department of State has imposed the International Traffic and Arms Regulations (ITAR) which prohibits universities from providing “defense services” or “defense articles” to foreign nationals or foreign nations. “Defense articles” include items with military applications only and no performance equivalent in civilian applications. “Defense services” includes furnishing assistance to foreign persons, even if they are in the United States, and furnishing any technical data associated with any defense article.

The Department of Commerce has enacted the Export Administration Regulations (EAR). These restrict the export of commercial technologies and include “dual use” technologies, *i.e.*, those technologies with predominately civilian uses which may also have military and proliferation applications or that may be used in terrorist activities. These regulations restrict both the specific technology *and* the location of its export or “deemed” export.

The Department of Treasury’s Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) administers and enforces economic and trade sanctions placed upon certain foreign countries, foreign nationals, international narcotics traffickers, and those engaged in activities related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It regulates the transfer of assets or services to those countries and may prohibit travel and certain other activities with sanctioned countries and persons.

Both ITAR and EAR include language that excludes the results of “Fundamental Research” from requirements for export licenses or other governmental approval. This exclusion applies to basic and applied research in science and engineering performed by US accredited universities *as long as* that research is carried out openly and without restrictions on publication, disseminations, or foreign national access. In other words, once a university accepts a publication restriction in a contract, we lose our right to claim the fundamental research exemption and must prohibit the involvement of foreign researchers and students. The government and industry subcontractors almost always include DFARS Clause 252-204-7000 which prohibits the disclosure of information. If that provision is not successfully removed, even if the Principal Investigator has no desire to publish the results, the university’s fundamental research exemption is lost.

The Council on Government Relations (COGR) reports that universities across the country are collectively finding these regulations to be negatively affecting their research activities. The applicable rules and regulations are complex and often difficult to interpret and apply. In addition, the consequences of an export control violation are serious. Not only does the offending university suffer a severe financial penalty, the individual Principal Investigator and the university’s designated signatory are subject to personal, criminal sanctions, including imprisonment. However, good news is on the horizon. The Under Secretary of Defense issued a memorandum last month strongly encouraging Department of Defense agencies to better “support free scientific exchanges and the dissemination of research results to the maximum extent possible.” In addition, he states that except in rare cases, the “performance of fundamental research should not be managed in a way that it becomes subject to restrictions on the involvement of foreign researchers or publication restrictions.”



Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP)

The FDP is a cooperative effort among federal research agencies, universities and the National Academy of Science aimed at streamlining and improving the federal/university research support relationship and reducing administrative burden. The mission of the FDP is to examine, improve and streamline the administrative processes involved in the competitive appointment, allocation and management of federal funds which support research activities at institutions of higher education throughout the country.

The FDP began in 1988 and includes approximately 120 universities and 10 federal agencies. During spring 2008 membership for the Phase V demonstration was opened for new members. This initiative will focus on maximizing the time Principal Investigators and scientific staff have available to spend on research while reducing administrative burden. George Mason University was accepted as a Phase V member of FDP in April 2008.

The success of this initiative over the years has been a result of close collaboration and communication between federal agencies and universities working towards common goals. As we continue to see increased efforts to grow research at Mason, our goals are aligned with other FDP members and we are excited for the opportunity to participate. For more information on the FDP please go to <http://thefdp.org/>.

Troublesome Contract Clauses—a COGR Update

The Council on Government Relations (COGR) held its annual conference in Washington, D.C. last month. During the conference, they gave an update on the FDP-sponsored survey conducted four years ago analyzing problematic clauses in university contracts. In 2004 and again in 2008, twenty member institutions identified troublesome clauses appearing in agreements issued by both the government and private industry over a six month period. The results? It appears the situation has gotten slightly worse over the past 4 years. The same problems plaguing university contracts then are still plaguing us now. The two main problem areas are restrictions on the ability to publish research findings and the restrictions against the participation of foreign nationals.

The 2008 survey identified 180 agreements where at least one (but often more) restrictive clauses appeared. Publication restrictions appeared 91 times (which includes 44 instances of the “dreaded” DFARS 252.204-7000 non-disclosure clause); restrictions on including foreign nationals appeared 26 times; export control regulations were invoked 26 times; intellectual property ownership restrictions appeared 37 times, and in 67 instances, private industry subcontracts contained restrictive government flow down provisions.

The survey results show that of these 180 awards, 16 resulted in total rejection by the university after lengthy negotiations were unsuccessful. Thirty-eight were accepted as proposed, but only by the three participating universities with secured facilities on campus. In 84 instances, the parties were able to negotiate acceptable language, and 42 were still pending at the end of the survey period. The survey found that these 180 agreements all took more than 100 days to negotiate.

The bottom line is federal agencies are expanding their use of restrictive and limiting clauses and industry primes are adding protective language to their university subcontracts, grants, and cooperative agreements. COGR and FDP are teaming together to lobby on behalf of universities to persuade the government to revise DOD acquisition guidance and clarify OMB restrictions.

University Policy 4009: Subrecipient Monitoring

George Mason University has enacted a new policy affecting the issuance and administration of subcontracts. University Policy 4009 sets forth our subrecipient monitoring practices and procedures. This policy is necessary because Mason is responsible for the financial and programmatic monitoring of sponsored project funds that are subcontracted to another institution or organization (subrecipients). When awarding to Mason, our prime sponsors (often the federal government) have specific terms and conditions that we are required to flow down to any subrecipient receiving a portion of those funds. To monitor these requirements and to ensure good stewardship of sponsored project funds, Mason will use reporting, site visits, regular contact, and other means to assure that the subrecipient administers awards in compliance with laws, regulations, and the provisions of Mason’s prime award and that performance goals are achieved.

The Office of Sponsored Programs is available to assist PIs and departmental personnel with interpreting this new policy. We will also take the lead in developing strategies for resolving cost or audit issues with subrecipients. To locate Policy 4009, please go to <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/4009res.html>. The associated procedures can be found at <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/4009pro.html>

OSP RESTRUCTURE AND STAFF CHANGES

During FY08 we reorganized our team structure in OSP separating pre-award and post-award functions. During the process, there have been several position changes and new additions to our staff. See below for a summary of these changes and go to <http://www.gmu.edu/research/OSP/staff.html> for the OSP org chart.

Job Changes/Promotions:

Karen Cohn: Karen has been named the Assistant Director, Reporting and Operations.

Donna Donaho: Donna previously served as Grants Specialist, Compliance Manager, and Team Leader. She has recently been named Financial Manager.

Eileen Gallagher: Eileen was previously a Contracts Officer and has been promoted to the position of Assistant Director, Contracts.

Beth Ives: Beth previously held the position of Financial Manager and has been promoted to the position of Assistant Director, Post Award.

Patrick Miller: Patrick was previously a Senior Grants Accountant (Gold Team) and has been promoted to Compliance Manager for OSP.

Ashleigh Oglesby: Ashleigh was previously a Grants Accountant (Gold Team) and has been promoted to Grants Administrator (Green Team).

Tippi Phillips: Tippi served as the Team Leader for the Blue Team before joining the Contracts Team as a Contract Administrator.

New Employees:

Linette Anderson: Grants Administrator – Linette comes to OSP INOVA Health Systems grant administration office where she researched and identified funding opportunities. She also prepared and submitted grant proposal applications on their behalf.

Donna Beaubien: Grants Accountant - Donna comes to Mason from the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority where she was an Accounting Technician. Along with her State experience at NVRPA, she brings many years of accounting experience to this position.

Kevin Brooks: Grants Administrator – Before coming to OSP, Kevin was a Program Manager and Grants Specialist with a private grants development consulting firm. He was Director of Alumni Affairs at Randolph-Macon Academy and served for seven years in the U.S. Air Force.

Kai Kong Chan: Grants Administrator – Kai comes to OSP from Mason's School of Management where he supported faculty and students as an assistant in SOM's Finance Department. Kai has also worked for the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance

Maria Vance: Grants Accountant– comes to OSP from BB &T where she was responsible for handling various banking transactions.

Rhonda Troutman: Team Leader, Post Award– Rhonda rejoins OSP as Team Leader, Post Award (Gold Team) effective August 11. She has been in the College of Science for 5 years and previously served as a Grants Administrator in OSP





Congratulations to Patrick Miller, George Mason University's Employee of the Month, August 2008

Travel Authorizations and Reimbursements on Sponsored Funds

As of July 1, 2008 travel authorizations and reimbursements on sponsored funds (funds starting with a "2") no longer need to be submitted to the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) for prior approval before submission to the Travel Office. Principal Investigators (PI) and unit administrators should review award budgets and travel restrictions to ensure travel costs charged to sponsored funding are allowable.

Please note all federal funding must comply with the Fly America Act, which requires travelers funded by the U.S. Government to use a U.S. air carrier for foreign travel. In extenuating circumstances non-compliance may be approved in advance by OSP.

Exceptions may be made when using a U.S. air carrier rather than a foreign carrier would:

- 1) increase the number of aircraft changes you must make en route by two or more
- 2) extend your travel time by six hours or more
- 3) require a connecting time of four hours or more at an overseas interchange point

Cost is not considered a reason for exception under this federal regulation, and travelers will not be reimbursed for any transportation cost for which there is improper use of a foreign air carrier.

OSP will be performing a periodic post-audit review of travel expenses charged to sponsored funds. During this process, OSP will work with the PI and unit administrators to move the unallowable cost to an appropriate funding source. If there are questions regarding travel restrictions or award terms please contact your Post Award Team Leader in OSP <http://www.gmu.edu/research/OSP/staff.html>.

MasterCard Transactions to Sponsored Funds

As of July 1, 2008, MasterCard transactions charged to sponsored funds (funds starting with a "2") no longer need to be submitted to the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) for prior approval before submission to Purchasing. Cardholders who make charges to sponsored funds must retain the original receipts with their departmental MasterCard records for no less than 10 years. Please use the new GE MasterCard Approval Form at <http://fiscal.gmu.edu/forms/index.html#Purchasing>.

If there are any questions regarding this process, please contact Terri Russell at 993-2506.



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