

# **RHODE ISLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

## **MEETING OF THE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

### **PUBLIC SESSION**

**October 14, 2010**

**The Rhode Island Science & Technology Advisory Council (“STAC”) met on Thursday, October 10, 2010 in Public Session at the offices of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, Providence, Rhode Island pursuant to notice of the meeting to all Members and public notice of meeting, a copy of which is attached hereto, as required by applicable Rhode Island Law.**

**The following Members were present and participated throughout the meeting as indicated: Clyde Briant (Co-Chair), David Farmer (Co-Chair), Peter Alfonso, Timothy Babineau, Pierre Corriveau, Kimball Hall, David Hibbitt, Stuart McGuigan, and Thomas Rockett. Members absent were, Saul Kaplan, Margaret Leinen, Jeffrey Seemann and Donald Stanford.**

**Also present was Governor Carcieri, RIEDC Executive Director Keith Stokes and RIEDC staff. Co-chairs Briant and Farmer presided over**

the meeting.

## **Welcome**

**Co-Chair Clyde Briant welcomed everyone and introduced new STAC member Stuart McGuigan, Chief Information Officer for CVS Caremark who joins the Council to complete the term of Tom Ryan. Co-Chair Briant then announced the agenda would focus on an update of two federally-funded R&D initiatives and a special briefing from the White House Office on Science and Technology Policy regarding future trends for federal research policy.**

**Co-Chair Briant also noted this would be the Governor's last meeting. He commented that record-breaking levels of sponsored research at Brown and URI in addition to major gifts and partnerships received statewide demonstrate RI is making advances in increasing our R&D capacity and thanked the Governor for his leadership.**

**The Governor stated that the next challenge for the Council is to work to develop state investments that will synthesize basic research into new commercial products and spin-out companies. The Governor also thanked Co-Chair David Farmer for his dedicated efforts. Farmer recently announced he will be stepping down as Dean at the Graduate School of Oceanography in July 2011**

**Co-Chair Farmer stated that he has been pleased to assist Rhode**

**Island's economic growth through STAC and other initiatives like the Special Area Management Project (SAMP).**

### **Approval of Minutes**

**Citing no changes, upon a motion duly made by Ms. Hall and seconded by Mr. Rockett, the minutes of the February 3, 2010 STAC meeting were accepted.**

**Citing no changes, upon a motion duly made by Dr. Babineau and seconded by Mr. Alfonso the minutes of the May 6, 2010 STAC meeting were accepted.**

### **Update on STAC and EDC initiatives**

**Co-Chair Briant introduced EDC Director Keith Stokes who stated that the Corporation is working to develop new capital programs to fill the major capital gap faced by both existing and emerging companies with soft assets such as patents, licenses and intellectual property.**

**Using the recently enacted Job Creation Guarantee Act, the RIEDC will work to grow and relocate tech companies across a broad portfolio of industry sectors, such as life science, medical device and defense. 38 Studios was the first company to benefit from the Act and the corporation will be actively engaged with other companies in the coming months. The RIEDC also plans to work with higher education to continue partnerships, such as the SAMP, which play to**

**our strengths.**

**Briant then announced that STAC has launched 5th RPF for Collaborative Research Grant Proposals. Interest has grown immensely, and 80 pre-proposals have been received for this grant cycle, representing a significant increase in the number of applications and breadth of S&T represented. To handle this increase STAC is investigating having the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) assist with the peer review process.**

**Regarding recent STEM education efforts, Briant reported that STAC Executive Director Christine Smith has joined RIDE's Science Leadership Council. She has worked with Rep. Langevin's office on a new national program they hope to introduce into high schools to identify students interested in careers in cyber security. She has also worked with the Governor's office to launch the Real World Design Challenge that seeks to inspire students to pursue engineering careers. Council member David Hibbitt represented STAC at the Real World Design Challenge announcement.**

### **Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF)**

**Co-Chair Farmer introduced URI Professor David Rowley who provided an overview of the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) program. The SURF program, established in 2001,**

**offers summer research opportunities to qualified undergraduate students who are considering careers in biomedical, behavioral, and life science research. SURF is jointly sponsored by the federally funded NIH INBRE and NSF EPSCoR programs and provides training for approximately 80 students annually who participate in a 10-week science research project. Following Professor Rowley's presentation, Co-Chair Farmer announced that in honor of Governor Donald Carcieri and his commitment to strengthening student training and engagement in the sciences STAC will fund an additional fellowship for a qualified RI undergraduate student interested in advancing their training and laboratory skills.**

## **RI EPSCoR**

**Co-Chair Farmer then introduced STAC member and EPSCoR Director Peter Alfonso to provide an update on the newly received \$20M NSF EPSCoR grant. Alfonso stated the five-year award will bring \$20 million to the state from the National Science Foundation to strengthen our research competitiveness and productivity in marine life science at nine of the state's institutions of higher education. The goal of the program is to make Rhode Island more competitive for federal funding by improving the academic research infrastructure. In addition to funding improvements in our physical infrastructure through new state-of-the-art laboratory facilities and equipment, the federal investment places a great emphasis on**

**funding outreach and workforce development initiatives, providing fellowships and training to undergraduate and graduate students, and building diversity in our science and technology community. Per the award, the state EPSCoR office is developing a strategic plan to guide implementation of the award and insure sustainability.**

## **Federal Science and Technology Policy and Funding in the Obama Administration**

**Co-Chair Farmer introduced Kei Koizumi, Assistant Director for Federal R&D, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). Koizumi shared that the Administration believes that science is more essential for our prosperity, our security, our health, our environment and our quality of life than ever before. The mission of the OSTP is to insure that federal investments in programs support policy goals. The Office oversees a broad diversity of funded agencies and has targeted three for doubling of their budgets: NSF, DOE and NIST. This commitment to increase S&T funding can be contrasted to the plan to keep domestic discretionary spending flat. Areas of greatest interest include biodiversity, sustainability, climate, energy and cyber security. Responding to a question posed by Director Stokes regarding funding for technology transfer, Koizumi stated the Administration understands the importance of meeting the challenge of translating basic discovery into commercial products. Partnerships will play key role in this area. Koizumi also stated a new website has been created to make special federal funding**

**opportunities accessible at [www.challenge.gov](http://www.challenge.gov). In response to Mr. Corriveau, Koizumi discussed the role OSTP plays in supporting STEM education efforts. OSTP recognizes the importance of inspiring students, improving teacher training and providing better tools for the classroom.**

### **Adjournment**

**There being no further business Co-Chair Briant adjourned the meeting at 2:45 p.m.**

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**Christine M.B. Smith**  
**Secretary**