

National Space Grant Alliance

Minutes of the October 29, 2002, Alliance Meeting in Dorado, Puerto Rico

John Gregory, Chair, presiding, convened the session at 8:10am.

NASA Faculty Fellowship Program (NFFP)

Gerald Karr made a presentation about the NFFP, which basically is ASEE/SSFP and JOVE combined. Each Center has university involvement. The program is not just a summer program, but also has arrangements for 3 years involvement with an option for two more. There was discussion of possible roles for Space Grant in the program.

Minutes

Minutes from the March Alliance Meeting were handed out.

Minutes were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Jean Teasdale reported that 10 states that have not yet paid for 2002. Four of these have said they will be paying. The treasury balance as of October 18, 2002, is \$47,240.

NASA Code N

Chair Gregory outlined what is known of the new organization, Code N, at NASA.

Report from VSA

Carolyn Fuller reviewed the Space Grant request and status of actions in congress. The funding for Space Grant currently stands at \$19.1M in the Senate, and \$24.1M in the House. There will probably be a conference in December, three weeks after Thanksgiving break. Carolyn discussed possible language to ask for in the conference report, to insure that the maximum goes into workforce projects.

NASA and OMB are working on the FY04 budget. We're in competition with other areas in the FY04 budget within NASA.

Rep. Boehlert intends to have a NASA authorization bill early in 2003. We need to rationalize our program, and make as simple as possible in presentation, making it understandable and marketable. We will set our goals as our long-range plan is developed. The authorization would lock in a plan for probably 3 years, if it passes.

Five Year Plan for Space Grant

Joe Danek discussed the early draft of a five-year plan, asking for comments and input to be submitted to him or to John Gregory within the next couple of weeks. There was discussion of how we might be viewed as part of the old system, which needs to be rebuilt. We should emphasize that we are primarily higher education, with interests also in K-12. Mike Wiskerchen noted that we need to speak in terms of the new goals, and not speak of things in terms of organization that might easily change.

Joe Danek suggested incorporating new programs into the core grants. There was discussion of the need for a population-based component, with a need to develop a formula for distribution, and eliminating the designated distinction over the next couple of years. That would involve congressional action, planned for the authorization bill next year.

Richard Hackney noted the problem with the 1:1 match requirements as funding levels rise. Janice DeCosmo asked for more work to define and simplify the population-based component. Fred DeJarnette suggested specifying core grants as averages, and calling the Competitive Investments Fund "Special Initiatives." Yervant Terzian noted that the NASA operations component needs to escalate.

John Gregory requested that the Alliance give general agreement to the thrust of this plan. The motion from the floor

was passed by the membership.

Working with Congress

Colette Marschesini-Pollock gave a guide for handouts. We need to provide facts particular to our state concerning why Space Grant is important, what we got in funding last year, what we did with it. We should prepare a list of our students associated with their districts/constituencies (zip code keys to district on congressional website). In the house, what matters is the congressional district. We need to talk about the research that is being done, and how it benefits the state and the districts. Meetings and tours in our state are opportunities to invite either the member or their district staff to participate. It needs to be something exciting. We need to know our audience. The message needs to be focused and concise, with perhaps 15 minutes to get the points across. We should tell what students have done special things and what special programs have been run. We need to stay on target, and have our detailed information at hand. Each Director should bring a brief one-pager to leave with the staff.

Carri Booth explained that the Authorization Committee authorizes what money can be appropriated, making a strong statement of why the money is needed and should be appropriated. We need to have very strong language supporting Space Grant in an authorization bill. The Appropriations Committee actually appropriates the money. Calls to action are sent out when we need to remind our members that an action is immediately pending. It's a good idea to lay groundwork in advance of the March visits. If we're asked questions by the staff, please pass the information to VSA. It would also be helpful if we each could bring a really sharp student or impressive researcher to meet with the member or staff. Bring any success story that was written up.

The Alliance Meeting adjourned at 11am.