



DUPONT SUMMIT 2012

..... Pressing Issues Amid the Political Maelstrom

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The Policy Studies Organization

Speakers

Janet Berkovitz, PhD, *University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana*

Maryann Feldman, PhD, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Mark Crowell, *Executive Director of U. Va. Innovation, Associate Vice President for Research, University of Virginia*

Elana Koustova, PhD, *NIH, National Institute of Drug Abuse*

Max Wallace, JD, *President and CEO, Accelerate Brain Cancer Cure*

Topic: “The Evolving Research Enterprise: The Role of Foundations and Strategic Funding”

Private foundation funding of academic research has grown substantially over the past 10 years. Estimated at \$4.3 Billion dollars in 2010, such philanthropic funding has surpassed industry-funding levels and now accounts for approximately 8% of Academic R&D spending. Increasingly, foundations employ a new strategic funding process modeled after venture capital investing, in which project outcomes are identified by the sponsor with a specific problem to be solved, a team is selected based their potential contribution and a community of common inquiry is created and funded over a long period of time. This new funding model originated with disease-oriented foundations, such as Michael J. Fox and Faster Cures and is diffusing to other types of foundations and agencies within the federal government, suggesting that this new model may offer advantages to scientific inquiry. Despite the growing importance of foundations and strategic funding models, little is known about whether foundations complement or substitute for other sources of funding, nor whether strategic funding practices can enhance the overall functioning of the American research enterprise. This panel will discuss the role of private foundation funding in the larger university research enterprise as well as the potential impact – both in terms of research practices and research outcomes – of this new strategic funding model. Particular attention will be given to the policy implications that accompany the emergence of foundation funding, notably the adoption of alternative Intellectual Property strategies by different types of funders and the impact of these strategies on the translation of academic discoveries to commercial products or societal benefit.