Meeting the Moment

Office of Research on Women’s Health

30th Anniversary Scientific Meeting

December 15, 2020

National Institutes of Health
It’s Personal for Me

My early career: The Multiple Risk Factor Intervention Trial (MRFIT)
Meeting the Moment

• Today, we’re at a pivot point in our nation’s failure to recognize science. 30 years ago, we were at a pivot point in our nation’s failure to recognize women’s health.

• The urgent focus on women’s health wasn’t brought on by a pandemic but by women’s health advocates who urged women leaders in Congress to demand change.

• The women of Congress organized and brought about enormous progress in women’s health funding at NIH.

• It started with a bipartisan group of women, Reps. Connie Morella, Olympia Snowe, Pat Schroeder and their ringleader, Senator Barbara Mikulski.
“Women were not included in the protocols at NIH, in the famous study, 'take an aspirin a day, keep the doctor -- you know -- a heart attack -- away.' It was done on ten thousand male medical students.”
Others Who Met the Moment

- Members of Congress: Nita Lowey, Patsy Mink, John Porter, Henry Waxman
- The elected leaders worked closely with advocacy groups including the Society for Women’s Health Research and National Breast Cancer Coalition
- The Office of Research on Women’s Health under the leadership of Dr. Vivian Pinn became the driver at NIH.
  - It has accomplished so much, including focusing on health issues of particular concern to women of color.
- The Office continues to meet the moment to this day, as the work is ongoing.
Research!America Was Formed in 1989 to Meet the Moment: Weakened Support for Science by Congress

We bring stakeholders together to heighten the priority of research and to help assure scientific progress and the health and vitality of the scientific enterprise.
Research!America Strategies for Success

- Keep a finger on public pulse via public opinion surveys
- Develop timely policy and advocacy resources
- Continuously cultivate new advocates and congressional champions
- Execute grassroots/grasstips advocacy campaigns
- Monitor and share federal developments
- Convene cross-sector discussions to inform research-relevant policy issues
- Work with the broad science community to assure all boats will rise
It is more honest to frame the new, post-COVID-19 normal not as predictions, but as a series of choices.

Fate will not create the new normal; choices will.
Our Choices Matter

Choosing to wear a mask
Choosing to make sure women’s voices are at the table
Choosing to get a flu shot
Choosing to act to assure diversity and equity and inclusion
Choosing to speak up for science
Choosing to "hand the microphone" to others to allow them space to speak
Four of Five of Americans Agree: It’s Time for an Urgent Refocus on Science

Which statement is closest to your view? Statement A: The COVID-19 pandemic is a disruptive event and requires urgent refocusing of America’s commitment to science. Statement B: Things will get back to normal soon; we don’t need increased efforts in science.

“...public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed.”

President Abraham Lincoln
Research!America Surveys

- Commissioning public opinion surveys on research issues for 28 years:
  - National Surveys
  - State-Based Surveys
  - Issue-Specific Surveys
- Online surveys are conducted with a sample size of 1000-2000 adults and sampling error of +/-3.1% to +/-2.1%. The data are weighted in two stages to ensure accurate representation of the U.S. adult population.
- For many surveys, we oversample minority populations.
Declining Belief in Benefit of Vaccines

Do you believe that you have personally benefited from the development of vaccines over the last 50 years?

August, 2020
- Strongly, Yes: 46%
- Somewhat, Yes: 27%
- Somewhat, No: 11%
- Strongly, No: 5%
- Not sure: 5%

May, 2008
- Strongly, Yes: 59%
- Somewhat, Yes: 28%
- Somewhat, No: 4%
- Strongly, No: 5%
- Not sure: 5%

November, 2008
- Strongly, Yes: 75%
- Somewhat, Yes: 15%
- Somewhat, No: 5%
- Strongly, No: 3%
- Not sure: 3%

Urgent and High Priorities for Americans - Science Can Help

How much of a priority are each of the following issues for the United States and how can science technology, and innovation help address them? (Top 6 responses)

Source: A Research!America survey of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in August 2020
More Americans have a great deal of confidence in medical scientists now than before the pandemic.

% of U.S. adults who say they have a great deal or fair amount of confidence in each of the following groups to act in the best interests of the public:

Medical scientists: 89%
Scientists: 87%

Source: Pew Research Center
Confidence in Medical Professionals and Scientists is Especially High

How much confidence do you have in each of the following to act in your best interest -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>A fair amount</th>
<th>Not too much</th>
<th>None at all</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctors</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scientists</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>Police officers</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public health officials</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military leaders</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious leaders</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College and university professors</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public school principals (K-12)</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business leaders</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elected officials</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trust in Institutions v. Individuals

Icons made by Eucalyp and srip from Flaticon
Most Americans Cannot Name a Living Scientist

Can you name a living scientist?

- Yes: 29%
- No/Not Sure: 71%

* Deceased

Increase in those saying “yes” from 20% in 2019 to 29% in 2020

Anthony Fauci: 24%
Neil DeGrasse Tyson: 10%
Bill Nye: 8%
Stephen Hawking*: 4%
Timothy Berners-Lee: 3%
Jane Goodall: 2%
Alain Aspect: 2%
Albert Einstein*: 2%
Alan Guth: 1.5%
Bill Gates: 1%
Elon Musk: 1%

Only Half of Americans Can Name a Place Where Medical or Health Research is Conducted

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

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2020

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital 12%
Mayo Clinic 12%
Johns Hopkins University/Hospital 7%
Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 5%
National Institutes of Health (NIH) 5%
Cleveland Clinic 3%
Pfizer Inc. 3%
Other 54%

Increase those saying “yes” from 35% in January 2018 to 53% in 2020

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2020
The Majority of Americans Do Not Know That Research is Conducted in All 50 States

To the best of your knowledge, would you say that medical research in the U.S. is conducted in all 50 states?

Increase in those saying “yes” from 27% in 2019 to 34% in 2020

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2020
Meet the Moment: Increase the Visibility of Science
COVID-19 has pushed science to the forefront of public attention.

- Experiencing science in “real time”
- → This is new for scientists too

Scientists are not trained to engage the public

- We propose federally-funded PhD students get specific training
- Participate in a Public Engagement (PE) course

Ensure that new generations of scientists are increasingly visible and comfortable with the broader community → increase trust of and support for science, stronger interest in STEM careers, stronger, science-driven economy

Mary Woolley, Jenny Luray, and Sarah Ackerman, September 2020
Progress, but More to Do

Women’s Health for Women

Women’s Health is Everyone’s Health

Science for the Future of our Nation

Photos: CDC, Adobe Stock, Unsplash
Meet the Moment - Put a Face on Research: YOURS!
The most important four words a scientist can say and convey are ...
“I work for you.”
Research!America Works for You

Connect with us

www.researchamerica.org
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www.twitter.com/researchamerica
www.youtube.com/researchamerica
mwoolley@researchamerica.org