

Research Matters

A Monthly Publication of RAE

March 2022

Notes from Beneath the Blue Awning

Hello, all,

I hope that each of you had a wonderful Spring Break and are now energized for the final push to the end of the 2021-22 academic year, culminating in the Honors Convocation (March 25), Student Scholar Symposium (April 14), and Commencement (May 14)! Lots going on, so let's get right to the following list of items from across the UWF research landscape:

Research Integrity Office staffing

I am pleased to announce that RAE has hired Dr. Janny Crespo-Grow as the inaugural Research Integrity Coordinator. Dr. Crespo-Grow will be responsible for coordinating the University's efforts to address concerns about international influence on University research, as mandated by state and federal laws, including international travel by University researchers, as discussed in the excellent [UWF Employee Travel Guidance](#) page.



NSF switching to Research.gov

The National Science Foundation has informed all partners that they will be switching all proposal submissions from Fastlane to Research.gov by the end of December 2022. This WILL affect the way all UWF PIs apply for NSF proposals; notably **Research.gov requires that, PIs, not RAE, initiate the proposal submission process.** To prepare for this transition, please review the [NSF PSM page](#) and be on the lookout for upcoming UWF RAE training on this issue.

IRB training required for faculty research advisors

The recently revised [IRB Practice and Procedures Manual](#) requires all faculty advisors for student research to have an up-to-date [CITI training certificate](#) for either the Social & Behavioral Research Basic/Refresher course or the Biomedical Research-

Basic/Refresher course. This requirement will go into effect for all new applications and IRBNet packages submitted after **Wednesday, April 13**. CITI training certificates can be uploaded to **IRBNet user profiles** for easier sharing. For questions, please call 850.474.3484 or email **irb@uwf.edu**.

RAE Office Hours

If you have questions about grant prospecting, proposal preparation and submission, grant administration, research integrity, or research compliance, please stop by our NEW RAE office hours **every second Tuesday (3:30-4:30 p.m.) and fourth Friday (3-4 p.m.) of the month**. Schedule and Zoom links are maintained on the **RAE website** and the **UWF Event Calendar**.

Regards,

Matt Schwartz

Professor and Associate Vice President of Research Administration

SBA programs offer funding, partnership opportunities

By JEFFREY E. CASSADY

RAE Staff Writer

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Turning a good idea into a salable product is often daunting, even for seasoned entrepreneurs. A pair of programs managed by the U.S. Small Business Administration might be able to make things a little easier for university researchers who have developed a product or service they think might be a commercial hit.

The **Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer** programs (SBIR and STTR) encourage cooperation among federal agencies, small businesses and nonprofit research institutions, including universities. Through the program, federal agencies contract with or award grants to small businesses that work closely with university researchers to develop and test new technologies that have the potential for commercialization.

This is a big help for University of West Florida researchers who want to take a product or service they've already created – often initially for noncommercial use – and further refine it for the market, said **Dr. Hakki Sevil**, assistant professor in the UWF Department of Intelligent Systems and Robotics.

“Usually, when preparing proposals for agencies, universities and nonprofits, you have to come up with a theoretical, novel contribution,” said Sevil, who worked with a company last year on an **Air Force STTR project** that involved swarm algorithms. “With this program, you have a company that works with something you’ve already developed. They put it into action.”

The two SBA programs differ in their requirements, and STTR projects might be a

better fit for University researchers, as STTR *requires* that contracting small businesses work with researchers at nonprofit institutions while SBIR merely allows such partnerships.

The **Office of Research Administration and Engagement** can help University researchers identify potential SBIR/STTR funding opportunities with federal agencies. For researchers trying to find a partner in the private sector, the **SBDC at UWF** might be able to help locate a suitable company with which to work.

“If there is a (researcher) looking to partner with someone who has the equipment they need and serves the market they need, we can help them make those connections,” said Ayesha Haider, associate director at the SBDC at UWF. “We can help match faculty with businesses.”

Additionally, the SBDC at UWF can assist with drafting SBIR and STTR proposals, specifically with developing a commercialization plan, Haider added.

Participating in SBIR and STTR projects provides several benefits, in addition to the potential development of a commercial product, Sevil said.

“(Students) have the opportunity to work on a project team where there is a company on the other side,” Sevil said. He added that SBIR and STTR project provide valuable experience to students who wish to pursue a research career and it serves as an excellent resume-builder for all student participants.

Sevil offered two pieces of advice for researchers who are interested in STTR. The first is to find a company that the researcher trusts and can work with for several years. The second is to plan ahead and to make sure to identify important points of contact both at the partner company and at the federal agency well ahead of application deadlines.

“We wanted to submit (an application) for Phase 2 (STTR) funding, but we needed a point of contact at the Air Force,” Sevil said. “That’s very important, and it’s difficult to do in a short time. I wish I knew beforehand. It was a big lesson for us.”

Haider will give a presentation about SBIR and STTR opportunities at 10 a.m. May 24 at a TechFarms event held in conjunction with the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Panama City. Haider said she encourages University researchers interested in attending the event to contact her for more information.

For more information about SBIR and STTR generally, contact **Elan Travis** at RAE.

New publications

The Office of Research Administration and Engagement congratulates the following researchers for their new publications:

- Dr. Donovan Chau for his article "**The Geography and Politics of Kenya's Response to COVID-19**" in the journal PRISM.
- **Dr. Alfred Cuzan** for his book "Law and Politics: Their Operations in Democracies and Dictatorships."
- **Dr. Meredith Marten** for her article "The 'Sustainability Doctrine' in Donor-

Driven Maternal Health Programs in Tanzania."

- **Dr. Heather Riddell**, Dr. Stuart Ryan, and **Dr. Charlie Song** for their article "**Improving Students' Oral Communication Skills Through an Interdisciplinary Problem-Based Learning Opportunity in a Sport Management Course**" in the International Journal of Physical Education, Fitness, and Sports.

If you or your students have a new publication you'd like to see highlighted here, please email **Jeffrey Cassady** and be sure to include the researchers' names, the name of the article, the name of the journal or book in which it appears, and a link to the article or an abstract. Also, please identify any University of West Florida researchers who contributed to the publication.

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The Under the Blue Awning column in the March 2022 edition of Research Matters distributed on March 22 should have said that faculty advisors *listed on Institutional Review Board applications* must have an up-to-date CITI training certificate for either the Social & Behavioral Research Basic/Refresher course or the Biomedical Research Basic/Refresher course. RAE regrets the error.

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