

5-21-13

BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM

I.4. Research, Economic Development,  
& Innovation Committee

Thursday, June 6, 2013  
Wisconsin Room  
UW-Milwaukee  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

1:00 pm Research, Economic Development & Innovation Committee – Wisconsin Room

- a. Approval of the Minutes of the April 4, 2013 Meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation Committee
- b. Update on Undergraduate Research, Technology Transfer, and Commercialization Support for the UW System Comprehensive Campuses [Resolution I.4.b.]
- c. Overview and Discussion of Potential Faculty Incentives and Rewards Related to Research, Economic Development, and Innovation

UW System Board of Regents  
Reaffirmation of Support of WiSys

RESEARCH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE

Resolution:

That, upon recommendation of the President of the University of Wisconsin System, the UW System Board of Regents reaffirms its support of WiSys as the sole technology transfer mechanism for research, innovation, and technology transfer on UW System two-year and four-year comprehensive campuses, and of the further development of policies and practices that support and encourage faculty and undergraduate research, technology transfer, entrepreneurship and innovation.

## **UPDATE ON FACULTY AND UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, AND COMMERCIALIZATION**

### **BACKGROUND**

At the February 7, 2013 meeting of the REDI Committee, Regent Tim Higgins was asked to lead an initiative to recommend a framework or infrastructure to support the development of a sustainable resource pool that might be used to advance promising research from seed capital through early stage start-ups on UW System two-year and four-year comprehensive campuses.

WiSys is the technology transfer entity authorized by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System for all UW System institutions other than UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee. Those two research institutions maintain their own distinct entities for this purpose, the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF), and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Research Foundation, respectively.

WiSys has demonstrated leadership in advancing research and technology development across Wisconsin in a cost-effective manner by building strategic partnerships with innovative start-ups, high-tech companies, clinical organizations, and UW campuses. Since its inception, WiSys has been successful in significantly reducing technology development costs and in improving process efficiency. To date, WiSys has pursued patent protection on 104 innovative technology discoveries. Thirteen startups from seven comprehensive campuses and one startup from UW-Milwaukee have been formed. Fourteen high-paying jobs have been created and three companies have raised \$5.6 million in private equity and approximately \$1 million in public funds.

In an effort to reaffirm its support of research and technology initiatives on UW campuses statewide, on May 10, 2013, the WiSys Board of Trustees approved the following new configurations to the WiSys governance structure:

Revised WiSys board representation:

- WARF – two members (previously four members)
- UW System – two (continuing)
- Business Representatives – two comprehensive campus alumni
- Sitting Chancellor – one, who will serve as Chair of the Advisory Committee (new)

Revised WiSys advisory board composition:

- UW System Chancellors from Comprehensive Campuses – three
- UW Extension Chancellor – one
- UW System Associate Vice President for Economic Development – one (new)
- WEDC Representative – one (new)
- UW System REDI Committee Regent – one (new)
- Business Representatives – two

In addition, UW System has agreed to allocate up to \$1 million of funding annually to WiSys for administration and project development, and WEDC has committed to providing additional funding (up to \$500,000 per year) to support projects that align with the state’s economic development priority industries and industrial clusters.

With consent from WARF, continued funding support for UW campuses, and with increased commitments for funding from UW System, and from WEDC, WiSys will continue to serve as an effective channel for fostering UW research and development, provide enhanced support for commercialization of intellectual property, and provide business development resources and infrastructure that support commercialization activities. These efforts will encourage best-practice entrepreneurial “ecosystems”, thereby helping accelerate the path to growth and job creation across Wisconsin.

A strong and sustainable WiSys represents an integral component of the UW System Board of Regents’ economic development strategic direction. In light of the new funding arrangements with UW System and WEDC, and in light of the changes made to the WiSys governance structure, it is recommended that the UW System Board of Regents recognize the efficacy of this arrangement and affirm its support of WiSys as the single technology transfer entity for the two-year campuses and the four-year campuses other than UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee.

## **REQUESTED ACTION**

Approval of Resolution I.4.b. -- To reaffirm the UW System Board of Regents support of WiSys as the sole technology transfer mechanism for research, innovation, and technology transfer on UW System two-year and four-year comprehensive campuses, and to further develop policies and practices that support and encourage faculty and undergraduate research, technology transfer, entrepreneurship and innovation.

## **DISCUSSION**

The UW System Board’s Research, Economic Development, and Innovation (REDI) Committee is responsible for adopting policies and developing strategies designed to strengthen the UW System’s overall contribution to the economic development of the state and to consider any matters related to the University’s role in enhancing its research enterprise, including technology transfer, entrepreneurship, industry partnerships, and the development of intellectual capital.

The Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF) created WiSys to extend its mission, goals, and objectives to UW System comprehensive campuses and colleges. Since 2000, WiSys has provided significant support to advance research at UW System campuses and played a critical role in transforming technology into jobs. As a key link between the campuses of the UW System and the statewide business community, WiSys remains committed to identifying and invigorating partnerships that will help address Wisconsin's critical educational and economic development challenges.

## **RELATED REGENT POLICIES**

No applicable Regent Policy Documents

## **OVERVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL FACULTY REWARDS AND INCENTIVES**

### **BACKGROUND**

Undergraduate research has been identified as a high impact practice and one that has been adopted by UW System two-year and four-year comprehensive campuses in addition to the research activities at UW-Milwaukee and UW-Madison. Such research requires institutional support, including direct and indirect encouragement, plus resources that include space and staff support for oversight and release time, and funding to cover salaries, overhead, and related costs.

At the February 7, 2013, meeting of the REDI Committee, Regent Mark Tyler was asked to lead an initiative to identify practices and policies that could be implemented to further recognize, encourage, and reward faculty members who engage in activities related to research, economic development, and innovation.

The UW System has an opportunity to affirm and expand its support of such efforts across the institution. Regent Tyler has asked Senior Vice President Mark Nook to provide an overview of best practices in this area. This discussion will guide the review, analysis, and discussion of this important strategic element of the REDI Committee mission in support the UW System educational and economic development initiatives.

### **REQUESTED ACTION**

Information only.

### **RELATED REGENT POLICIES**

No applicable Regent Policy Documents