



FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

January 27, 2011

Dr. David Pilgrim, Chief Diversity Officer
Ferris State University Diversity Office
1201 S. State St., CSS 312
Big Rapids, MI 49307

RE: Ferris State University Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant

Dear Dr. Pilgrim and Granting Committee,

We are grateful for the opportunity to apply for a Ferris State University Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant. The enclosed application, "Using Our Skills to Help Countries in Need: Training African Rats as Life-savers in Africa," was prepared by a group of psychology faculty. The program revolves around the work of Dr. Alan Poling, a Western Michigan University psychology professor who has been using his skills to help train African rats to detect land mines in former war-torn areas of Africa. Dr. Poling will visit the campus and meet with faculty and students and he will also present a public lecture to describe his work.

We believe that his appearance at Ferris will demonstrate how class material can be applied to solve real-world problems. In addition, he will demonstrate the importance of using our knowledge to help diverse populations in need around the world. His work will help our students and community understand that concerns about diversity should not stop at the campus or even at the country's edge.

We again thank the committee for the opportunity to apply for this grant. The enclosed application lists the tentative schedule for Dr. Poling and the proposed budget. We are asking for \$1180 to support his visit. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions concerning this proposal.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeff Nagelbush
Professor of Psychology
Social Sciences Department
231-591-5880
nagelbuj@ferris.edu

Ferris State University
Faculty and Staff Diversity Mini-Grant Application

I. Identification

Name of Primary Applicant Dr. Jeff L. Nagelbush
Members of Team Dr. Janice Weaver
Dr. Connie Meinholdt

Department or Unit Social Sciences Department
Campus Address 820 Campus Drive, ASC 2108
Big Rapids , MI 49307-2225
Telephone 231-591-5880
E-mail address nagelbuj@ferris.edu

II. Event Title (25 words or less)

Using Our Skills to Help Countries in Need: Training African Rats as Life-savers in Africa

III. Specific core value, strategic initiative, or goal related to diversity that the event will address. (See the University Strategic Plan and the Diversity Plan)

Strategic plan goal 1, Become a demonstrable center of excellence in educational quality and student learning, Strategic plan goal 5, fostering external working relationships, and Diversity goal 4B, diversity across the curriculum, showing how core knowledge can be used to be of help to diverse populations in the world

IV. Abstract (150-200 word, use additional paper if necessary). If the application is approved the abstract will be posted on the Diversity and Inclusion Office website.

Dr. Alan D. Poling, a psychologist from Western Michigan University, uses psychological learning technology to train African pouched rats (who are bigger than many squirrels) to detect land mines and tuberculosis bacteria. Working for APOPO, a non-governmental organization headquartered in Tanzania, Dr. Poling has been working to improve the training and evaluate the success of rats to detect the existence of land mines so that they can be neutralized. He is also evaluating the ability of these large rats to detect the tuberculosis bacterium quicker and more accurately than microscopy. Dr. Poling will describe his work in his presentation. Besides the interesting content, his work reveals how information our students learn in our classes can be used to help others here and abroad. He also is an example of someone who has been willing to go to remote and dangerous places to help make the world better.

V. Event Narrative (up to 4 pages single-spaced)

Conceptual Framework

The success of diversity education at Ferris cannot end when a student graduates. Our students must see how the ideas, knowledge, attitudes, and skills they develop here can be applied beyond the walls of academia to groups beyond their own. The work of Dr. Alan Poling is a current example of how academic knowledge can be used to help diverse people in need in other parts of the world.

Many poor countries have suffered war and disorder. Even when the violence calms down recovery is difficult. One particularly troubling difficulty is the continued danger of land mines. Those who plant land mines typically do not leave records of where they have been placed. After they leave, the mines remain, killing and wounding many innocent adults and children. Often, fields cannot be tilled and schools cannot be rebuilt because of the danger from the mines. Safe, effective ways to detect mines so they can be neutralized are needed.

APOPO, a group founded by Belgian Bart Weetjens, has pioneered the use of African pouched rats as a means to detect land mines in their HeroRat program. The rats are tethered and led over the area suspected to have mines. They are trained to start digging when they smell the explosive constituents of a mine. Although they are larger than most squirrels, the rats are light enough that they do not set off the mines. After the rats detect a mine, a person with a metal detector makes sure it is a mine and then the mine is deactivated.

In 2009, Dr. Alan Poling, a psychology professor at Western Michigan University was hired by APOPO for their HeroRat program. Dr. Poling is an expert in behavior analysis and has published many studies using animals in drug testing. His job with the HeroRat program was to design and conduct experiments to scientifically evaluate the animals' performance. In addition to his work evaluating the ability of the African pouched rats to detect land mines, Dr. Poling is also evaluating the ability of these rats to detect tuberculosis in sputum samples. If successful, the use of the rats may be a more accurate fast way to find who is infected than current methods using microscopy.

Goals, Outcomes, and Discipline Relationship

Dr. Poling uses techniques that Ferris psychology faculty teach in their classes and applies these techniques to help various African nations cope with their land mine and disease problems. Our students, as well as others in the Ferris community, will learn the practical value of what we are teaching and the importance of applying this knowledge to solve world-wide problems. Dr. Poling's work is a model of how the information we teach can be used to improve the lives of diverse people around the world.

His talk will support a number of Ferris goals. Ferris strategic plan goal one is to become a demonstrable center of excellence in educational quality and student learning. Dr. Poling's lecture will enhance the education of our students by describing how classroom knowledge can be used in the world outside the classroom. In addition to the general goal, his talk will specifically support initiative 5, preparing students for a global society.

Dr. Poling's talk will also support strategic plan goal five, fostering external working relationships, in particular, helping to get Ferris' program better known to Western Michigan University's psychology department. This is important because Western Michigan University is a place where some of our students seek to go for graduate school.

Finally, Dr. Poling's talk will support Ferris' diversity strategic goal 4B, infusing diversity into the curriculum. By discussing the problems African countries are facing and what can be done to help, Dr. Poling's presentation will help our students understand issues facing peoples in another important part of the world.

Target Audience, Impact, and Assessment

The target audience will primarily be Ferris students in various psychology classes. Most of the psychology faculty will give credit to their students for attending Dr. Poling's lecture and writing a reaction to the talk. At least one biology faculty member has also shown interest in having his students attend the talk. In addition, the lecture will be open to the public at large. We expect about 200 to attend.

Assessment will happen two ways. Each faculty member who sends students will design their own writing assignment encouraging their students to relate the talk to their particular courses. In addition, everyone who attends will be encouraged to fill out a questionnaire after the event (see enclosed). The questionnaire will ask for an evaluation of the talk as well as a request to describe what they gained from the talk.

Timeline

The exact timeline is not fixed. Dr. Poling will soon be going back to Africa and will not be back until late February. We expect the talk to take place in March, after spring break. The tentative schedule for the talk follows:

Day 1

5:00 p.m.	Dinner with Faculty
7:00p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	Public Talk and Questions
8:30p.m. to 9:30 p.m.	Reception

Day 2

8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast with Faculty
9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	Meeting with Students

VI. Budget

Budget Overview			
	Requested Grant Funds	Funding from other sources	TOTAL BUDGET
STIPEND			
HONORARIA	\$500.00		\$500.00
TRAVEL	\$110.00		\$ 110.00
FOOD(Meals plus reception)	\$400.00		\$400.00
RENTALS			
PRINTING & DUPLICATING	\$20.00		\$20.00
PROMOTION			
SUPPLIES & POSTAGE			
RESOURCE MATERIALS			
ASSESSMENT TOOLS			
OTHER (Hotel)	\$150.00		150.00
TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$1180.00

Applicants' Signatures:

Dr. Jeff Vogelbusch
Dr. Carice Weaver
Dr. Carice McEntire

Submission Date: January 27, 2011

Submit applications to Patty Terryn, Diversity and Inclusion Office, CSS 312. Review of applications will begin upon receipt and continue contingent on available funds.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING TODAY'S EVENT. WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK TO THE STATEMENTS AND QUESTIONS BELOW.

Using our Skills to Help Countries in Need: Training African Rats as Life-savers in Africa
Presentation by Dr. Alan Poling

Please circle the responses that best fits your experience of today's event.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Information about how psychology can be applied to help people in need was discussed at this event.	1	2	3	4	5
Important questions about the needs of people in countries who have experienced war were discussed at this event.	1	2	3	4	5
I learned something new as a result of this event.	1	2	3	4	5
I am glad I chose to attend this event.	1	2	3	4	5
I felt safe to express myself during this event.	1	2	3	4	5

What did you like best about this event?

Please indicate which of the following best describes you.

- FSU student
- FSU faculty or staff member
- Big Rapids Community member
- Other Community member. Please specify: _____
- Other. Please specify: _____

We welcome your additional comments!

Thank you again for joining us today and providing your feedback!