WKU. Office of Research & Creative Activity

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

*The Spirit Makes The Master*

ERECTED BY
COLLEGE HEIGHTS
FOUNDATION
IN COMMEMORATION OF
WESTERN'S
50TH ANNIVERSARY
1956

# Annual Report FY21

*The mission of the Office of Research & Creative Activity at Western Kentucky University is to provide outstanding support for the research, service, creative, and scholarly endeavors of our faculty, staff, and students.*

WKU. Office of Research & Creative Activity

# Message from the Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Education

It gives me immense pleasure to share the Annual Report for the Office of Research and Creative Activity (ORCA) for FY21. This report provides a snapshot of the incredible achievements of faculty and staff in advancing the research, public service and creative scholarship mission of Western Kentucky University (WKU) during FY21. We remain grateful to faculty for their unwavering commitment to the pursuit of excellence in obtaining extramural funding while advancing the mission of WKU.

New knowledge has been generated that has been shared in peer-reviewed journals, conferences, regional and international in scope, and some of these discoveries have resulted in Intellectual Property (IP) disclosures. Taken together, the hard work, creativity, outstanding grantsmanship, and mentoring of faculty and staff has made a deep impact internally and externally.

The successes of faculty and staff in FY21 are built upon the exceptional services by ORCA staff. These include Ms. Regina Allen, Assistant Director; Ms. Laura Burchfield, Research and Graduate Education Outreach Coordinator; Ms. Kathryn Garrett, Grants Coordinator; Ms. Ryanne Gregory, Budget and Grants Resources Manager; Ms. Rachel Marr, Grants Coordinator; Ms. Robin Pyles, Compliance Manager; Mr. LaTravius Robinson, Compliance Associate; and Ms. Emily Wallace, Grants and Contracts Administrator.

One of them, Ms. Ryanne Gregory was recipient of *The Christopher Ware Staff Star Award* during FY21 lending credence to the outstanding services provided by ORCA staff.

I remain grateful to each of them for their passion and commitment for supporting the research mission of WKU.

On a personal note, I want to express my deep gratitude to WKU President Dr. Timothy C. Caboni and Provost and Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Robert (Bud) Fischer, for giving me an opportunity to head two important offices, ORCA and the Graduate School at WKU since July 1, 2020.

**Ranjit T. Koodali, Ph.D., FRSC**

# Faculty and Staff Awards

WKU recognizes outstanding contributions of faculty in teaching, research and creativity, service, and student advising each year. During FY21, the following faculty were recognized by the respective units for excellence in research and creativity.

## Excellence in Research & Creativity

- Christina Noel, Associate Professor, School of Teacher Education, CEBS
- April Murphy, Department of Social Work, CHHS
- Sebastian Leguizamon, Economics, GFCB
- Christopher Groves, Earth, Environmental & Atmospheric Sciences, OCSE
- Tim Frandy, Folk Studies, PCAL

## University Faculty Award for Research/Creativity

- Christopher Groves, Earth, Environmental & Atmospheric Sciences, OCSE

In addition to these awards given by the five units and the University, the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) recognizes the contributions and success of faculty and staff who are dedicated to the research, public service, and creative scholarship mission of WKU at a campus wide ceremony.

## Office of Sponsored Programs

The following Office of Sponsored Programs' Award Ceremony honors Faculty and Staff for external proposals and awards during FY21.

### *First Time Lead Awardees*

This award honors lead Principal Investigators (PIs) who received their first award at WKU during FY21.

- Jacob Byl, Economics
- Xiuhua Ding, Public Health
- Cristi Galindo, Biology
- Christopher Jensen, Advising & Career Development
- Susan Keesey, School of Teacher Education
- Ranjit Koodali, Office of Research & Creativity

- Jimmie Martin, Educational Enhancement
- Fatemeh Orooji, Engineering & Applied Sciences
- Cheryl Pence, Counseling & Student Affairs
- Ke Peng, Modern Languages
- Michelle Reece, Public Health
- John Sunnygard, Global Learning
- Matthew Woodward, Psychological Sciences

## *Prolific Proposer*
This award honors individuals who have submitted four or more proposals during FY21 as either PI or Co-PI.
- Brent Björkman, Kentucky Museum
- Amy Brausch, Psychological Sciences
- David Brinkley, Public Radio Services
- Michael Carini, Physics & Astronomy
- Vladimir Dobrokhotov, Environmental Science & Technology
- Mark Doggett, Engineering & Applied Sciences
- Kirolos Haleem, Engineering & Applied Sciences
- Catherine Malin, South Central AHEC
- David Pollack, Folk Studies & Anthropology
- Jenni Teeters, Psychological Sciences
- James Watkins, Training/Technical Assistance Services

## *Million Dollar Club*
This award honors PIs who reached $10 million in external awards during FY21.
- Martha Sales, Educational Talent Search

## *Department Awards*
These awards honor academic departments with the largest percentage of proposing faculty and the largest percentage of faculty awardees in FY21.
- Physics & Astronomy, Department with the largest percentage of proposing faculty
- Folk Studies & Anthropology, Department with the largest percentage of faculty awardees

### *Associate Provost for Research and Creative Activity's Innovation & Impact Award*

This award is given to an individual or team for innovation and impact in FY21.

- Vladimir Dobrokhotov received this award in recognition of his outstanding entrepreneurship and commercialization efforts during FY21.
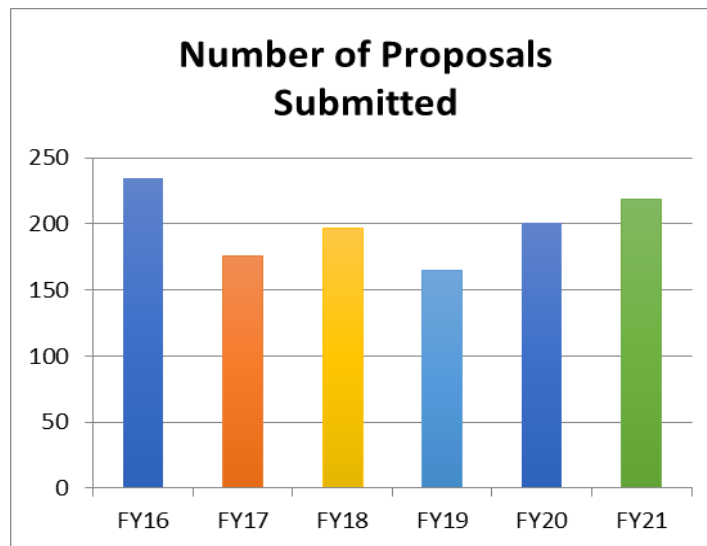
# Office of Sponsored Programs

The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) is the coordinating office for both externally and internally funded research and sponsored projects at WKU. OSP serves as the principal point of contact for faculty and staff seeking and managing external funding for research, public service, instruction, student services and equipment/ instrumentation. OSP staff members offer assistance across the entire spectrum of sponsored programs activities, from identifying a potential source of funding to reviewing the terms and conditions of awards made to the institution. Data pertaining to extramural grants and contracts in FY21 are summarized below.
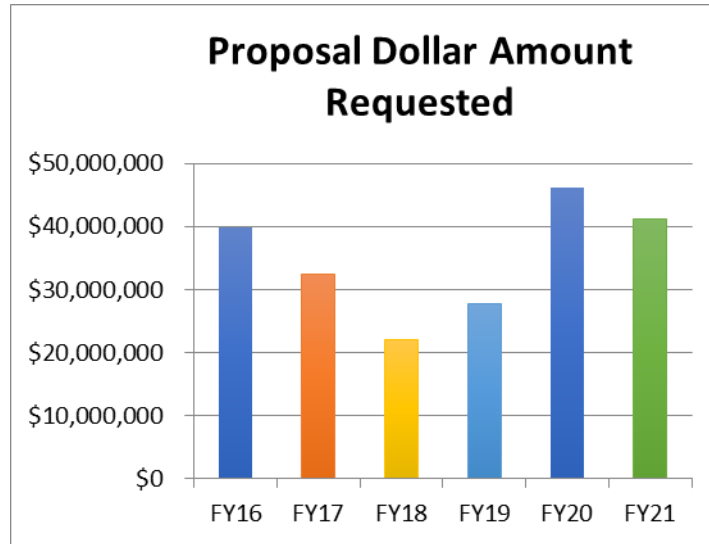
## Proposals and Awards

Each year, faculty and staff work diligently to prepare and submit proposals to external sponsors to request support for their research and projects. Each proposal must follow specified guidelines, outline the proposed project, and justify the budgetary requirements to complete the project. OSP's Pre-Award team assists with the entire proposal development process, including finding funding, reviewing requirements and guidelines, budget development, compliance review, and proposal submission. The Post-Award team in OSP is also committed to providing timely and accurate assistance to faculty, staff, and external sponsors. They assist PIs in exercising good fiscal management practices for the administration of externally funded programs at WKU from award receipt to closeout. They also provide expertise in interpreting guidelines and promoting compliance with sponsor and University policies.

The following data provide a glimpse of the research and creative activities of WKU faculty and staff. In FY21, 219 proposals were submitted compared to 201 proposals in FY20. An average of 199 proposals were submitted annually over 6 years. This is indicated in Figure 1.
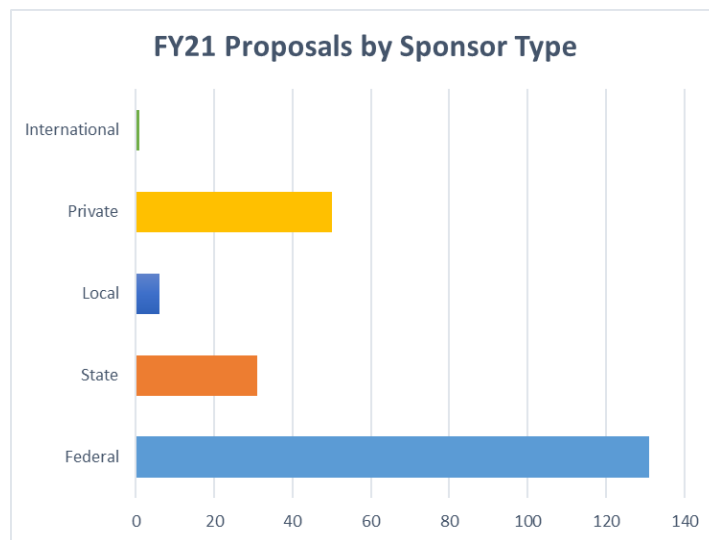


**Figure 1.** A six-year comparison of the number of proposals.

The total amount requested for FY21 was $41,110,059, which was a decrease of $5,112,907 as compared to FY20. Requests in FY21 and FY20 includes CARES funding. This is shown in Figure 2.



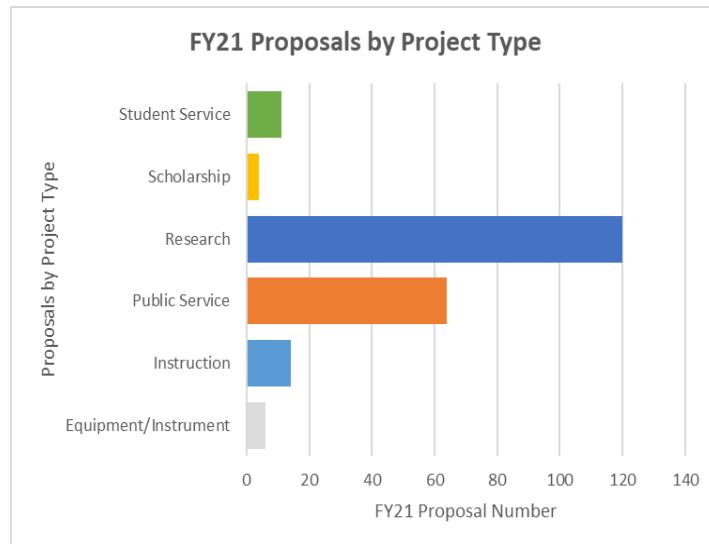**Figure 2.** A six-year comparison of the total dollar amount requested in external proposals.

Proposals are submitted to multiple sponsors, that include Federal, State, Private etc. by faculty and staff. The following table provides information about proposals by sponsor type. The highest number of proposals (131/219) was submitted to federal sponsors. The second highest number of proposals (50/219) went to private sponsors. Figure 3 provides this information.



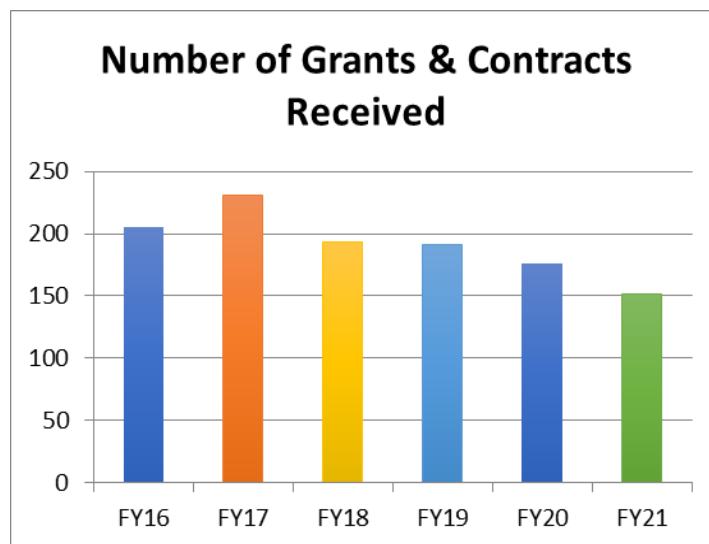**Figure 3**. Breakdown of proposal number by sponsor type in FY21.

Figure 4 provides details of proposals by project type. Of the 219 proposals submitted, the majority (120) of them were research proposals.



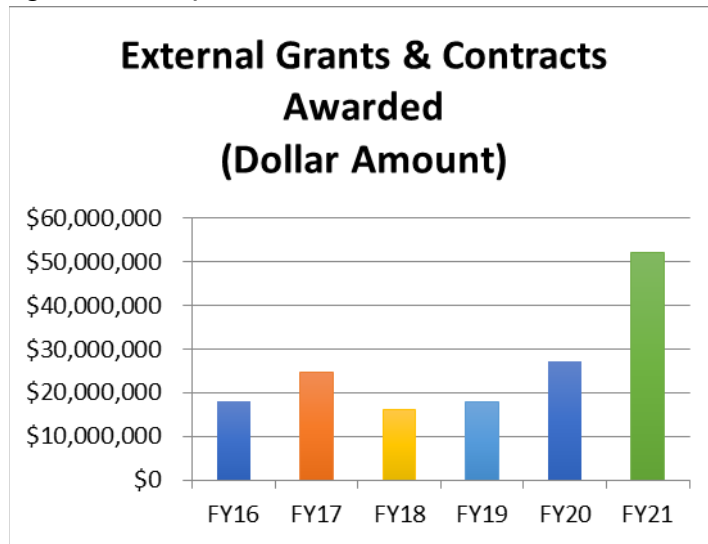**Figure 4.** Representation of FY21 proposals by project type.


Figure 5 provides data about the number of Grants and Contracts received over the past six fiscal years. The number of Grants and Contracts received in FY21 was 152.



**Figure 5.** A six-year comparison of the number of Grants and Contracts received annually.
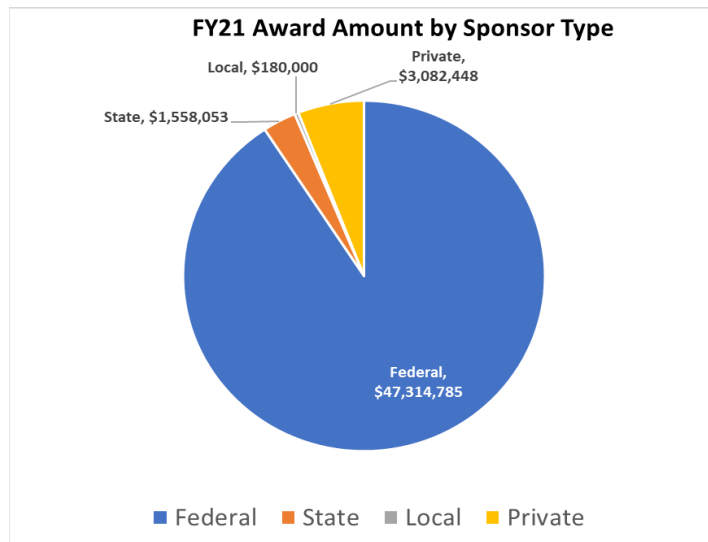
Figure 6 provides information regarding the total amount awarded annually since FY16. The total dollar amount awarded in FY21 was $52,135,287. The increases in FY20 (partly) and in FY21 (mainly) are due to federal funding received through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The total amount awarded, excluding CARES for FY21 was $16,138,416. This is higher in comparison to $14,119,978 awarded in FY20.
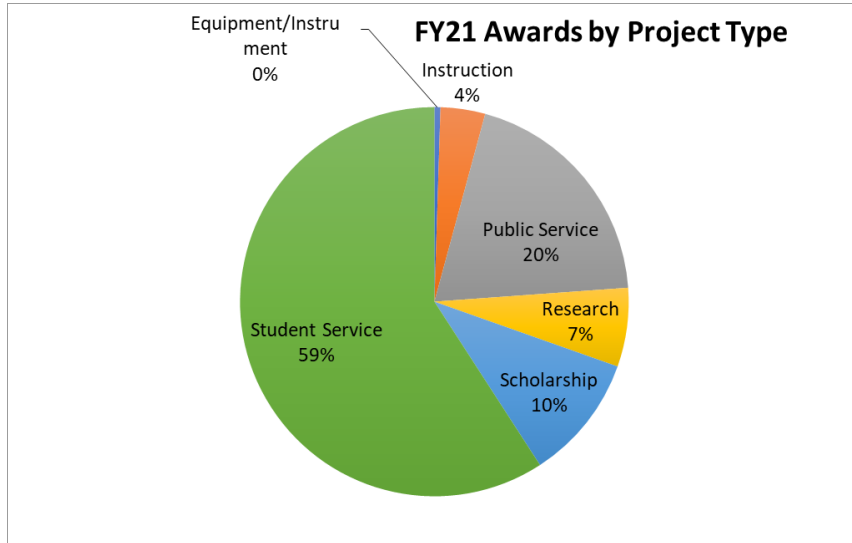


**Figure 6.** The total dollar amount awarded annually from FY16 to FY21.

Classification of awards by sponsor type is indicated in Figure 7. Federal sources constitute the majority of the dollar amounts awarded for FY21, mainly due CARES Act.
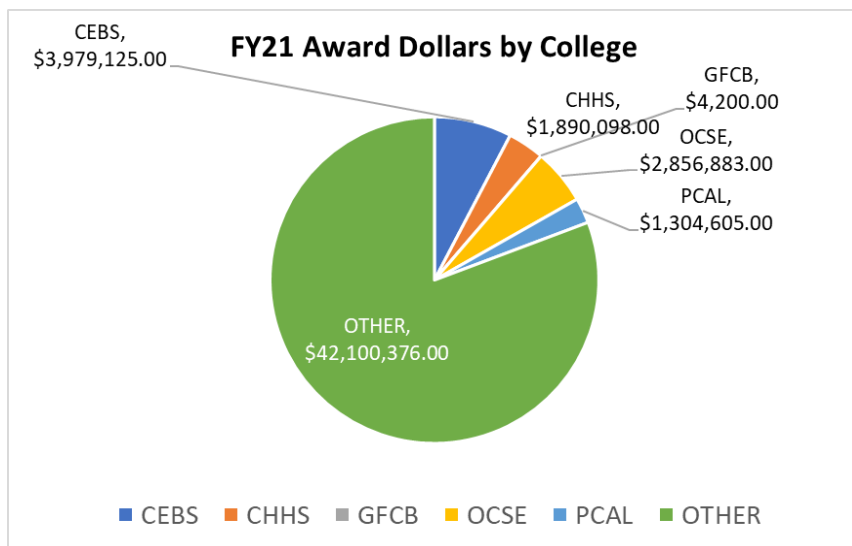


**Figure 7.** The total dollar amount awarded by sponsor type for FY21.

Classification of awards by project type is indicated in Figure 8. The amount awarded to Student Service is significantly higher in comparison to Research due to money from the CARES Act.



**FY21 Awards by Project Type**

- Equipment/Instrument 0%
- Instruction 4%
- Public Service 20%
- Research 7%
- Scholarship 10%
- Student Service 59%

**Figure 8.** Representation of FY21 proposals by project type.

Figure 9 provides information regarding the total dollar amounts received by Colleges.



**FY21 Award Dollars by College**

- CEBS, $3,979,125.00
- CHHS, $1,890,098.00
- GFCB, $4,200.00
- OCSE, $2,856,883.00
- PCAL, $1,304,605.00
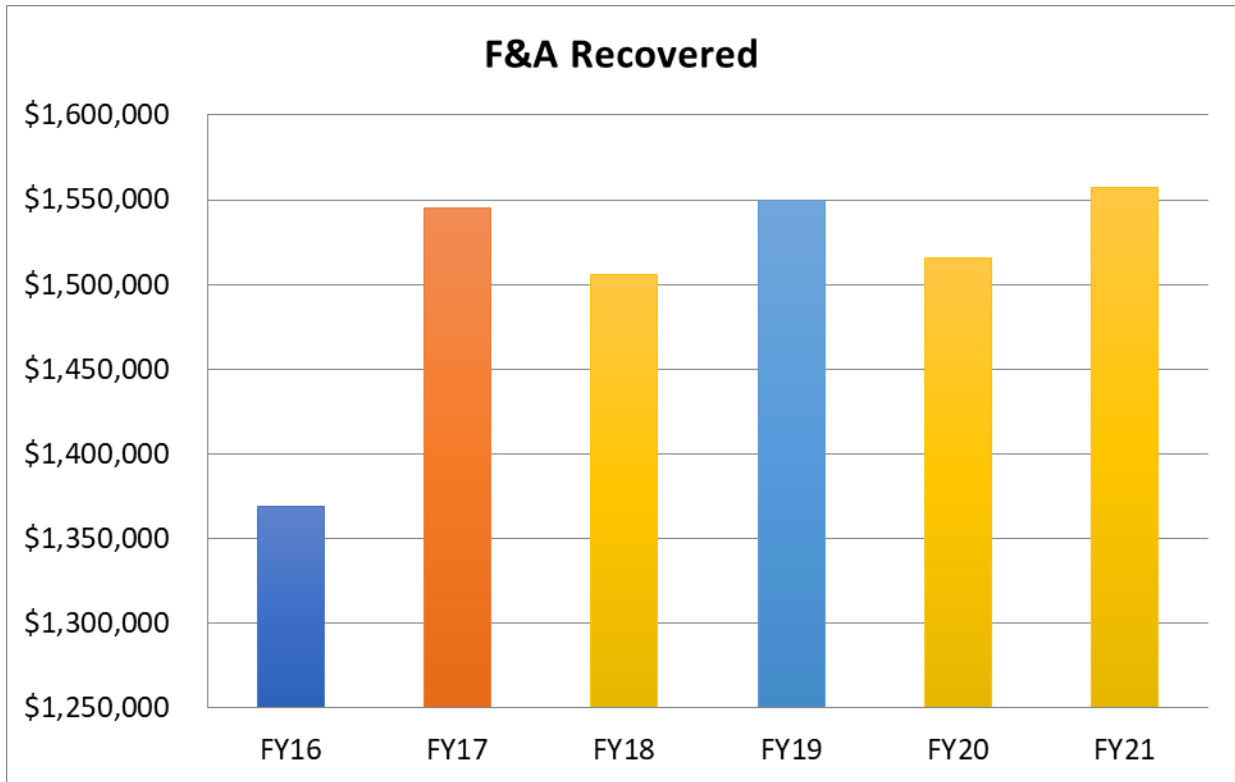- OTHER, $42,100,376.00

Legend: CEBS CHHS GFCB OCSE PCAL OTHER

**Figure 9.** Total award dollars by College for FY21.

# Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs

Facilities and administrative costs (also known as overhead or indirect costs) are those costs associated with providing and maintaining the infrastructure required to support sponsored activities, but which cannot easily be attributed to a specific project. Indirect costs are requested according to WKU's federally negotiated indirect cost rate, unless specifically prohibited or limited by the sponsor. Figure 10 below shows a five-year comparison of the total amount of F&A recovered annually.



**Figure 10**. A six-year comparison of total F&A recovered annually.

*FY21 Recovered amount excludes Advantage Kentucky Alliance (AKA) CARES, CARES, Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF), and Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) funds.

# Research and Creative Activities Program (RCAP) FY11-19 Outcome Report

RCAP funding is provided by Academic Affairs & the Office of Research and Creative Activity to encourage eligible full-time faculty and instructors at all WKU campuses to develop individual projects for research, scholarly pursuits, and creative activities, while promoting the pursuit of external funding sources.

- **Category I** funds are considered "seed" monies to enhance the competitiveness of a subsequent proposal submission for external funding. Category I awardees are required to submit a proposal for extramural funding as an outcome of funding.
- **Category II** funds support the general development, expansion, or enhancement of faculty research and scholarly activity, and/or the creative and performing arts.

The following report summarizes the outcomes and return on investment for RCAP Fiscal Years 2011-2019. During the reported period, 263 projects received RCAP funding totaling nearly $2.53 million dollars. The proposals by College are indicated in Figure 11.
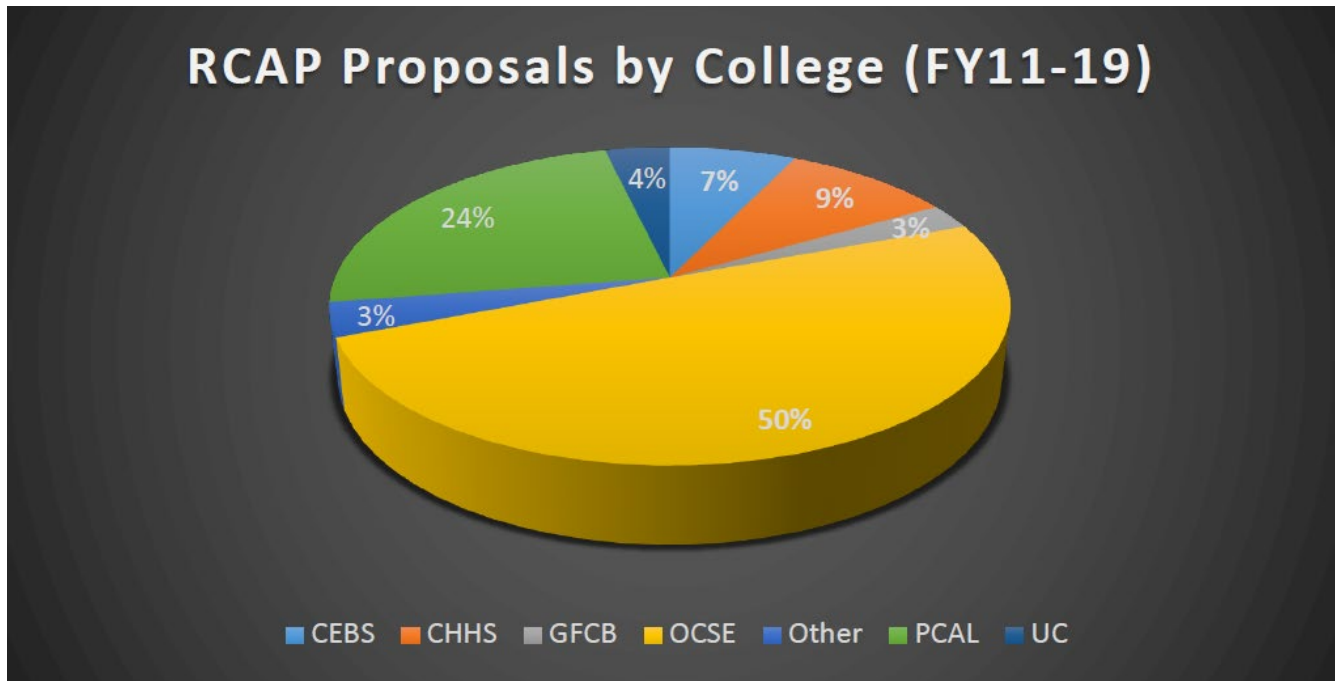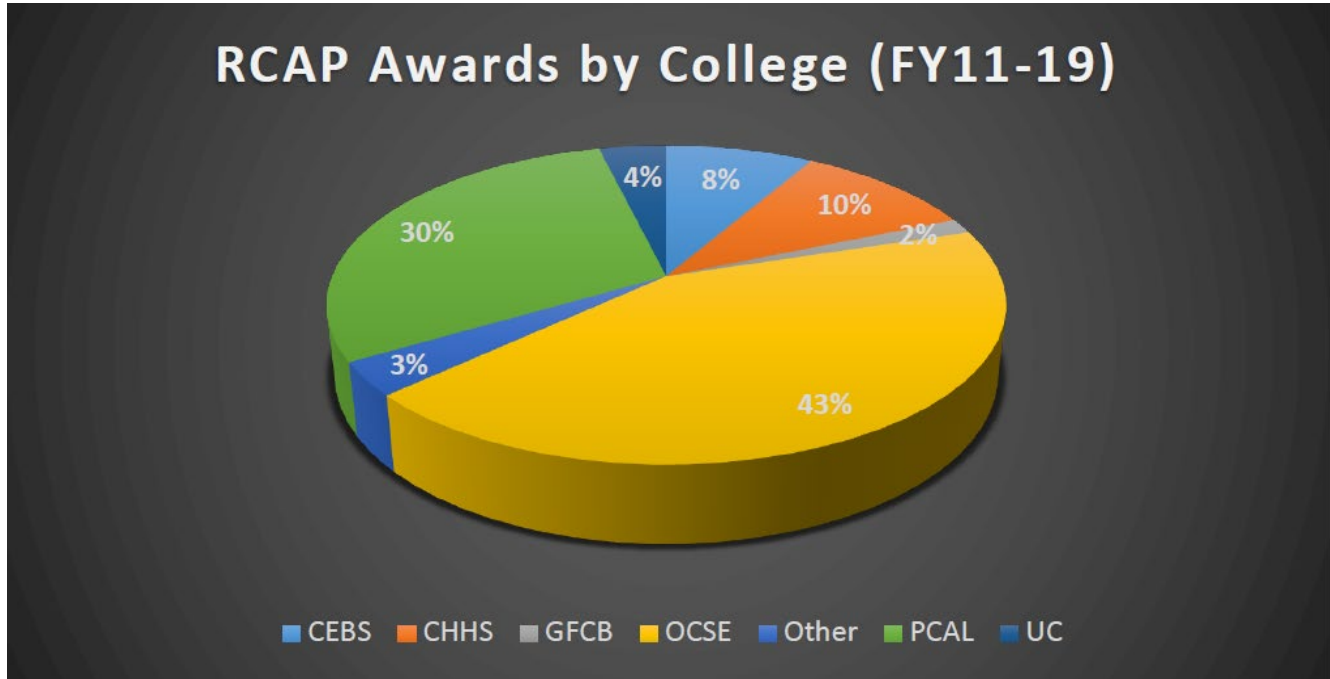


**Figure 11.** RCAP proposals by College for FY11-19.

Figure 12 provides information about RCAP awards by Colleges for FY11-19.



*RCAP Awards by College (FY11-19)*

4% 8% 10% 2% 30% 3% 43%

CEBS ■ CHHS ■ GFCB ■ OCSE ■ Other ■ PCAL ■ UC

*\* Outcomes for RCAP cycles after FY19 have not yet been captured, since award periods are ongoing at the time of this report.*

**Figure 12.** RCAP awards by Colleges for FY11-19.
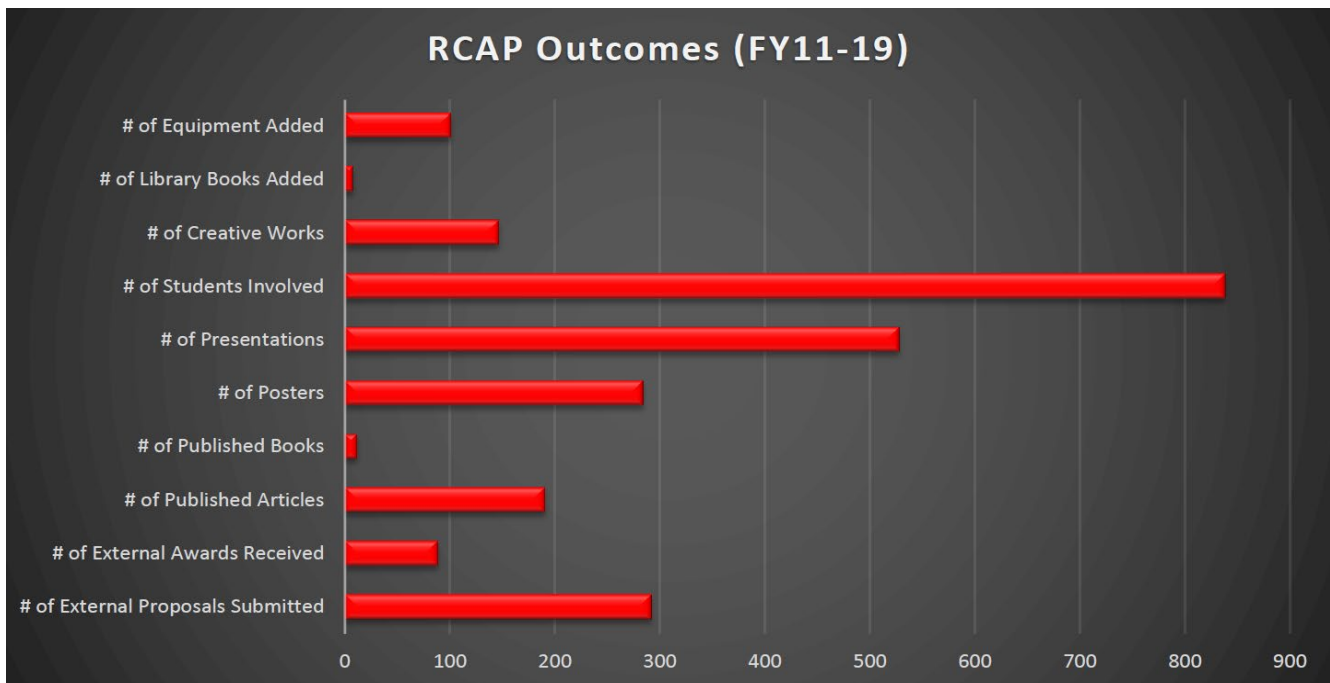
## RCAP Outcomes

***Extramural Proposals & Awards*** – While submission of extramural proposals is a requirement of Category I awards, all awardees may choose to submit subsequent funding requests to external sponsors. Several projects during the reporting period served as seed funding for subsequent external proposal submissions. Of the 292 external proposals submitted as a result of RCAP funding, 89 received funding. The amount of external funding received by WKU as a result of RCAP FY11-19 support is $8,093,055.00.

***Student Engagement*** – RCAP guidelines promote that "*all projects should aim to incorporate undergraduate and/or graduate students…*". As a result of RCAP support (both directly and indirectly), 838 students have gained valuable experience in research, creative activities, and other scholarly pursuits over the period, FY 11-19.

***Publications*** *– Most* RCAP awards result in a publication of some form. During the reported period, 191 journal articles and 12 manuscripts were published as a result of RCAP funding.

***Other Outcomes*** *– RCAP* projects resulted in 528 presentations*, 284 posters*, and 147 creative works. Additionally, RCAP projects added 8 books to departmental/library resources and added 101 pieces of small and large equipment to the university's infrastructure. The RCAP outcomes for FY11-19 are indicated in Figure 13.



*Reported presentations and posters refer to external conferences/events for both faculty and students that worked on RCAP supported projects. Presentations and posters at WKU's Student Research Conference are not included in RCAP Outcomes reporting.*

**Figure 13.** RCAP outcomes for FY11-19.

## Return on Investment

The primary purpose of RCAP Category I funds is to serve as "seed" monies to enhance the competitiveness of subsequent proposal submission(s) for external funding. Such funding serves to provide preliminary data, proof of concept, project/fund management experience, publications, etc., all of which contribute to strengthening external proposal submissions from WKU.

During the reporting period (FY11-FY19), RCAP support totaled $2,529,187. This reflects the priority WKU makes in the investment of research, scholarly endeavors, and creative activities

via the RCAP program. As a result of RCAP funding, 89 external grants received funds totaling $8,093,055. This 320% return on investment demonstrates the value of RCAP funding in stimulating competitive external proposals. This is indicated in Figure 14.
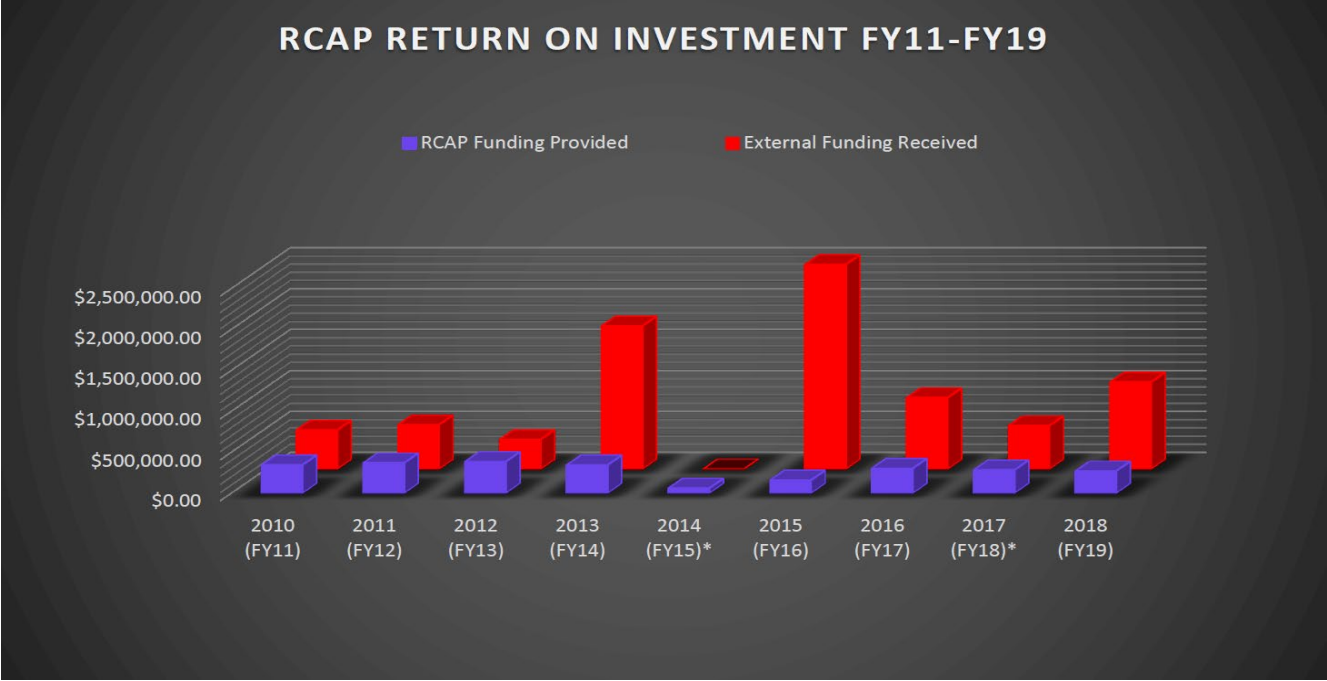


**Figure 14.** RCAP Return on Investment (ROI) for FY11-19.

# Faculty-Undergraduate Student Engagement (FUSE) Grants

FUSE grants support undergraduate students' intellectual development by fostering active engagement in the areas of research, creative and scholarly activities, and/or artistic performances. All undergraduate students in good academic standing who will reach at least sophomore status at the time of award may apply. The following Tables provides information about internal dollar amounts committed to FUSE since Fall 2016 and breakdown regarding awards to the Colleges.

**Table 1.** Information about number of awards and amounts committed since Fall 2016.

| FUSE Round | Awards | International | Domestic | Committed $ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fall 2016 | 41 | 9 | 32 | $159,000.00 |
| Spring 2017 | 48 | 4 | 43 | $171,000.00 |
| Fall 2017 | 46 | 11 | 35 | $172,000.00 |
| Spring 2018 | 39 | 9 | 30 | $154,000.00 |
| Fall 2018 | 36 | 9 | 27 | $101,500.00 |
| Spring 2019 | 37 | 3 | 34 | $132,500.00 |
| Fall 2019 | 36 | 4 | 32 | $131,000.00 |
| Spring 2020 | 33 | 5 | 28 | $124,500.00 |
| Fall 2020* | 7 | 1 | 6 | $25,500 |

* Internal grants were paused in 2020-2021 and were awarded only in Fall 2021.

**Table 2.** Information about number of awards by Colleges since Fall 2016.

| FUSE Round | College of Education | Health & Human Sciences | Gordon Ford College | Ogden College | Potter College | University College /Honors |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fall 2016 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 20 | 13 | 2 |
| Spring 2017 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 21 | 15 | 2 |
| Fall 2017 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 21 | 15 | 2 |
| Spring 2018 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 15 | 13 | 1 |
| Fall 2018 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 15 | 13 | 2 |
| Spring 2019 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 22 | 12 | 0 |
| Fall 2019 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 24 | 7 | 0 |
| Spring 2020 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 14 | 10 | 0 |
| Fall 2020 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0 |

## Student Research Council (SRC)

The WKU Student Research Council (SRC) is a university-wide committee charged with promoting student scholarly activity on campus and organizing the annual student conference. The Student Research Council has organized the annual Student Research Conference since 2012, with financial support provided by the WKU chapter of Sigma Xi, the Office of the Provost, the Office of Research and Creative Activity, and other university units.

The 2021 Student Research Conference was held virtually as necessitated by the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic.



The 51st Annual WKU Student Research Conference showcased 202 research projects and creative works. A total of 235 students were presenters and co-presenters at the conference, including 160 undergraduate, 41 master's, and 1 doctoral student.

The SRC members represent the following campus units: academic colleges, Honors College, Graduate School, University Libraries, University Senate, Gatton Academy, Sigma Xi, Student Government Association (SGA), and Office of Research and Creative Activity (ORCA). Members in 2020-2021 are Simran Banga (chair), Scott Gordon, Ranjit Koodali, Ryanne Gregory, Lawrence Hill, Christopher Biolsi, Timothy Rich, Kayla Baker, Kyle Phillips, Kandy Smith, Derick Strode, Leah Thompson, Tim Thornberry, Dan Forrest, and Haiwang Yuan. Ms. Felicia McCroskey, an English major helped as a web and social media coordinator. Seventy-six WKU faculty, staff, and retired faculty and staff served as judges at this virtual conference. Alicia Carter, Amy Bingham DeCesare, Tommy Newton, Scott French, and other members of the WKU Office of Public Affairs staff provided vital assistance with electronic advertising, press and social media releases, conference artwork design, and a View from the Hill video segment. Diana Keeling provided expert database support to the Student Research Council.

# National Science Foundation Higher Education Research & Development (HERD) Survey Results

The NSF Higher Education Research & Development (HERD) survey collects data from universities and colleges in the U.S. on annual research expenditures. Surveys are submitted each January. The NSF publishes the HERD survey data each year typically in November, and also publishes the rankings of colleges and universities in various categories of research expenditures: Total R&D Expenditures (from both external sources and internal sources); Expenditures from federal sources; and Expenditures from all external sources, etc.

At WKU, data required for completion of the survey are provided by budget managers from all colleges, staff in Grants and Contracts Accounting, and staff in the Office of Sponsored Programs. Ms. Paula Mattison, Assistant Director, Grants and Contracts Accounting, collects the relevant data from across campus, assembles the data, and performs the necessary calculations, and completes and submits the survey to NSF.

The NSF HERD survey pertains only to research expenditures. Our profile of external grants and contracts includes awards in several categories of Equipment/Instrument, Instruction, Public Service, Research, Scholarships, and Student Services. Below you can see WKU's nationwide ranking (as compared to other Kentucky public universities) in the category of Total R&D Expenditures (external + internal) for FY15-20. In the HERD ranking, a lower score is associated with a higher ranking in the survey.

**Table 3.** NSF HERD Rankings of Public Institutions in KY.

| UNIVERSITY | FY20 | FY19 | FY18 | FY17 | FY16 | FY15 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EASTERN KENTUCKY | 645 | 619 | 609 | 599 | 570 | 541 |
| KENTUCKY STATE | 365 | 357 | 343 | 357 | 367 | 375 |
| MOREHEAD STATE | 551 | 535 | 510 | 475 | 487 | 524 |
| MURRAY STATE | 473 | 446 | 487 | 486 | 508 | 490 |
| NORTHERN KENTUCKY | 488 | 507 | 558 | 554 | 527 | 512 |
| UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY | 63 | 63 | 63 | 62 | 64 | 69 |
| UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE | 123 | 130 | 125 | 122 | 112 | 107 |
| WESTERN KENTUCKY | 362 | 346 | 339 | 324 | 337 | 347 |

WKU's R&D expenditure per NSF data since FY 2010 is indicated in Table 4 below.

**Table 4.** WKU Research and Development expenditures since FY 2010.

| Fiscal Year | R&D Expenditure ($ Million) |
|:---:|:---:|
| 2010 | 9.943 |
| 2011 | 8.344 |
| 2012 | 10.639 |
| 2013 | 9.322 |
| 2014 | 8.280 |
| 2015 | 7.854 |
| 2016 | 8.926 |
| 2017 | 10.814 |
| 2018 | 9.617 |
| 2019 | 9.281 |
| 2020 | 8.241 |

# Research and Creative Activity Council

The Research and Creative Activity Council (RCAC) serves as an advisory committee to the Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Education. The RCAC provides counsel on a wide variety of matters relating to the research and creative enterprises of WKU faculty, staff, and students. The group is composed of the following members:



**Dr. Jeffrey Budziak** is an Associate Professor of Political Science and currently serves as the Assistant Dean in the Potter College of Arts and Letters. Dr. Budziak's scholarly interests focus on American government, law and courts, and statistical methodology. His research primarily investigates the behavior and decision-making patterns of the United States Supreme Court and the United States Courts of Appeals. This research has been published in scholarly journals such as The Journal of Law and Courts, Political Behavior, and Political Science Research and Methods,



**Dr. Anthony Paganelli** is the business and law librarian instructor for WKU Libraries' Department of Public Library Services. He has been with the WKU Libraries since 2012. Research interests includes the academic library role in blockchain technology, social entrepreneurship, and makerspaces. Further research in academic libraries involve innovative library services in embedded librarianship, personal librarianship, online and distance librarianship, and library learning modules. Dr. Paganelli writes the column Legally Speaking for the *Against the Grain* journal and is a reviewer for the Journal of Academic Librarianship.

**Yvonne Petkus**, artist and Professor of Art in the WKU Department of Art & Design, was recently awarded the distinction of University Distinguished Professor. Petkus has presented her work in exhibition venues and conferences across the U.S. and internationally, and honors include artist grants and awards from the Kentucky Arts Council, the Kentucky Foundation for Women, and the Great Meadows Foundation. Competitive artist residencies and fellowships include an artist residencies in New York at the School of Visual Arts, and Iceland, and the 2017 Zuheir Sofia Endowed International Faculty Seminar Fellowship Program in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

**Dr. Jenni Redifer** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology and also is the Assistant to the Dean for Research in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences. Her research examines cognitive factors related to student learning and achievement. She is also the Lab Director of the Attention and Memory Lab which examines cognitive factors related to student learning and achievement. The lab investigates how working memory capacity (the limited attentional resources we have available during effortful tasks) influences problem-solving and retrieval of information from long-term memory.

**Dr. Bruce A. Schulte** is the Associate Vice President for Strategy, Performance and Accountability and a University Distinguished Professor noted for his studies on elephant behavior and conservation. He was co-chair of the WKU Strategic Plan *Climbing to Greater Heights* development process, and he chairs the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee. The WKU Strategic Plan set as a goal for Our Community & Beyond for WKU to serve as a Regional Lighthouse "*to provide resources, attract talent, and nurture intellectual capital in the communities we serve.*"

**Dr. Ritchie Taylor** is the Faculty Fellow for Research in the College of Health and Human Services. A major objective of this role is to create a CHHS research mentorship program to ensure successful tenure and promotion of junior faculty. Dr. Taylor is the founding Director of the Center for Environmental and Workplace Health. His research is focused on assessing exposures of firefighters in Kentucky to fire smoke contaminants and occupational hazards, assessment of hazardous materials transport and risks, and watershed health impacts from stormwater runoff. Taylor's international work is part of a team assessing road environment risks to youths in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Dr. Cathleen Webb** is presently serving as the Associate Dean of Research of the Ogden College of Science and Engineering. Dr. Webb recently completed twelve years as Department Head of Chemistry. Dr. Webb has had continuous and diverse external research funding (federal – NSF, NPS, USGS, BLM, EPA, and USFS, state and private) since 1991, with over 40 grants totaling over $3M, including an SBIR Phase I and Phase II grant from the EPA. She has published over 40 articles, chapters, conference proceedings, and technical reports. Her research area of specialty is environmental and geochemistry and impacts on water quality.

**Dr. Lily Popova Zhuhadar** received her Ph.D. degree in *Computer Science and Computer Engineering* from the University of Louisville. Dr. Zhuhadar's applied research is directed toward collaborating with colleagues from various disciplines in the USA and Europe to solve today's Big Data problems by using Data Mining methodologies. The impact of her research has been witnessed by its contribution to more than 50 publications in peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and national/international conference proceedings. Dr. Zhuhadar is a fellow of several associations such as AAAI, AACSB International, ACM, IEEE to name a few.

## Office of Research Staff

We are pleased to extend our sincere thanks and congratulations to the many dedicated faculty and staff members who participated in sponsored projects activities in FY21.

The following is a list of ORCA staff.

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