

**Minutes of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation Committee**  
**University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents**  
**UW-Madison**  
**October 8, 2015**

Chairman Higgins convened the meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation (REDI) Committee at 9:00 a.m. Regents Higgins, Hall, Bradley, Harsy, and Tyler were present.

**a. Approval of the Minutes of the September 10, 2015, Meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation Committee**

Chairman Higgins asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2015, REDI Committee meeting. Motion was made by Regent Hall and seconded by Regent Bradley to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**b. UW-Madison Business Outreach — TED Talks Wisconsin Style = Economic Development "Red" Talks**

Chairman Higgins introduced Susan LaBelle, Director of the Office of Corporate Relations (OCR) at UW-Madison, who provided an overview of her office and its recent signature event: the Corporate Open House. The Office of Corporate Relations (OCR) at UW-Madison was created in 2003 to help foster mutually beneficial relationships between the business community and the university. OCR accomplishes this mission through three major areas of focus:

- Creating awareness within the business community, in Wisconsin and beyond, of the resources at UW-Madison that can help support their growth and success
- Responding to the needs of businesses by connecting them with the university resources and expertise that can provide value
- Communicating with campus partners to share information and opportunities, and coordinating a campus-level approach to meeting the needs of strategic corporate partners

She explained that this event was designed to connect companies of all sizes to UW-Madison and the many ways the University can help create value for their businesses. Over 140 people representing more than 100 companies from Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, and Minnesota attended the 2015 event. As part of the event, she explained that professors from across campus presented a series of eight RED (Research, Education and Discovery) talks modeled on the popular TED talks and highlighting several exciting areas of research at UW-Madison.

LaBelle then introduced two of the RED talks that were presented at the recent Corporate Open House. Professor Tim Donohue, PhD, Professor of Bacteriology and Director of Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center presented an overview of the Center's research which has produced 119 invention disclosures, over 770 publications, 3 dozen patent licenses, and 2 new companies. Professor Laura Heisler, PhD., Director of Programming with Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF), presented the historical background of WARF and key patents leading up to the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the partnership between UW-Madison and WARF. She reviewed key figures in WARF's history, including early partners UW-

Madison professor Harry Steenbock and Charles Slichter, former Dean of the Graduate School. UW-Madison Chancellor Rebecca Blank emphasized the important role WARF plays in funding graduate students and stressed that UW-Madison would not be where it is today without this beneficial partnership. Dr. Heisler reported that over WARF's 90 year-partnership with UW-Madison, the inflation-adjusted cumulative value of its grants to the campus is approximately \$2.3 billion.

**c. WEDC -- Program and Leadership Update —Assistant Secretary and Chief Operating Officer Tricia Braun**

Chairman Higgins introduced WEDC Assistant Secretary and Chief Operating Officer Tricia Braun who provided an overview of the Annual Report on Economic Development and highlighted key programs and outcomes of state-led economic development efforts. Braun noted that WEDC assisted 5,244 businesses in 103 different communities over the last year. At the conclusion of the presentation, Regent Hall commended WEDC on its economic development efforts and noted marked progress in Milwaukee. Chairman Higgins concluded that WEDC has proven an excellent partner for economic development efforts.

**d. WiSys Quick Pitch Tournament —Executive Director Arjun Sanga**

Chairman Higgins introduced WiSys Executive Director Arjun Sanga. Sanga provided background on WiSys as well as on its inaugural Quick Pitch Tournament. WiSys is the designated technology transfer entity authorized by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System to advance promising research and innovation from discovery through commercialization on UW System four-year comprehensive campuses and at UW Colleges and UW-Extension. Sanga explained that the recent WiSys Quick Pitch Competition is a new special event that gave student innovators the opportunity to present their research in a three-minute pitch for a chance to win a cash prize as well as a presentation slot in the Up-and-Coming Innovators session at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Wisconsin Science & Technology Symposium. UW-Eau Claire Chancellor James Schmidt introduced the student winner of this initial Quick Pitch event, Appleton native Drake Bortolameo, a senior majoring in Geography at UW-Eau Claire. Drake presented his winning pitch to REDI on ground-penetrating radar in Rib Lake and highlighted the benefits and uses for this innovative technology.

**e. Regent Scholar Award Program Preview for 2016 —Regent Tim Higgins**

Regent Higgins explained that last year the REDI Committee fully endorsed the newly-developed Regent Scholar program to recognize faculty excellence in the areas of collaborative research initiatives, industry partnerships, entrepreneurialism, and innovation. Regent Higgins announced that the program will continue in 2016 with three faculty/student awards of up to \$50,000 each, for a total of \$150,000 awarded.

Through a competitive process, Regent Scholar Grants will be available for faculty to explore entrepreneurial ideas and innovative projects with undergraduate students and other collaborative partners. The goal is to expand the boundaries of knowledge, enhance research, stimulate new technologies, inspire start-up activity, fuel product development, better prepare the future workforce, and create or retain jobs in Wisconsin.

Regent Higgins explained that grants will be awarded competitively, based on recommendations by a selection committee made up of both public and private-sector experts. He indicated that one of the members will be a Regent or Regent Emeritus; two members will be employees of UW System Administration and/or UW institutions; and three non-UW System members will be from Wisconsin businesses and organizations experienced with economic development, workforce development, STEM, and arts and humanities education.

He explained that UW System Administration will consult with WEDC and the legislature to help determine selection committee members who reflect diverse economic and workforce needs.

**The application deadline is November 15 for the 2015-2016 grants. The selection committee will make final award decisions no later than January 1.**

Chairman Higgins then thanked Regent Mark Tyler, who has agreed to lead the evaluation of the Regent Scholar grant proposals again this year. Regent Tyler then provided some background on his experience with the Regent Scholars program and committee.

Chairman Higgins adjourned the meeting of the Research, Economic Development, and Innovation (REDI) Committee at 10:30 a.m.