NEWS SUMMARY

Members of Congress returned to Washington for three weeks of debate. Topics of debate included flood insurance, child development programs, the minimum wage and veterans benefits. Congressional hearings included the following:

- **February 26** Senate Appropriations Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Subcommittee hearing entitled “Taking a Toll on Families and the Economy: The Rising Cost of Alzheimer’s in America;”
- **February 27** Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee hearing on promoting college access and success for students with disabilities;
- **February 27** House Appropriations Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee hearing on federal investments in neuroscience research; and
- **February 27** House Education and the Workforce Subcommittees on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education and Higher Education and Workforce Training hearing entitled “Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession.”

On Monday, Representative John Dingell announced his retirement from office. Elected in 1955, Representative Dingell has served in Congress for almost 60 years.

The National Science Board met in Arlington, VA, on February 25-26. Topics covered included: a FY14 update, a review of facilities, the iPlant collaborative, the astronomy portfolio, the Antarctic program and the 2014 Science & Engineering Indicators report. The meeting was webcast.

President Obama has nominated the following individuals to his Administration:
- **Janet Hill**, Principal at Hill Family Advisors, to be a General Trustee at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts;
Robert Holleyman II, CEO and Founder of Cloud4Growth, to be Deputy United States Trade Representative;

Ambassador Karen Kornbluh, Executive Vice President of External Affairs at the Nielsen Company, to be Broadcasting Board of Governors;

Michael Lombardo, is President of Programming for HBO, to be a General Trustee at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts;

Leslie Meyers, Program Coordinator at The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity, to be a member of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council;

Rose Kennedy Schlossberg, a writer and researcher for Red Board Productions, to be a General Trustee at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts;

Susan Sher, Senior Adviser to the President of The University of Chicago, to be a General Trustee at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts;

John Rogers, Jr., Chairman, CEO, and Chief Investment Officer of Ariel Investments, to be Chair of the President’s Advisory Council on Financial Capability for Young Americans; and

José Cisneros, Treasurer of the City and County of San Francisco, to be Vice Chair of the President’s Advisory Council on Financial Capability for Young Americans.

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AGRICULTURE

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION 100TH ANNIVERSARY CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES
Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) Council of Governmental Affairs (CGA)
News, February 26, 2014

Late yesterday, a House Congressional Resolution H.Con.Res.86 was filed, sponsored by Reps. Austin Scott (R-GA), Frank Lucas (R-OK), Collin Peterson (D-MN), and Kurt Schrader (D-OR), commemorating the 100th anniversary of Cooperative Extension and the enactment of the Smith-Lever Act, which established the nationwide Cooperative Extension System. The House Agriculture Committee intends to hold a hearing next Tuesday, March 4 at 2 pm in 1300 Longworth to “Review the Smith-Lever Act on its 100th Anniversary.” We expect that the Senate Agriculture Committee leaders will also introduce a commemorative resolution and they may have interest in a hearing as well.

* This is the complete news article.

USDA ANNOUNCES NEW GRANTS TO HELP COMMUNITIES MEET WATER CHALLENGES IN COMING YEARS
USDA Press Release, February 24, 2014

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced today that USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture will make $6 million in grants available this year, and up to $30 million total over
the next five years as part of a new initiative to provide solutions to agricultural water challenges. The grants will be used to develop management practices, technologies and tools for farmers, ranchers, forest owners and citizens to improve water resource quantity and quality.

**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

**A WHITE HOUSE CALL TO ACTION TO ADVANCE THE BRAIN INITIATIVE**
By Tom Kalil, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) Blog, February 24, 2014

On April 2, 2013, President Obama launched the Brain Research through Advancing Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative, a Grand Challenge designed to revolutionize our understanding of the human brain. Under this initiative, Federal agencies such as the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Food and Drug Administration are supporting the development and application of innovative, new technologies that can create a dynamic understanding of brain function and its relationship to behavior...Later this year, the White House will hold an event to feature the role of these organizations in achieving the President’s bold vision. These commitments might include support for activities that advance the goals of the BRAIN initiative, including...

**TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR DISSEMINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH IN HEALTH**
By Tony Mazzaschi, Association of American Medical Colleges, February 26, 2014

The 2014 Training Institute for Dissemination and Implementation Research in Health has been scheduled for July 21-25, 2014 at Harvard University. Supported by several federal agencies, “this 5-day training institute to provide participants with a thorough grounding in conducting dissemination and implementation research in health. Faculty and guest lecturers will consist of leading experts (practitioners and teachers) in theory, implementation and evaluation approaches to dissemination and implementation (D&I), creating partnerships and multi-level, transdisciplinary research teams, research design, methods and analyses appropriate for D&I investigations and conducting research at different and multiple levels of interventions (e.g., clinical, community, policy).” There are strict participant eligibility criteria. Applications are due April 6th.

**CREDIT WHERE CREDIT’S DUE: HUMAN SUBJECTS TRAINING FOR PHYSICIANS**
By Sally Rockey, Rock Talk, February 27, 2014

NIH supports critical research that advances human health, while protecting the rights and welfare of the research participants who are integral to research success. NIH’s human subjects
protection policies ensure the conduct of quality research and provide the proper stewardship of NIH funding. Some of you may have taken human subjects training offered at your home institution, but did you know NIH offers free online training as well...Beginning March 3 2014, physicians who successfully complete the course will be able to earn up to 3 American Medical Association Physician’s Recognition Award Category 1 Credits™ continuing medical education credits.

NIH DIRECTOR SEES ALZHEIMER’S RESEARCH HOBLED BY FUNDING SHORTFALL
By Melissa Attias, CQ.com, February 26, 2014

The head of the NIH said Wednesday that his agency’s ability to move forward with promising medical breakthroughs remains limited by funding, though he praised Congress for increasing money for medical research in the recent omnibus spending measure. NIH Director Francis S. Collins said people who come to NIH with research ideas for Alzheimer’s currently have about a one in six chance of getting funded, which means five out of six walk away with nothing. Collins was testifying at a Senate Appropriations Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee hearing on the economic effect of Alzheimer’s disease. “We are constraining the energy, the innovation, the creativity of the most amazing engine for discovery the world has seen, which is American science,” Collins said. Senate Appropriations Chairwoman Barbara A. Mikulski, D-Md., said she was not sure that the idea of doubling funding was “in our fiscal cards.” But she expressed interest in an idea that she said came from Collins to fund the agency at inflation plus 5 percent for about four years to provide a $10 billion increase. Collins said that would bring NIH up to $40 billion in funding, but noted that the decision is ultimately up to Congress, the administration and the American people. “From my perspective, the best thing we can do for science would be to get on that kind of a stable, predictable trajectory so we can plan more than three months at a time, so we can actually tell young people who are coming into the field, there’s a career for you, America is going to invest in this,” Collins said. “Right now people aren’t quite sure. This up and down and uncertainty has really done quite a lot of damage to the momentum.” Collins also thanked lawmakers for the fiscal 2014 appropriation for NIH in the omnibus (PL 113-76), but said that it did not completely reverse the fiscal 2013 sequester cut. In terms of Alzheimer’s funding, he said the fiscal 2013 NIH budget devoted $504 million to research on the disease, while the Alzheimer’s Association estimates that the country currently spends more than $200 billion a year on care for those with Alzheimer’s. That price tag is expected to jump to $1.2 trillion annually by 2050, he added. “We are thrilled that the FY ’14 omnibus includes an additional $100 million for research on diseases of aging, including Alzheimer’s disease, but as you can see the investment pales in comparisons to the cost,” Collins said. The hearing featured a first panel with Collins and other NIH witnesses in a room full of advocates wearing purple Alzheimer’s Association sashes. The second panel included testimony from comedian Seth Rogen, a celebrity champion for the Alzheimer’s Association, who repeatedly prompted laughs from the audience and senators alike. But at many points, the hearing seemed to leave more questions unanswered about Alzheimer’s than answered. Subcommittee Chairman Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, asked the NIH officials what people can do to prevent the disease, and said that he sees claims that range from doing crosswords to taking
supplements. National Institute on Aging Director Richard J. Hodes said that question is being addressed by ongoing research and that no definitive answer currently exists. Harkin and Jerry Moran of Kansas, the top Republican on the subcommittee, also asked Hodes about the prevalence of Alzheimer’s but could not get direct answers to their questions. Still, Collins painted a hopeful picture of Alzheimer’s research compared to 10 years ago. At that time, he said, people working on the disease were “pretty darn frustrated” and clinical trials were turning out badly. But in the last five years, he said there has been “a dramatic change in that environment.” Instead of having a few clinical trials focused mostly on advanced cases, he said now they start treatment earlier because they can make predictions about risk. “There’s a sense in this community of momentum,” Collins said. “It is the right moment to really try to provide that extra push and that’s why what’s happened in FY ’14 could not come at a better time.”

* This is the complete news article.

**OBAMA BUDGET WILL SEEK RECORD FUNDING FOR NEW DOCTORS**
By Kelly Kennedy  *USA TODAY*, February 27, 2014

President Obama will propose boosting the National Health Services Corps from 8,900 a year to 15,000 a year over the next five years, as well as spending $5.23 billion to train 13,000 primary care residents over the next 10 years, in his budget next week, administration officials told *USA TODAY*. The budget, which Obama will reveal Tuesday, marks the first time Medicare funds will be used to increase the number of medical residents, and it's the largest-ever proposed increase of the corps, officials said.

**NIH ADDS SUBSTANTIAL SET OF GENETIC, HEALTH INFORMATION TO ONLINE DATABASE**
NIH News Release, February 26, 2014

Researchers will now have access to genetic data linked to medical information on a diverse group of more than 78,000 people, enabling investigations into many diseases and conditions. The data, from one of the nation’s largest and most diverse genomics projects — Genetic Epidemiology Research on Aging — have just been made available to qualified researchers through the database of Genotypes and Phenotypes, an online genetics database of the NIH.

**FEDERAL BUDGET**

**APPROPRIATORS SEASON BEGINS AS LAWMAKERS HOPE TO BUILD ON PROGRESS**
By Tamar Hallerman, *CQ.com*, February 25, 2014
Appropriators dive into fiscal 2015 work this week hoping to build on the progress they made in negotiating last month’s omnibus with another batch of spending bills. But advancing a new set of appropriations measures this year will depend on whether members are willing to set aside their sharp, partisan differences over domestic policy in order to write politically palatable bills under a more normalized process. “Having gone through the [omnibus] last year helps us. We’re better prepared. We have more knowledge and more experience,” said Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., ranking member on the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations subcommittee.

On domestic programs, Moran said, “we’ve already been able to prioritize to some degree, so now I think we can do an even better job of trying to eliminate programs that are ineffective and prioritize the things that have value.” House and Senate appropriators are holding a trio of hearings ahead of next week’s White House budget request that fall under the two traditionally-divisive domestic spending measures: Financial Services and Labor-HHS-Education.

Just how much appropriators are willing to stand together on domestic issues from medical research to the Internal Revenue Service — all of which appropriators will probe this week — may set the tone for the months ahead. The most critical battle of this year’s appropriations cycle, which formally begins March 4 with the White House’s budget request, will involve how members choose to divide the $492.5 billion set aside for domestic discretionary programs in the December budget agreement (PL 113-67) among priorities as varied as education, health care and financial regulation. With a top line discretionary spending level of $1.014 trillion locked in and defense funding subsequently capped at $521.4 billion, two of the biggest appropriations hurdles have already been averted for fiscal 2015 before it’s even begun. But that still leaves nearly half a trillion dollars in play that could divide appropriators still riding the high off their omnibus (PL 113-76) win. Pent-up demand for funding could drive a wedge between the parties that may be tough to overcome on some of the politically tough spending bills, said Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Tom Harkin, D-Iowa. “There’s going to be a lot of jockeying for money because we have fallen way behind in terms of meeting our domestic needs,” he said. “It’s nice to have a top line because we know what we’ve got to work with, but we’ve got three or four years of falling way behind that we’ve got to make up.” Increased pressure from outside groups for limited domestic funding also will likely fuel debate over divisive policy riders that have stalled work on domestic spending measures in recent years. Senate Appropriations Chairwoman Barbara A. Mikulski, D-Md., and her House counterpart, Harold Rogers, R-Ky., punted on many of the most contentious policy riders in their omnibus negotiations last month, and those outstanding issues will undoubtedly be brought up during the upcoming spending cycle if leaders allow full member input as they have promised in committee and on the floor. The November elections will likely provide further incentive for members to try and achieve their messaging goals in spending bills, some of the only must-pass legislation lawmakers are expected to consider this year. “I think having spending caps makes it all a lot easier because we know what we’ll be writing our bills to overall. It’ll be much more orderly,” said Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, ranking member on the Transportation-HUD appropriations subcommittee. But the first two bills up for hearings include two of the most contentious issues on Capitol Hill: the 2010 health care law (PL 111-148, 111-152) and the Dodd-Frank financial regulatory overhaul (PL 111-203). “This place is not supposed to be rift free. This is supposed to be a place in which there’s debate, discussion, amendments,” said Moran. The Labor-HHS-Education bill is “no different,” he said. “As long as
the Affordable Care Act is so front and center and it creates so many problems, we’re going to continue to have [trouble] finding any kind of agreement between Republicans and Democrats. Having said that, what we did in the last appropriations cycle was satisfactory and the question will be whether we can find similar opportunities.” Harkin said he will push for the Senate to consider domestic appropriations bills first, but said he was not sure “if the Republicans would let us do that.” “I think they would see that as being a Democratic victory and they don’t want us to have any kind of win here, so I think the Republicans would make it impossible to get our appropriations bills through,” he said. Mikulski said her main goal is to move all 12 of the annual spending bills to the floor individually before the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30 so that no continuing resolution is needed to carry funding past the November elections. “I would prefer no lame duck,” she said. “We’d like to be able to have our bills done under regular order by fall.”

* This is the complete news article.

**HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY**

**GREATER EXPECTATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: GOVERNMENT AND COLLEGES CAN COOPERATE MORE**

The “Great Recession” of 2008 had a major impact on college and university budgets. State appropriations, on a per-student basis, have declined by more than 20 percent in inflation-adjusted dollars. Yet expectations from political leaders have proliferated. For example, five years ago the president called on the nation’s colleges and universities to produce more college graduates and ensure those graduates are leaving our institutions with high-paying salaries.

**HOW AVERAGE NET PRICE FAILS TO CAPTURE THE ‘BEST BANG’ FOR YOUR BUCK**

Search for a college on the White House’s College Scorecard, and the first number you’ll see is the institution’s average net price, under a gauge that shows whether the number is low, medium, or high in relation to other colleges. The scorecard was supposed to be a source for prospective students to “compare schools based on a simple criteria—where you can get the most bang for your educational buck,” according to President Obama, who introduced it in his 2013 State of the Union address. But that criterion turns out to be anything but simple.

**NEGOTIATORS WRESTLE WITH HOW TO REVISE RULES FOR PLUS LOANS**
Representatives of historically black colleges, whose institutions were among those hardest hit by the U.S. Department of Education’s abrupt tightening of credit standards for PLUS loans for parents more than two years ago, told the department on Friday that the simplest way to fix the problem would be to just revert to the standards it used before the fall of 2011. "This is not a program in trouble," and the department is not a bank, said David Swinton, president of Benedict College and one of 33 officials on a negotiated rule-making committee looking at the loan issue and other topics. "Your job is to promote education." The department’s changes, he said, had done just the opposite.

**HAVE U.S. ‘SHAME LISTS’ HELPED LOWER TUITION? PROBABLY NOT.**

Three years ago, the Education Department published the first of its annual College Affordability and Transparency Lists, a series of six rankings based on college tuition and net price. The federal watch lists, dubbed the "wall of shame" by college lobbyists, are meant to pressure institutions to rein in their tuition, while enabling consumers to compare colleges based on costs. But as President Obama moves forward with his broader college-rating plan, it is unclear whether the existing lists are working.

**COLLEGE BOARD OFFERS PROPOSALS FOR SIMPLIFYING STUDENT FINANCIAL AID**

Prospective students from low-income backgrounds need information on financial aid at a younger age, and an easier way to get access to that money when they need it for college. That’s the perspective guiding a set of proposals for simplifying the financial-aid system that was released by the College Board on Wednesday. The proposals appear in a new paper, “Back to Basics: Simplifying the Financial Aid Process to Increase Access & Success,” written for the second phase of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s Reimagining Aid Design and Delivery project. The College Board is part of the project’s consortium working on simplification and transparency.

**RISK MANAGEMENT**

The U.S. Education Department needs to do more to ensure the billions of dollars it offers in financial aid aren’t wasted on students who fraudulently enroll in distance education programs, the department's Office of Inspector General has concluded in a critical new report...Despite the Education Department’s efforts in recent years to curb cases of fraud where students enroll in courses to exploit those financial aid programs -- schemes known as fraud rings -- the audit found the institutions struggle to verify students’ identities and track their attendance and academic engagement.
CFPB VS. ITT
By Michael Stratford, Inside Higher Ed, February 27, 2014

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau on Wednesday filed a lawsuit against ITT Educational Services, accusing the large for-profit higher education company of engaging in predatory lending and other abusive practices. The bureau’s lawsuit marks its first enforcement action against a for-profit college and is an indication, some observers said, of how seriously and aggressively the watchdog agency -- which officially turns three years old this July -- plans to use its enforcement powers in this contentious, politically charged sector of higher education.

IMMIGRATION

WHERE DO HOUSE REPUBLICANS STAND ON IMMIGRATION PRINCIPLES? (UPDATED WHIP COUNT)
By Christina Bellantoni, Roll Call, February 25, 2014

Where do House Republicans stand on the set of immigration principles released by GOP leadership in January? Journalists at CQ Roll Call spent two weeks asking each House Republican’s office and combing through their public statements to answer that simple question. We have recorded the answers, which suggest weak support within Speaker John A. Boehner’s conference for overhauling the nation’s immigration system. The initial CQ Roll Call tally found 19 Republicans backing the principles, two who said “possibly yes,” 30 Republicans openly opposed, 22 who refused to say and 25 who were undecided. Three others had nuanced responses. The other 131 did not respond to calls or emails from our team.

DEMOCRATS’ IMMIGRATION GAMBIT
By Seung Min Kim, Politico, February 26, 2014

Hill Democrats and immigration reform advocates are almost certain they’ll have to resort to a rare procedural move to try to force a vote on an overhaul this year. The tricky part is deciding when to pull the trigger. Though aides say no decision has been made, House Democratic leaders are strategizing on when to deploy what’s known as a discharge petition, which would have to garner a majority of lawmakers’ signatures to force immigration legislation onto the House floor for a vote.

INNOVATION
WHITE HOUSE HOLDS MEETING TO DISCUSS WAYS TO IMPROVE U.S. PATENT SYSTEM
The Association of American Universities (AAU), February 21, 2014

The White House on February 21 held a Patent Stakeholders Meeting at which National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling, Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker, and Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce and Deputy U.S. Patent and Trademark Office Director Michelle Lee reviewed Administration initiatives "designed to combat patent trolls and further strengthen our patent system and foster innovation." The speakers reviewed progress on five Executive Actions announced in June, 2013, and announced three new Executive Actions. In his opening remarks, Sperling presented a case for forceful action against what he characterized as an abrupt increase in abusive patent practices by patent assertion entities. But in describing the Administration's position, he acknowledged legitimate differences among different sectors on the range of legislative proposals for curbing abusive practices, and called on stakeholders to come together to forge workable compromises. Following the public session, Deputy Undersecretary Lee moderated a roundtable on patent reform legislation attended by representatives from 25 invited organizations, including universities, to present and discuss their views on key legislative issues. Each group was asked to provide a statement on its top three priorities; the statement submitted by John Vaughn of the AAU can be found here. The roundtable revealed significant differences of view, but the discussion also suggested a receptivity among the parties to seeking ways to narrow those differences in pursuit of legislative compromises.

* This is the complete news article.

INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

USAID LAUNCHES SECOND ROUND OF ALL CHILDREN READING: A GRAND CHALLENGE FOR DEVELOPMENT GRANT AND PRIZE COMPETITION
USAID Press Release, February 27, 2014

Today, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), in partnership with World Vision and the Australian government, launched the second round of All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development. This international grant competition will make available a total of $2.7 million for innovations and programs that leverage the transformative power of technology to leapfrog existing infrastructure challenges and empower children to read. Applications are now being accepted at www.AllChildrenReading.org.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES IN EUROPE FOR NSF POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH FELLOWS
NSF Dear Colleague, February 24, 2014
To further scientific and technological cooperation between the European Community and the United States, an Implementing Arrangement was signed on July 13, 2012 to enable U.S. scientists and engineers with NSF-funded CAREER awards and Postdoctoral Research Fellowships to pursue research collaboration with European colleagues supported through EU-funded ERC grants. Under the Arrangement, the ERCEA identifies ERC-funded research groups who wish to host NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellows for research visits of up to one year within their ERC funding. This letter invites current Postdoctoral Research Fellows to apply for research visits to any identified, appropriate European research group.

**PHYSICAL SCIENCES & ENGINEERING**

**PRESIDENT OBAMA ANNOUNCES TWO NEW PUBLIC-PRIVATE MANUFACTURING INNOVATION INSTITUTES AND LAUNCHES THE FIRST OF FOUR NEW MANUFACTURING INNOVATION INSTITUTE COMPETITIONS**
White House Press Release, February 25, 2014

The President today will announce new steps in partnership with the private sector to boost advanced manufacturing, strengthen our capabilities for defense, and attract the types of high-quality jobs that a growing middle class requires. First, the President will announce two new manufacturing innovation institutes led by the Department of Defense supported by a $140 million Federal commitment combined with more than $140 million in non-federal resources: (1) Detroit-area headquartered consortium of businesses and universities, with a focus on lightweight and modern metals manufacturing; (2) Chicago headquartered consortium of businesses and universities that will concentrate on digital manufacturing and design technologies. Second, the President will also launch a competition for a new manufacturing innovation institute to build U.S. strength in manufacturing advanced composites, the first of four new competitions to be launched this year. [MSU is one of the university partners in the Detroit-area Manufacturing Innovation Institute.]

**CONCEPTS FOR CHANGE** (an overview of the Department of Defense’s (DOD’s) research and engineering strategy)
By Alan Shaffer (Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering), January-February 2014

For more than 50 years, the DoD has relied on Research and Engineering (R&E) to provide the nation with the technology-based operational capability superiority that protects U.S. forces and helps to ensure national security. DoD’s scientists and engineers work daily with industry and academia to conceive, develop and mature concepts into capabilities that provide an operational advantage to our warfighters...The guidance is clear: The president and the secretary of defense rely on the R&E community to make key contributions to the defense of our nation. This guidance is summarized in three strategic objectives:
• Mitigate new and emerging adversary threats that could degrade U.S. (and allied) capabilities.
• Affordably enable new or extended capabilities in existing military systems.
• Develop technology surprise through science and engineering applications to military problems.

RELIANCE 21: OPERATING PRINCIPLES FOR DEFENSE S&T ENTERPRISE
Department of Defense, January 2014

Reliance 21 is the overarching framework of the DoD’s Science and Technology (S&T) joint planning and coordination process. The goal of Reliance 21 is to ensure that the DoD S&T community provides solutions and advice to the Department’s senior-level decision makers, warfighters, Congress, and other stakeholders in the most effective and efficient manner possible. This is achieved through an ecosystem and infrastructure that enables information sharing, alignment of effort, coordination of priorities, and support for scientists and engineers across the Department.

PRIVACY WORKSHOP TO EXPLORE "BIG DATA" OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES
By Nicole Wong, OSTP Blog, February 24, 2014

Last month, the President asked Counselor John Podesta to lead a comprehensive review of how “big data” – data sets so massive, diverse, or complex, that conventional technologies cannot adequately capture, store, or analyze them – will affect how Americans live and work. Senior administration officials have since begun to look at the implications of collecting, analyzing, and using such data for privacy, the economy, and public policy. Because we all have an important stake in the future of privacy, hearing from a broad range of experts and engaging the public is critical to this effort. To advance this inquiry, OSTP will be co-hosting a series of public events to hear from technologists, business leaders, civil society, and the academic community. The first event is a public workshop organized by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), entitled “Big Data Privacy: Advancing the State of the Art in Technology and Practice.” The workshop will be held on March 3, 2014. For information on how to register, or how to watch the event by webcast, please go to MIT’s website here.

NASA TO HOLD ASTEROID INITIATIVE OPPORTUNITIES FORUM
NASA News Release, February 24, 2014

As the next step in advancing NASA’s asteroid initiative, the agency will host an Opportunities Forum March 26 at NASA Headquarters in Washington. The forum, which is open to industry, academia and interested individuals, will provide status updates from ongoing asteroid redirect mission studies and summarize how responses to a 2013 Request for Information are helping
improve mission planning activities. The event will also highlight opportunities for public engagement in the mission and activities associated with the Asteroid Grand Challenge.

**BROADER IMPACTS INFRASTRUCTURE SUMMIT**
**NSF, February 28, 2014**

Building on the success of last year's Broader Impacts Infrastructure Summit, the broader impacts community and NSF invite institutional BI support professionals to participate in a dialogue on the future of broader impacts support. The Summit will be April 16-18, 2014 at the Westin Arlington Gateway in Arlington, Virginia. The goals of the Summit are to:

- Bring BI professionals together to share best practices, ideas, and challenges.
- Set the course for the future of BI infrastructure support.
- Increase interaction between NSF and the BI community.

Early Registration is $175 (by March 10, 2014). Regular Registration is $225 (by March 24, 2014). Late Registration is $250 (after March 24, 2014). Register here: https://extweb.missouri.edu/NewWebReg/Login.aspx?uid=3&pid=123877. To find out more about the BIIS2014, visit our website at www.broaderimpacts.net

* This is the complete news article.

**A STAR IN A BOTTLE**

Years from now—maybe in a decade, maybe sooner—if all goes according to plan, the most complex machine ever built will be switched on in an Alpine forest in the South of France. The machine, called the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor, or ITER, will stand a hundred feet tall, and it will weigh twenty-three thousand tons—more than twice the weight of the Eiffel Tower. At its core, densely packed high-precision equipment will encase a cavernous vacuum chamber, in which a super-hot cloud of heavy hydrogen will rotate faster than the speed of sound, twisting like a strand of DNA as it circulates. The cloud will be scorched by electric current (a surge so forceful that it will make lightning seem like a tiny arc of static electricity), and bombarded by concentrated waves of radiation. Beams of uncharged particles—the energy in them so great it could vaporize a car in seconds—will pour into the chamber, adding tremendous heat. In this way, the circulating hydrogen will become ionized, and achieve temperatures exceeding two hundred million degrees Celsius—more than ten times as hot as the sun at its blazing core.

**ARPA-E PROJECTS ATTRACT MORE THAN $625 MILLION IN PRIVATE FUNDING**
The DOE’s Advanced Research Projects Agency -- Energy (ARPA-E) today announced that the Agency’s innovative projects are making great strides towards transforming the way Americans use and produce energy. To date, 22 ARPA-E projects have attracted more than $625 million in private-sector follow-on funding after ARPA-E’s investment of approximately $95 million. In addition, at least 24 ARPA-E project teams have formed new companies to advance their technologies, and more than 16 ARPA-E projects have partnered with other government agencies for further development.

RENEWABLE CARBON FIBER

The DOE’s Bioenergy Technologies Office announced the Renewable Carbon Fiber Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), which seeks to develop a cost-competitive pathway to produce high-performance carbon fiber for vehicle lightweighting from renewable non-food biomass. For more information about the content of this FOA, or to apply, please visit the EERE Exchange website. Questions about this FOA can be sent to RenewableCarbonFiber@go.doe.gov. The deadline for submitting concept papers is March 3, 2014, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, and the deadline for full applications is April 11, 2014, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

* This is the complete news article.

MARKET REPORT ON EMERGING NANOTECHNOLOGY NOW AVAILABLE
NSF Media Advisory, February 25, 2014

Nanotechnology has had an established role in industry for many years. For more than a decade, the NSF has supported cross-disciplinary nanoscale science and engineering research, helping to spawn global growth in nanotechnology research and development. To help quantify that growth, Lux Research released a new report on global spending for emerging nanotechnology and the next generation of nano-enabled products. These findings help illustrate the long-term impact investments in fundamental science and engineering research under an innovative initiative can have on the global marketplace.

WINDSTORM RESEARCH BILL ENDORSED BY HOUSE PANEL
By Anne L. Kim, CQ.com, February 28, 2014

A House panel on Friday approved legislation that would reauthorize for two years a multi-agency program for windstorm research and development of ways to reduce the damage they cause, after lawmakers adopted a compromise that drew Democratic support. In a brief markup, the House Science, Space and Technology Committee gave voice vote approval to the
amended measure (HR 1786). While Democrats had initially objected to the bill at the subcommittee level, lawmakers appear to have reached a compromise on the measure since then. “I am pleased that the process of getting from subcommittee to full committee today was a fair, productive and bipartisan process,” said ranking Democrat Eddie Bernice Johnson of Texas in a written statement. She thanked Chairman Lamar Smith and Randy Neugebauer, both Texas Republicans, for “working with us to address some of our concerns with the legislation.” The panel’s top lawmakers did not give opening statements in order to speed up consideration of the bill before scheduled floor votes. Daniel Lipinski, D-Ill., said that while there was still disagreement on the underlying bill’s funding level, he supported the compromise. The bill would authorize $21.4 million annually for fiscal 2014 and 2015 for federal research on windstorms and developing mitigation techniques and outreach. Specifically, the bill would authorize funding for this coordinated work at the Federal Emergency Management Agency, NSF, National Institute of Standards and Technology, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The measure also would make changes to the program, such as designating the National Institute of Standards and Technology as the lead agency. The OSTP currently leads activities. Changes to Funding Level: Before approving the bill, the panel adopted by voice vote a manager’s amendment by Neugebauer, who sponsored the measure. The manager’s amendment would adjust the bill’s authorization levels, more than doubling the bill’s annual authorized funding for FEMA while lowering authorized levels for other agencies covered under the bill. The measure’s overall authorization level would stay the same each year, but the amendment would change the measure from a three-year bill to a two-year reauthorization, lowering the total amount that the bill would authorize. “FEMA is the [National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program] agency tasked with taking the research conducted at other agencies and developing mitigation techniques and public outreach,” Johnson said in her written statement. “It is important to ensure that they have the resources they need to be effective.” The manager’s amendment also would include social science research in the measure. “Strengthening our physical infrastructure is not sufficient to save lives,” said Lipinski, who said social science is essential for increased efforts to boost resilience against disasters. While it may sound like a “no-brainer” that people in the path of a windstorm would take appropriate shelter, “decades of social science research tells us otherwise,” he said. The amendment also would require the four agencies that make up the program to spell out in their annual budget requests to Congress what they plan to do and how much they plan to spend under the program for that year. Neugebauer said that provision would provide more accountability and transparency on how money is being spent. The original 2004 authorization law (PL 108-360) expired in 2008. Neugebauer, who wrote that law, said he learned first-hand the devastation that tornadoes can cause, when during the 1970s, one destroyed the Lubbock, Texas, apartment complex where he lived. “What that experience taught me was the tremendous damage that can be caused by these windstorms and tornados, but also the loss of life,” he said. Lawmakers also indicated that they were seeking to work on a reauthorization of the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program. Smith said that he planned to schedule a hearing and that he looked forward to working on a reauthorization of that program.

* This is the complete news article.
NANOTECHNOLOGY UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION IN ENGINEERING
NSF Program Solicitation, February 27, 2014

Full Proposal Deadline(s) (due by 5 p.m. proposer's local time): May 27, 2014. This solicitation aims at introducing nanoscale science, engineering, and technology through a variety of interdisciplinary approaches into undergraduate engineering education. The focus of the FY 2014 competition is on nanoscale engineering education with relevance to devices and systems and/or on the societal, ethical, economic and/or environmental issues relevant to nanotechnology.

TINY, CHEAP, FOOLPROOF: SEEKING NEW COMPONENT TO COUNTER COUNTERFEIT ELECTRONICS
DARPA News Release, February 24, 2014

Used and non-authentic counterfeit electronic components are widespread throughout the defense supply chain; over the past two years alone, more than one million suspect parts have been associated with known supply chain compromises. The problem is pervasive, with both expensive and inexpensive electronic parts being targeted. Counterfeit, or otherwise suspect electronic components, present a critical risk for the DoD, where a malfunction of a single part could lead to system failures that can put warfighter lives and missions at risk. A new DARPA program seeks to develop a tool to verify, without disrupting or harming the system, the trustworthiness of a protected electronic component. The DARPA Supply Chain Hardware Integrity for Electronics Defense program seeks proposals to develop a small (100 micron x 100 micron) component, or dielet, that authenticates the provenance of electronics components. Proposed dielets should contain a full encryption engine, sensors to detect tampering and would readily affix to today’s electronic components such as microchips.

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN DINGELL’S RETIEMENT

THE ‘BABE RUTH’ OF LEGISLATORS
By David Nather, Politico, February 24, 2014

Congress is losing a lot of policy heavyweights this year, but there’s only one whose career spans from the creation of Medicare to the passage of the Affordable Care Act. In his nearly six decades in Congress, John Dingell has played a central role in more issues than most ordinary lawmakers ever get to touch — everything from health care to energy, environmental laws, food safety and telecommunications policy, and an aggressive oversight approach that cut across even more issues that affect Americans daily.
SO LONG, JOHN DINGELL
By Norm Ornstein, The Atlantic, February 24, 2014

The Michigan Democrat has served in Congress for 58 years, and was immersed in the House for a long time before that, as his father held the seat for the previous 22 years, going back to the beginning days of the FDR era. At 87, he is still as passionate about the issues, as savvy about how Congress works, as knowledgeable about the policies, as he ever was, which makes him more passionate, savvy, and knowledgeable than the vast majority of his colleagues. The fact is that he could stay in office and still be a force, hitting the 60-year mark with ease. Even in this hothouse and rancorous atmosphere, Dingell commands widespread respect across all the usual barriers in Congress.

RESEARCH FUNDING TRENDS

STRAPPED SCIENTISTS ABANDON RESEARCH AND STUDENTS

The numbers and the accompanying litany of woe are getting quite familiar. The budget of the National Institutes of Health, the single biggest supplier of research dollars to universities, hasn’t beat inflation in more than a decade. The NSF and other federal providers aren’t doing a lot better. After several years of growing anxiety over whether those trends are temporary or enduring, thousands of university researchers responding to a Chronicle survey have helped answer a key question: For better or worse, the nation’s scientists have embarked on an unequivocal downsizing of their capability to perform basic investigative research. Among the key findings: Nearly half have already abandoned an area of investigation they considered central to their lab’s mission. And more than three-quarters have reduced their recruitment of graduate students and research fellows because of economic pressures.

RENEWING THE PUSH ON RESEARCH
By Libby Nelson, Politico’s Morning Education, February 27, 2014

The across-the-board cuts of sequestration might be (mostly) gone, but universities argue that Congress needs to do more to avoid a growing "innovation deficit" between the U.S. and other countries willing to spend more on education and research. The American Council on Education, AAU and APLU and others co-sponsor a new video that uses the language of deficit hawks to sound the alarm. [MSU is a member of both AAU and APLU.]

* This is the complete news article.

SEXUAL ASSAULT POLICY
FEDS PROBE MSU FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT MISCONDUCT

The U.S. Department of Education revealed Monday it is investigating complaints about MSU’s handling of sexual assault accusations, a fact that university officials successfully kept quiet until now. On Friday, university officials sent a letter via email to the MSU community announcing what they described as several new events aimed at educating students, faculty and staff about sexual assault prevention.

STANDARDS OF EVIDENCE
By Michael Stratford, Inside Higher Ed, February 25, 2014

The drafting of new campus safety rules under the Clery Act is reigniting some of the debate over what standard of evidence colleges should be required to adopt in campus disciplinary proceedings involving sexual assault. Education Department officials on Monday released their first proposal for new campus safety regulations to conform with changes Congress made last March to the Clery Act. The proposal spells out how institutions must handle new, expanded crime reporting requirements, such as including instances of domestic violence, dating violence and stalking in their published crime statistics.

SOCIAL SCIENCES, THE ARTS & THE HUMANITIES

ALAN LOMAX’S 1938 SURVEY OF MICHIGAN IS SUBJECT OF E-BOOK DISCUSSION

In 1938, the Archive of Folk Song at the Library of Congress dispatched Alan Lomax to complete a folklife survey of the Great Lakes region. Almost three months later, Lomax returned with a cache of 250 discs and eight reels of film. These materials documented the diversity of ethnicities in Michigan, as well as cultural expression among loggers and lake sailors. Author Todd Harvey of the American Folklife Center will discuss his new e-book, "‘Michigan I-O’: Alan Lomax and the 1938 Library of Congress Folksong Expedition” (Dust to Digital, from the iBookstore, 2014), on Wednesday, March 12, at noon [at the library of Congress.]

TAXES

EDUCATION IN TAX REFORM IN 30 SECONDS
By Libby A. Nelson, Politico’s Morning Education, February 27, 2014
The House Ways and Means proposal for tax reform would (take a deep breath): make the 
American Opportunity Tax Credit more refundable; stop taxing Pell Grant refunds as income;
end tax deductions for tuition, student loan interest and teachers' classroom supplies; tax 
student loan forgiveness for public servants, "section 127" programs that contribute to paying 
for employees' higher education, and tuition discounts for college employees; and kill Coverdell 
savings accounts and zone academy bonds. In all, it would slim 15 higher ed tax provisions 
down to five. Teachers would be particularly hard-hit, losing two special set-asides, although 
the plan's author, Chairman Dave Camp (R-Mich.), says the classroom deduction would be more 
than offset by lower rates and overall simplification.

* This is the complete news article.

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN INTRODUCES TAX OVERHAUL PLAN; CONTAINS 
SEVERAL PROVISIONS OF CONCERN TO UNIVERSITIES

House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp (R-MI) today introduced an 
ambitious plan to overhaul the federal tax code that contains several provisions of significant 
concern to the higher education community. The proposal would streamline individual and 
corporate tax brackets, lower tax rates, and modify or eliminate a number of tax breaks and 
incentives, including several that are important to higher education. An initial review indicates 
that the bill contains many troubling provisions that would: adversely affect students’ ability to 
pay for college, potentially reduce charitable giving, increase regulatory and compliance 
burdens, and make it harder for universities to carry out their missions. The legislation would,
among other things:

- incorporate elements of the Black-Davis Student and Family Tax Simplification Act (H.R. 
  3393), including making permanent the American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC) and allow 
  some Pell Grant recipients to better benefit from the AOTC;
- repeal the tuition deduction for both undergraduate and graduate students;
- repeal the student loan interest deduction;
- significantly pare back Section 127 employer-provided education assistance benefits;
- repeal Section 117 (c) tuition remission benefits that universities may offer their employees;
- modify provisions affecting charitable giving, including provisions affecting valuation of 
  property and limitations on taxpayers’ adjusted gross income levels, and establish a two-
  percent floor before charitable contributions could be deducted;
- not extend the IRA charitable rollover;
- add new requirements affecting executive compensation;
- make taxable private activity (tax-exempt) bonds for private colleges and universities;
- change unrelated business taxable income (UBIT) provisions affecting tax-exempt entities, 
  including making name and logo royalties subject to taxation, requiring UBIT to be
calculated separately for each trade or business activity, and limiting the UBIT exemption for research income to only income derived from research made available to the public;

- impose a new excise tax on investment income of private colleges and universities; and
- modify and make permanent the R&D tax credit.

Other provisions in the legislation would also affect research universities. AAU staff will review the bill over the next few days, and it will be discussed at next week’s regular CFR meeting here in Washington, DC. Chairman Camp discussed his bill in advance of its introduction in an op-ed published today in the Wall Street Journal. The plan was met with little support on Capitol Hill, with House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) saying he welcomed “a public conversation about the issue of tax reform,” without offering comments on specific provisions in the measure, and both Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) saying that the package stands no chance of approval in this election year.

*This is the complete news article.

**THE TAX BILL COMETH**

Tax legislation introduced Wednesday by Republican leaders in the House of Representatives doesn't have a snowball’s chance in Miami of becoming law. But that does not mean that its many provisions related to higher education -- many of which would negatively affect colleges and universities -- don't matter.

**HIGHER ED GROUPS ASK IRS NOT TO CHANGE POLITICAL ACTIVITY RULE**

A coalition of higher education associations on Thursday urged the Obama administration not to apply to colleges and universities its proposed rules on political activity by certain tax-exempt nonprofit organizations. The Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) have been seeking public comments on their proposal to more clearly define what constitutes political campaign-related activity at "social welfare" nonprofits, which are organized under section 501(c)4 of the tax code. In proposing new standards at those 501(c)4 organizations, the Treasury Department and IRS also asked for input on whether they should apply the same definition of political campaign activity to 501(c)3 organizations, which include most nonprofit colleges and universities.

**ADJUNCTS: CAPS UNTouched**

When the Internal Revenue Service offered guidance earlier this month on how college and universities should count adjuncts' hours in relations to the Affordable Care Act, the agency
raised at least as many questions as it answered. Chief among them was whether the guidance would make any real difference in the lives of adjuncts.

**TEACHER PREPARATION**

**HOUSE PANEL SEeks TO OVERHAUL TEACHING SCHOOL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

By Carolyn Phenicie, *CQ Roll Call*, February 27, 2014

House lawmakers and outside experts agreed Thursday that reporting requirements for teacher preparation programs are burdensome and ineffective and should be overhauled as Congress works on reauthorizing the Higher Education Act. The need for less federal data collection has been a common theme during hearings by the Education and the Workforce Committee on renewing that law, noted Rep. Virginia Foxx, R-N.C., chairwoman of the Higher Education and Workforce Training Subcommittee. “Every panel we’ve had said we collect too much data at the federal level and we don’t have information, and you all have confirmed that again,” Foxx told the witnesses. Rep. Jared Polis, D-Colo., said state and federal regulations, including data reporting, are stifling creative and innovative programs to attract and train new teachers. “We need to remove the Higher Education Act’s onerous input-based reporting requirements, and focus on outcomes,” Polis said. Under Title II of the law (PL 110-315), schools of education each April must report a variety of data on their students, and states each October must aggregate that data — including certification and licensure requirements, pass rates on state licensure tests ranked by institution and other information — and report to the Education Department. Teacher preparation programs collect most of the data, of which there are more than 400 separate measures, and then forward that information to the state, said Deborah A. Gist, commissioner of Rhode Island’s Elementary and Secondary Education Department. “Going forward, it would be helpful if the state collection were limited to data points that provide evidence of quality, and that our states and that our educator preparation programs find to be actually valuable, such as data that will focus on outcomes,” she said. Heather G. Peske, associate commissioner for educator quality at the Massachusetts Elementary and Secondary Education Department, said states are not required to report on teacher hiring or retention measures or teacher evaluations, which could be illustrative when assessing the quality of teacher preparation. Reporting requirements on the percentage of graduates teaching high-need subjects or in high-need schools also would be useful, she said. Witnesses said that although the Education Department is not collecting the correct data, the federal government does have a role to play in this area. Rep. Todd Rokita, R-Ind., who chairs the Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, asked witnesses to submit lists of not only data collection areas that should be eliminated but also useful ones that could be added. Once schools and states collect the data and send it to the Education Department, they do not receive feedback that could be helpful, Foxx said. “Do you ever get any feedback on all that data? You’re shaking your heads no. We’re just wasting people’s time and money,” she added.

* This is the complete news article.
NEW DATA SHOW WHERE VETERANS ENROLL, BUT NOT HOW THEY FARE

Through a new tool designed to help GI Bill recipients navigate their college choices, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has for the first time released data that show exactly where those federal education benefits are used. The data, released this month, are for the 2012 calendar year and were compiled through the VA’s GI Bill Comparison Tool. What the data show resembles the results of a 2011 U.S. Senate report and confirms the beliefs of some university officials and veterans' advocates about where veterans are attending college.

VETS RESEARCH ROUNDUP
By Libby Nelson, Politico’s Morning Education, February 28, 2014

A new report from the Institute of Education Sciences digs into colleges' interactions with military students. It finds 76 percent of colleges and universities enrolling service members, former military personnel and their dependents awarded credit for training during military service. But fewer than one in four institutions trained faculty or staff about the mental and physical health issues that veterans may face, IES found.

* This is the complete news article.

APLU SENDS LETTER TO SENATE ON VETERANS’ IN-STATE TUITION PROVISION IN S. 1982
APLU CGA Update, February 24, 2014

APLU sent a letter on S.1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act, to all Senate offices today. As noted in CGA News (2-21-14), the Senate expects to take a cloture vote on the motion to proceed on S.1982 this evening. As the letter states, in principle, APLU believe that individual states should retain their autonomy to determine in-state residency status. However, if this bill proceeds, we prefer the narrower House-passed language regarding in-state residency for veterans. It also acknowledges our disappointment about the loss of out-of-state yellow-ribbon educational benefits for public institutions resulting from this provision. Please feel free to use this letter in your discussions with your Members.

* This is the complete news article.