Making the Case for NIH: The Good News

- NIH has a clear and compelling mission, i.e. funding research to improve health
- The American public is positive about research, including basic research
- Scientific opportunity has never been greater

Advocacy does make a difference: NIH has fared better than many other interests in recessionary times.
Making the Case for NIH: Challenges

- Perceived lack of accountability; not enough palpable “progress”; people don’t see solutions and results
- Other stakeholders in the research-for-health ecosystem don’t always feel valued or heard
- Science and scientists are largely “invisible”
- Economic impact analyses are unconvincing
- ACA conversation consumes health mindshare, crowding out research for health
- Most health care providers — the most trusted sources for research information — do not talk about research
“...public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed.”

Abraham Lincoln
Commissioning public opinion polls on research issues for 21 years:

- National Polls
- State-Based Polls
- Issue-Specific Polls

Telephone (random-digit dialing) polls are conducted with a sample size of 800-1000 adults (age 18+) and a maximum theoretical sampling error of +/- 3.5%. Data are demographically representative of adult U.S. residents (state or national).

Online polls are conducted with a sample size of 1000-2000 adults and sampling error of +/-3.1%. The data are weighted in two stages to ensure accurate representation of the U.S. adult population.
The Good News
Most Agree that Basic Research is Necessary

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? “Even if it brings no immediate benefits, basic scientific research that advances the frontiers of knowledge is necessary and should be supported by the federal government.”

- 32% Strongly agree
- 42% Somewhat agree
- 11% Somewhat disagree
- 6% Strongly disagree
- 10% Not sure

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in December 2012.
49% of Americans Say U.S. Should Not Scale Back Medical Research

The planned across-the-board budget cuts mean that, next year, the federal government would fund approximately 2,300 fewer medical research grants across the country. Which comes closer to your views on this reduction in medical research grants?

- Our nation should not scale back medical research.
- It is OK to scale back medical research as part of deficit reduction.
- Not sure

Source: A Research!America poll of likely voters conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics, with support from United for Medical Research, in September 2012.
Few Likely Voters Think Gov’t Spends too Much on Research

For each of the problems listed, is the government spending ...

- Paying down the federal deficit:
  - Too much money: 6%
  - About the right amount of money: 21%
  - Not enough money: 62%
  - Not sure: 11%

- Highways and bridges:
  - Too much money: 6%
  - About the right amount of money: 37%
  - Not enough money: 49%
  - Not sure: 8%

- Science and math education:
  - Too much money: 8%
  - About the right amount of money: 34%
  - Not enough money: 46%
  - Not sure: 12%

- Scientific research:
  - Too much money: 9%
  - About the right amount of money: 46%
  - Not enough money: 35%
  - Not sure: 10%

- Law enforcement:
  - Too much money: 12%
  - About the right amount of money: 50%
  - Not enough money: 30%
  - Not sure: 8%

- Developing alternative sources of energy:
  - Too much money: 17%
  - About the right amount of money: 23%
  - Not enough money: 53%
  - Not sure: 8%

- National defense:
  - Too much money: 26%
  - About the right amount of money: 41%
  - Not enough money: 27%
  - Not sure: 6%

- Space exploration:
  - Too much money: 32%
  - About the right amount of money: 34%
  - Not enough money: 26%
  - Not sure: 8%

Source: A Research!America poll of likely voters conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in March 2012.
More than Half of Americans Willing to Pay Tax for Research

Would you be willing to pay $1 per week more in taxes if you were certain that all of the money would be spent on additional medical research?

- Yes: 54%
- No: 28%
- Not sure: 19%

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in December 2012.
Research is Part of the Solution to Rising Health Care Costs

When it comes to rising health care costs, would you say research to improve health is part of the problem or part of the solution?

- Part of the solution: 54%
- Part of the problem: 24%
- Not sure: 22%

Source: National Public Opinion Poll, October 2011, Zogby Analytics for Research!America
Opinions on America’s Most Important Health Issue

What would you say is the single most important health issue facing people in the U.S. today? (first volunteered responses)

- HIV/AIDS
- Cancer
- Health care cost / coverage / insurance
- Heart disease
- Obesity

Source: Public Opinion Polls, 1992-2010
Demonstrating Economic Impact
U.S. Spends Big on Health but Ranks Low in Return on Investment

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; Institute of Medicine
Do you believe that we are making enough progress in medical research in the U.S.?

- 25% Yes
- 55% No
- 20% Not sure

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in December 2012.
Skepticism about Economic Impact

What science is really worth

Spending on science is one of the best ways to generate jobs and economic growth, say research advocates. But as Colin Macilwain reports, the evidence behind such claims is patchy.

Source: Nature 465, June 9, 2010
Skepticism about Economic Impact

Does R&D Drive Economic Growth?
The Mythology of Innovation

October 29, 2012 | Roger Pielke Jr

It is a claim that you hear often in discussions of the role of research and development in the economy: “Federal investments in R&D have fueled half of the nation’s economic growth since World War II.” This particular claim appeared in a recent *Washington Post* op-ed co-authored by a member of the US Congress and the chief executive of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. It would be remarkable if true. Unfortunately, it is not.
Skepticism about Economic Impact

The main reason that countries are slow to realize the benefits of their research is because there have been few economic analyses of the knowledge economy. Better economic models are needed to understand the impact of investments.
Standing Shoulder to Shoulder
Do you think the different types of institutions conducting medical research in this country, such as government, universities, and private industry, work together to develop new treatments and cures, or do you think they are in competition?

Source: National Poll, November 2008
Charlton Research Company for Research!America
Research Institutions Should Work Together

Do you think the institutions conducting medical and health research in this country, such as government, universities, and private industry, should work together to develop new treatments and cures, or not?

- 94% Should work together
- 6% Should not work together

Source: Research Enterprise Poll, February 2010
Charlton Research Company for Research!America
Research is Invisible
Most Americans Can’t Name a Living Scientist

Can you name a living scientist? (first volunteered responses)

Source: Your Congress - Your Health Survey, March 2011
Charlton Research Company for Research!America
Most Americans Don’t Know Where Research is Conducted

Can you name any institution, company or organization where medical and health research is conducted?

59%

I can

41%

I cannot

- Mayo Clinic: 10%
- CDC: 9%
- NIH: 7%
- Johns Hopkins: 6%
- St. Jude: 4%
- Pfizer: 3%
- American Cancer Society: 3%
- Merck: 2%
- Duke Univ./Med. Ctr.: 1%
- OR Heath & Sci. Univ.: 1%
- UCSF: 1%
- Other: 52%

Source: Your Candidates-Your Health Public Opinion Poll, October 2011, Zogby Analytics for Research!America
To the best of your knowledge, would you say that medical research takes place in every state in the U.S.?

- Yes, medical research takes place in every state in the U.S. (44%)
- No, medical research does not take place in every state in the U.S. (35%)
- Don't know (21%)

Source: A Research!America poll of likely voters conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics, with support from United for Medical Research, in September 2012.
Few Americans Recognize the National Institutes of Health

What is the name of the government agency that funds most of the medical research paid for by taxpayers in this country? (first volunteered responses)

- National Institutes of Health: 50%
- Food and Drug Administration: 19%
- HHS/Health Dept.: 13%
- Centers for Disease Control: 6%
- Other: 3%
- Don't know: 9%

Source: Research Enterprise Poll, February 2010
Charlton Research Company for Research!America
Seven in 10 Say Doctors Don’t Talk About Medical Research

Has your doctor or other health care professional ever talked to you about medical research?

- Yes: 22%
- No: 70%
- Not sure: 8%

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in May 2013.
Specific Suggestions

- Get out of the echo chamber and talk to new audiences
- Design and fund economic impact studies
- Create incentives for individual scientists to engage the non-science public; pilot test and scale
- Educate grantees about other stakeholders, including industry and patient groups — stop expecting them to make our case if we aren’t making theirs
- Open dialogue with health care providers, the most trusted sources of information about research
Accountability is part of our contract with the public.
I admire and love my brother [Paul Greengard], but he lives on a higher plane, and what he does is secret, unrevealable. To me, anyway ...

“Every time he took a new job — whether at Albert Einstein College of Medicine or Yale — I’d ask him about it. Then he’d get into electro-physiological properties, and it was all over ...

“Now, he has won the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine, an honor he shares with two other scientists. In reporting it, the newspapers said their work on the way brain cells communicate might one day help cure diseases like Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s.

“I’m thrilled he won. Now I know what he does.”

— Chris Chase in a New York Times opinion piece on October 15, 2000
“Scientists are obliged to make the case for science to lawmakers. ... If I had to do it all over again I would spend more time talking to general audiences and public officials, penning op-eds.”

J. Michael Bishop, MD, Nobel laureate; Research!America Advocacy Awards, March 15, 2011
“I work for you.”