

D.C. Days 2015

Three faculty members from the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES), School of Environment and Natural Resources (SENR), recently traveled to Washington, DC as part of the DC Days program. Created by the OARDC Director's Office and the Grant Development Support Unit, the program was designed to increase the competitiveness of grants submitted by emerging faculty researchers by providing them an opportunity to visit with a variety of federal agencies and program officers.

During these meetings, program officers and administrators were asked to give an overview of the agency's mission, their approach to funding research, the submission process and peer review. Anticipated outcomes were that participants would learn more about structuring a research proposal to fit within the agency's requirements and the importance of tailoring a basic research idea to meet the needs and priorities of the funding agency.

Participants began at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with a welcome from Darrell Winner, Senior Science Advisor, EPA, Office of Research and Development (ORD) and received a comprehensive overview of EPA programming. There are six National Research Programs. Their mantra is "Researching a sustainable tomorrow today." The afternoon was filled with a meeting at the National Science Foundation (NSF) in which multiple program officers met with faculty. Of particular interest to our faculty was the encouragement of international collaboration within NSF. On day two, we met at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to hear about Feed the Future, USAID's initiative aimed at global hunger and food security. Through its 24 Feed the Future Innovation labs, they are on the cutting edge of efforts to research, develop and take to scale safe and effective technologies that address current and future challenges posed by a changing climate and the need to feed a growing global population. While visiting United States Department of Agriculture – National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA), faculty members were fortunate to be able to network with many national program leaders and to hear specifics on the six national challenge areas including Food Security, Water, Climate Variability and Change, Water, Sustainable Bioenergy, Childhood Obesity Prevention, and Food Safety.

A resounding theme among all funding agencies was the encouragement of faculty to participate in peer review panels in their desired area of discipline. This allows growth of the assistant professors on many levels, and aids in competitive proposal development. Faculty returned feeling empowered to make use of the contacts they made and with a better sense of what might be successful at the individual agencies. It was also a chance to form professional relationships with other OSU faculty members and staff.

If you are interested in being part of the next trip, please watch your email for more information about the selection process. Contact the Grant Development Support Unit for more information.



Photo: L-R Suzanne Gray, Lori Kaser, David Benfield, Pam Schlegel, Mathew Stevens, Kaiuano Zhao



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Helpful Websites

Grant Development Support Unit
<http://grants.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/>

OSU Office of Sponsored Programs
www.osp.osu.edu

PI Portal
<https://eresearch.osu.edu>

Useful Institutional Data
<http://osp.osu.edu/institutional/>

Grants.gov
www.grants.gov

National Science Foundation
www.nsf.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture
www.usda.gov

National Institute of Health
www.nih.gov

SEEDS Competitive Grants Program
www.oardc.osu.edu/seeds/

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