Denise Wallen, Ph.D.
Charlene Porsild, Ph.D.
University of New Mexico

Topics to be Covered

Background of Establishing the Center
Understanding Foundation Culture(s)
Seeking Appropriate Partners
Securing Private Funds
Strategies for Stewardship and Sustainability
Leveraging Private Funds to bring in other Funding
Maintaining Relationships

RWJF Center

Established in 2007 at the University of New Mexico
$10.5M grant and $8M endowment from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Mission to recruit and train a new generation of minority PhDs in social sciences with an emphasis on health policy and health disparities
-provide education and training
-provide research opportunities for faculty & students

Diversity: It's All of Us

RWJF Foundation leadership approached UNM leadership to discuss establishing a Center and invited UNM to submit a 5-year proposal with endowment request
-UNM leadership included President, VPR, Provost, and UNM Foundation
-Office of Research Development led proposal development effort with UNM stakeholders (i.e. department chairs, medical school)
What transpired??

RWJ Foundation approached UNM because:
1) Hispanic Serving Institution
2) Medical school and accredited social science PhD programs

UNM leadership suggested adding Native American leadership development to the focus of the proposed program/Center

Time Frame: January-June 2006
In-depth meetings with chairs, deans, and faculty to develop the concept and proposal
Ongoing meetings and discussions with RWJ leadership in coordination with the UNM Foundation
Involved RWJ site visits to UNM during the proposal process

Understanding Foundation Culture(s)

1. Formal Foundation Culture
   - highly structured
   - usually requires response to RFP
   - deadlines, formal application process
2. Informal Foundation Culture
   - innovative/creative
   - negotiable deadlines, may or may not have formal application process
   - usually requires an invitation

Culture of Giving
Each Foundation cultivates its own culture around its giving/programs
Being familiar with these programs and the kinds of projects previously funded makes it easier to be successful with a private funder
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture

Formal application but the proposal is invited, all pieces of the application discussed with a Foundation team well before submission

Budget is pre-negotiated

TIP

Unusual or exceptional items such as endowments, gifts, or one-time additional funds can be negotiated in these pre-submission periods!

FROM THE FOUNDATION PERSPECTIVE

PROS

- New Mexico offered demographic match for students
- UNM had appropriate social science degree programs
- UNM had a medical school/health sciences campus

CONS

- UNM not an Ivy League
- Targeted UNM departments had limited faculty capacity in health policy to train PhD students
- Institutional leadership was new and/or interim

FROM THE UNIVERSITY PERSPECTIVE

PROS

- Funder is non-political (few red flags for PR)
- Funder offering generous, multi-year support
- Very little ‘spin’ required to make the fit

CONSIDERATIONS

- Funder required match
- Funder required direct reporting line to Provost/President

TIP: Get to Know Your Funder

The Foundation leadership and team liked to talk through ideas that diverged from their usual projects

Results:

1) $8 Endowment given to assist UNM in hiring and maintaining health policy faculty
2) Expansion of demographic scope of students
Seeking Appropriate Partners

Internal Partners are Important!
- University Foundation or 501(c)3
- University Pre- and Post-Award Offices
- Other appropriate departments, programs, centers
- Show that you have friends, play well with others!
- Top Brass – President, Chancellor, Provost, Dean
- Wherever possible have like parties meet (UNM President and VPs meet with Foundation President and VPs); fundraisers and program faculty/staff meet with program officers

Working with Departments

RWJF Center now has a comprehensive Research Support Team to work with PI(s) and Department Administrators
Formalized relationships with UNM core departments in grant submission and management - required transparent submission process
- how to work with Research Support Team
- developing realistic deadlines
Established an F&A split
Formalized post award management

Working with Central Administration

By establishing a Research Support Team there is continuity for working directly with:
- Central Administration Pre-Award Office and a designated Research Administrator
- UNM Foundation when a proposal must be submitted by the UNM Foundation – e.g. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and endowment issues
- Post-Award administration for award management issues

Strategies for Sustainability

OK, you’ve got the money but remember……..
Stewardship and Sustainability are just as important as bringing the money in the door
Important to talk with the funder throughout about long-term commitments
Develop a strategic plan for funding base diversification and consider enlisting the primary funder to assist with other private & corporate foundation funding efforts
Use your Board of Directors and University leadership as appropriate

Leveraging Additional Funding

Operating funds are very difficult to attract but once established you can leverage those funds to bring in project based monies
- uses strengths and interests of your faculty
Build a portfolio of critical research talent and systematically pursue opportunities
Expanding Partnerships and Expectations

Maintaining the Relationship with the Funder

- honesty
- integrity
- accountability
- responsiveness
- good (great) reporting
- regular, positive communication
- occasional advice regarding unanticipated problems

Where we are today

Completed five years December 2011
Currently on Bridge funding of $1.6M through June 2012
Renewed for three years $7.5M beginning July 2012
In the process of writing more proposals to diversify funding base; expanding scope to internationalize the Center and attract new $$$

Where we are today

Just renewed for next 3 years!
RWJF is considering increasing our endowment
Developing a gift/donor plan
- alumni gifts
- board member contributions
- corporate and foundation giving

Visitors from Our Sister Center

Thank you

Charlene Porsild
cporsild@unm.edu; 505-277-0128
Denise Wallen
wallen@unm.edu; 505-277-7649