

GREATNESS THROUGH GRANTS

Research Corporation positions UOG for federal funding

Grants and the valuable research and educational programs that they fund are moving more efficiently than ever through the University of Guam. This means a number of projects important to the community—projects ranging from coconut rhinoceros beetle control and little fire ant mitigation, to radon training and aquifer monitoring, to HPV vaccination awareness and dementia training—are being successfully managed to completion and that the people needed to carry out the work are being efficiently hired and trained.

This propulsion is the direct result of the Research Corporation of the University of Guam, an entity that was born out of the University's 2014 "Good to Great" G2G initiative.

"RCUOG has only been in operation for three and a half years, but in that short time period has had a positive impact across the institution and the community at large," said Cathleen Moore-Linn, the Interim Executive Director.

The G2G initiative envisioned an efficient managerial entity to compete for and manage grants. RCUOG became that entity in February 2014 through Public Law 32-114. It now supports 92 grants for which it provides human resource, budgeting, and financial reporting services to scientists who can then focus on conducting research and disseminating their findings to the public.

"I decided to give RCUOG a try last year," said Dr. Aubrey Moore, an entomologist through the Cooperative Extension & Outreach service of the College of Natural & Applied Sciences. "I am now running three grants totaling over \$500,000 through RCUOG that are focused on finding a solution to the rhino beetle infestation."

Since its implementation, the corporation has been gaining measurable ground on efficiencies in human resources, supporting scientists who carry out research of value to the community, as well as shaping UOG students into global citizens through grant-funded travel – all of which are key focuses of the G2G initiative.

FAST-TRACKING PERSONNEL FOR RESEARCH

One of the primary focuses in G2G was balancing the human resources portfolio. As a public corporation rather than a government entity—meaning RCUOG employees contribute to Social Security but, by



Research that benefits the region (From left) Dr. David Combosch and Dr. Sarah Lemer of the UOG Marine Laboratory collect genetic samples for their project under the NSF EPSCoR grant.

statute, do not participate in the Government of Guam retirement plan—RCUOG made it possible for UOG to hire externally funded personnel more quickly.

"Processing hiring frequently had delays," said Dr. James McConnell, a professor of ornamental horticulture in the Western Pacific Tropical Research Center, whose seven grants with RCUOG include the monitoring and propagation of several threatened and endangered species of plants. "Through RCUOG, we can process hiring very efficiently enabling us to conduct research in a timely manner that is difficult to accomplish otherwise."

This has not only supported the timeliness of scholarly research to advance the local and regional communities, but it has also opened job opportunities for the local community. The corporation has increased its hiring by 49% from 2016. It now has about 100 employees who gain valuable experience working in the field, analyzing data, performing outreach duties, and monitoring budgets, among other tasks.

SUPPORTING RESEARCH OF LOCAL IMPACT

Since 2004, UOG had more than doubled the value of its federal grants portfolio with millions of dollars in funding from federal agencies, such as the National Science Foundation and Health and Human Services. RCUOG has filled a crucial administrative role for this exponentially increasing number of grants.

"Grants are all about delivering project outcomes," Moore-Linn said. "The creation of RCUOG enabled scientists to focus on their grant work while spending less time on administrative tasks, thanks to the Research Corporation's streamlined processes."

Moore said RCUOG has greatly improved his ability to secure and carry out grant work.

"The experience is like night and day," he said. "Purchase orders get issued within days instead of weeks, hiring is straightforward, and service contracts get written and executed with little fuss."

RCUOG accepted management of its first grant in October 2014 and today supports 92 different projects—a 32% increase from the prior year—which total more than \$12.6 million in federal funding.

POSITIONED TO PURSUE ADDITIONAL FUNDING

RCUOG's success in the management of federal grants and contracts is underscored by a series of clean audits for UOG, under which RCUOG is reviewed as a component unit.

With the creation of RCUOG and its support infrastructure, UOG is positioned to pursue additional grant funding moving forward for the benefit of the island and the region.

For more information about RCUOG, visit www.uog.edu/rcuog.