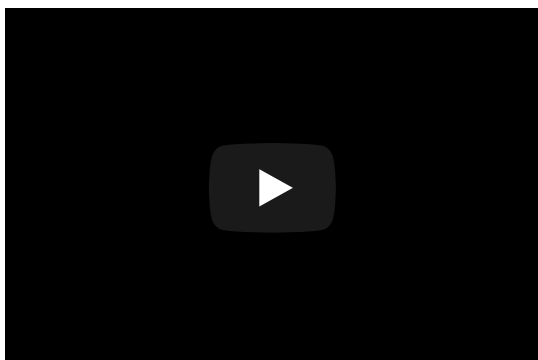By Michelle Franklin   Oct 17, 2019

Photo by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

UC San Diego Breaks Record with $1.35B in Research Funding

For 10th consecutive year, UC San Diego earns over $1B in funding

David Cheresh, distinguished professor and vice chair of pathology at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine, will be able to continue his research into cancer's ability to overcome stress, gain drug resistance and metastasize thanks to a $4.2 million Outstanding Investigator Award from the National Cancer Institute. Cheresh's research is one of thousands of projects at UC San Diego funded through contracts, grants and research gifts.

In fiscal year 2019 (July 1-June 30), UC San Diego earned $1.35 billion in sponsored research funding, a 10% increase over the previous year. This is the largest number ever for the university and marks the 10th consecutive year the campus has earned more than $1 billion in funding to support its extensive research enterprise.

Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla points out that sponsored research funding of this size has impact beyond the initial research. "Today's research grows tomorrow's industries. Research at UC San Diego helped create companies such as Qualcomm, Facebook, Viasat, GoPro, Cymer and Sun Microsystems. Companies like these dominate world markets today. The total estimated annual sales of UC San Diego-related companies worldwide is $32.4 billion. Worldwide, more than 1,000 companies use or have used technology created at UC San Diego."

Vice Chancellor for Research Sandra A. Brown sees this increase as an indication of the significant impact UC San Diego has in shaping the future. "More and more, the federal government, the State of California and industry partners rely on UC San Diego to conduct research, create technologies and develop life-saving therapies that have the power to protect our planet, enrich human life and address society's most pressing issues," she added.

Funding from federal agencies reached $803 million, an increase of more than 18% from last year's number. The largest portion of federal funding came from the Department of Health and Human Services at $495 million. Other significant federal funding came from the National Science Foundation ($115 million), the Department of Defense ($101 million) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ($35 million).

Contracts and grants from industry sponsors accounted for $205 million, an increase of 6% over the previous year. Funding from the state of California rose to over $52 million, marking a record-high amount.

Across the UC San Diego campus, funding can be broken down into three major groups: Health Sciences, Academic Affairs and Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Health Sciences, which includes the School of Medicine and Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, once again brought in the most funding with $761 million (an increase of 11% over last year). Academic Affairs, which includes academic divisions and organized research units, brought in $357 million (an increase of 28% over last year). Scripps Oceanography brought in $180 million (an increase of 16% over last year).

Over a billion dollars in funding supports a vast array of research ranging from data science to philosophical questions of free will. Some highlights from the past year include:

- UC San Diego's Center for AIDS Research receives $1.2 million in planning grants from the National Institutes of Health to help support the national "Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative."

- Scripps Institution of Oceanography and the U.S. Coast Guard have partnered on a Blue Technology Center of Expertise, to facilitate the identification, evaluation and transition of new blue technologies into Coast Guard capabilities.

- The West Big Data Innovation Hub at the San Diego Supercomputer Center at UC San Diego is one of four regional big data hubs partner sites awarded a $1.8 million grant from the National Science Foundation for the initial development of a data storage network during the next two years. This project will help researchers share data more efficiently and enable collaborations.

- Philosophy Professor Manuel Vargas shares a $1.2 million grant from the John Templeton Foundation to study free will and responsibility.

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