UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
OFFICE OF RESEARCH
ANNUAL REPORT
2009
The 2008-09 fiscal year was a testament to the commitment and creativity of University of Florida faculty, who earned $574 million in research awards despite some of the most challenging economic conditions since the Great Depression.

Our researchers brought in these contracts and grants during a period when headlines talked of hiring freezes and budget cuts.

In addition to furthering science, this funding impacts all facets of Florida’s economy, benefiting everyone from construction workers to graduate students. According to economic impact methodology from the U.S. Department of Commerce, UF research funding generates more than $1.2 billion in business activity and 10,500 jobs.

I believe there are several key reasons why our faculty have been successful despite the economic downturn.

One is that UF faculty are increasingly competitive with their national and international peers. Federal awards, which account for 59 percent of UF’s total, rose 4.3 percent last year, led by the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation.

In addition, collaborations with respected organizations like Scripps Florida, the Burnham Institute for Medical Research and the Moffitt Cancer Center help us to better leverage our respective scientific expertise.

And we have emphasized break-the-mold multidisciplinary efforts, such as the Emerging Pathogens Institute, the Florida Institute for Sustainable Energy and the Water Institute.

Finally, we are developing a mix of basic and applied research, as reflected in the growth of our technology transfer and commercialization efforts. Last year, UF spinoffs cracked the $100 million mark in venture capital investment for the first time.

Together, our faculty’s excellence and our growth as a research institution seem to have reached a critical mass. This is clear not only from dollars going into research, but also the results. UF-authored papers now appear regularly in such prominent journals as the New England Journal of Medicine, Nature, and the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Clearly, our faculty have faced the recent economic challenges with the same professionalism that has helped to make UF a leading national research institution. As the economy improves, we look forward to even more successes.
Nearly 2,000 UF researchers are currently conducting more than 6,900 projects, employing thousands more technicians and students to assist them. From microbiologists who pipette DNA samples to fabricators who create specialized parts for new machines, UF’s scientific workforce is the engine driving the university’s $574 million research enterprise.
Funding for construction of state-of-the-art UF research buildings — from federal, state and private sources — has a significant impact on the state and local economy. Heavy equipment operators and stone-masons, plumbers and electricians from a large geographical region contribute to the construction of these facilities. And the money they make is passed down through their local economies at gas stations and grocery stores, ensuring jobs for many more Floridians.
Often, the results of our research have commercial potential. UF has one of the nation’s most aggressive and successful technology licensing efforts, which has generated more than 100 new companies over the last 10 years. The Office of Technology Licensing works closely with our researchers to protect their intellectual property and to move promising technologies into the marketplace. By pairing scientists with experienced business people, the university increases the chances for a commercial success. The university uses the revenue from those successes to support new research, completing the circle.
Ultimately, the success of UF’s research efforts can’t be measured in dollars alone, but by the improvements to human quality of life that results from our discoveries. From a cure for a common form of blindness to a better understanding of a potentially catastrophic citrus disease, UF research is first and foremost about solving problems and expanding the boundaries of science. And as the first images from the Gran Telescopio Canarias that we helped build reveal, sometimes it’s simply about gaining a better understanding of who we are and where we came from.
SUMMARY OF
Sponsored
RESEARCH
ACTIVITY
2009

Proposals Submitted 5,887
Awards Received 6,237
New Awards Received 2,595
Continuations or Supplementals 3,642
Grant and Contract Dollars Awarded $544,890,302
Gifts for Research $29,141,392
Total Sponsored Research Funding $574,031,694
Projects Active During the Fiscal Year 6,974
Faculty Receiving Awards 1,898
Sponsors 1,007