Your Role in Changing Hearts and Minds for Science

Mary Woolley, President and CEO, Research!America

Dec. 16, 2016
UConn Health, Farmington, CT
Public Opinion Survey Question

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement - “Public policies should be based on the best available science?”
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement -- Public policies should be based on the best available science.

- Strongly Agree: 38%
- Somewhat Agree: 39%
- Somewhat Disagree: 10%
- Strongly Disagree: 3%
- Don't Know: 10%

Source: A Research!America and ScienceDebate.org poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in September 2015.
“Though there are increasing demands to curtail spending and to balance the federal budget, we must make the commitment to invest in science, engineering, healthcare and other areas that will make the lives of Americans better, safer and more prosperous.”

“We must balance a thriving economy with conserving our resources and protecting our citizens from threats. Science will inform our decisions on what regulations to keep, rescind or add. A vibrant, robust free market system will regulate the private sector.”

“Science is science and facts are facts. My administration will ensure that there will be total transparency and accountability without political bias. The American people deserve this and I will make sure this is the culture of my administration.”

Excerpts from ScienceDebate.org’s 20 questions on science, health, technology and the environment.
“Successful research does not have to come at the expense of human life. Scientific evidence, not political patronage, demonstrates the ability for researchers to solve our moral dilemma without having President Obama force taxpayers to subsidize research that will destroy human embryos.”

Rep. Tom Price (R-GA-06) DHHS Secretary-nominee
Current Context for Advocacy

Opportunities:

• Key champions for medical/health research on both sides of aisle still hold leadership positions in Congress
• Priorities on job creation, economic growth and maintaining competitiveness

Challenges:

• Tight budget caps create uncertainty
• Potential for an anti-science climate or one in which science is cut out of policymaking
• Health care cost and coverage issues could crowd out research

*Engagement and advocacy by scientists has never been more important!*
“You can change the image of things to come. But you can’t do it sitting on your hands...The science community should reach out to Congress and build bridges.”

Research!America Chair,
Former Congressman John Edward Porter
WARNING: Failure to be an advocate can be hazardous to your research career
President Obama signed the 21st Century Cures Act on December 13, 2016.

- Funding research to drive bold initiatives like the Cancer Moonshot
- Incorporating the patient voice into drug development
- Improving U.S. mental health infrastructure and funding solutions to the opioid crises
- Supporting the next generation of researchers
- Cutting red tape to get scientists back in the lab
- Taking steps to combat antimicrobial resistance
Advocacy Works: 21st Century Cures

- Has propelled medical progress into the spotlight
- Collaborative legislative model that brought patients to the table with policymakers, industry, researchers and other advocates
- Demonstrates that better health transcends partisanship, civility is a possibility, and gridlock need not be the rule
- Connects the dots between discovery, development and delivery - “we are all in this together”

“Bipartisan passage of the 21st Century Cures Act is a victory for patients and their loved ones – and that ultimately means all of us…”

Statement by Research!America President and CEO Mary Woolley on Passage of 21st Century Cures Act (HR 6) July 10, 2015
Democrats: 7

Warren Grant Magnuson (D, WA)
• U.S. Rep (1937-1944)
• U.S. Senator (1944-1981)

Lawton Chiles (D, FL)
• U.S. Senator (1971-1989)
• Florida Governor (1991-1998)

Claude Denson Pepper (D, FL)
• U.S. Senator (1936-1951)
• U.S. Representative (1963-1989)

Joseph Lister Hill (D, AL)
• U.S. Representative (1923-1938)
• U.S. Senator (1938-1969)

Dale Bumpers (D, AR)
• Arkansas Governor (1971-1975)
• U.S. Senator (1975-1999)

William Natcher (D, KY)
• U.S. Representative (1953-1994)

Louis Stokes (D, OH)
• U.S. Representative (1969-1999)
• Board Member (2007-2010)

Republicans: 5

Lowell P. Weicker, Jr. (R, CT)
• U.S. Representative (1969-1971)
• U.S. Senator (1971-1989)
• Connecticut Governor (1991-1995)

Mark Hatfield (R, OR)
• Oregon Governor (1959-1967)
• U.S. Senator (1967-1997)

C.W. Bill Young (R, FL)
• U.S. Representative (1971-2013)

John Edward Porter (R, IL)
• U.S. Representative (1980-2001)
• Chair of Research!America

Silvio O. Conte (R, MA)
• U.S. Representative (1959-1991)

*Plaza named for Paul G. Rogers (D, FL, U.S. Representative 1955-1979) Former Chair of Research!America
“It is critical that we secure and build on the United States’ leadership in medical innovation. To do this, I believe Congress has to look at how we can ramp up investment in the kind of research and development that helps drive this private sector growth.”

Rep. Patty Murray (D-WA), Ranking Member HELP Committee and Ranking Member Labor-H Appropriations Subcommittee
“I don’t care if you’re republican or democrat, liberal or conservative-- Alzheimer’s and cancer don’t pick people that way....everyone has a personal story. And in a very divided time, a polarized time, people are looking for things to work together on and support, and NIH and CDC are two of those things.”

-- Accepting the Whitehead Award for Medical Research Advocacy during Research!America’s 2016 Advocacy Awards Dinner

Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK-04), Chairman, Labor-H Appropriations Subcommittee
How important is it that elected officials at all levels listen to advice from scientists?

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2015.
Research!America’s Mission

Making research to improve health a higher national priority

Research!America is an innovator in advocacy for research
Research!America: 27 Years of Putting Research on the Public Agenda

- Nonprofit alliance with member organizations drawn from academia, business, patient organizations and scientific societies representing more than 125 million Americans
- Distinguished, all-volunteer board includes former elected and appointed officials, media and public relations leaders, and leaders from alliance member organizations
- Three ‘sister’ organizations in Canada, Australia and Sweden
Research!America Board Members (partial list)

- The Honorable John Edward Porter, Senior Advisor, Hogan Lovells US LLP
- The Honorable Michael Castle, Partner, DLA Piper, LLP
- E. Albert Reece, M.D., Ph.D., MBA, Vice President of Medical Affairs; University of Maryland School of Medicine
- Hortensia Amaro, Ph.D., Professor of Social Work and Preventive Medicine, University of Southern California School of Social Work
- Susan Dentzer, CEO, Network for Excellence in Health Innovation
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- Mark McClellan, M.D., Ph.D., MPA, Director, Center for Health Policy, Duke University
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- Keith Yamamoto, Ph.D., Vice Dean for Research, School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco
- Elias Zerhouni, M.D., President, Global Research & Development, Sanofi
Current Advocacy Agenda

- Build champions for research in the new Administration and Congress
- Advance evidence-based policymaking as Congress considers science and engineering-relevant legislation
- Help prevent deep cuts to non-defense discretionary spending
- Secure budget increases for NIH, FDA, CDC, AHRQ, NSF and other research agencies in FY17 and FY18
- As infrastructure investment is considered, make the case for bolstering our nation’s science and public health infrastructure
- Protect health services research (HSR) and social, behavioral, economic (SBE) research from ongoing threats of budget cuts
- Push for permanent repeal of medical device excise tax
A Challenge: Pass the Starbucks Test
Connecticut Delegation, 115th Congress

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)

Sen. Christopher Murphy (D-CT)

Rep. John Larson (D-CT-1)
Rep. Joe Courtney (D-CT-2)
Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT-3)
Rep. Jim Himes (D-CT-4)
Rep. Elizabeth Esty (D-CT-5)
Scientists talking to Congress

“There was a panel of scientists talking to a panel of representatives in Congress, and the members of Congress were passing notes to one another, and the notes said things like, Do you know what this guy is saying? And the guy would pass back the note, No, I have no idea, do YOU know what he’s saying?”

Communicating, instead of just talking...

“While we’re explaining things to somebody, are we reading them? Are we relating to them? Are we seeing if they’re getting it...or are we just spraying information at them.”

“I think these are some of the most important questions we can ask because although it’s true that if somebody is going to really study science deeply, really learn it, they’re gonna have to work hard at it. If we’re introducing them to it, then if all we do is turn them away from it, turn them off, then it’s not communication, it’s ex-communication.”

2016 National Academy of Sciences Public Welfare Medal Recipient – Alan Alda, May 1, 2016
Tell Your Story, Not Your Data!

“I’ll pause for a moment so you can let this information sink in.”
Engage Emotion: You Can’t Use Facts To Change Feelings

“When we think of ourselves, we identify with System 2, the conscious reasoning self that has beliefs, makes choices, and decides what to think about and what to do. Although System 2 believes itself to be where the action is, the automatic System 1 is the hero...System 1 [is about] effortlessly originating impressions and feelings that are the main sources of the explicit beliefs and deliberate choices of System 2.”

- Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking Fast and Slow*

- Time and again, research has shown that facts and rational analysis do not convince people to change behavior. Behavior change begins when people see something that makes them feel something.
- The gatekeeper for our decisions is not our rational self but our emotional self - our instincts, our emotions.
- If you want to change the narrative around a cause, you have to start by changing the way people feel.
- Hearts before minds.
“If you think research is expensive, try disease.”

Mary Lasker
1900-1994
Q: What do elected officials and scientists have in common?
Q: What do elected officials and scientists have in common?

A: Serving the public’s interest.

You can effectively start a conversation with any elected official by thanking them for serving the public’s interest. And then say how you do, as well.
“...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 24 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%. The data are weighted in two stages to ensure accurate representation of the U.S. adult population.
Majority 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.”

- **24%** Strongly agree
- **46%** Somewhat agree
- **15%** Somewhat disagree
- **11%** Strongly disagree
- **4%** Not sure

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2015.
Important for U.S. to Lead in Research

How important do you think it is that the U.S. is a global leader in medical, health and scientific research?

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in September 2015.
Many Believe Government Should Prioritize STEM Education, Careers

Do you agree or disagree that the federal government should assign a higher priority to improving education focused on science, technology, engineering and mathematics and careers in those fields?

- **40%** Strongly agree
- **38%** Somewhat agree
- **9%** Somewhat disagree
- **3%** Strongly disagree
- **3%** Not sure

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2016.
For which of the following would you be willing to share your personal health information? (Choose all that apply)

- To advance medical research: 59%
- So health care providers can improve patient care: 56%
- So public health officials can better track diseases and disability and the causes: 46%
- None: 14%
- Not Sure: 12%

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2016.
Important to Conduct Research to Eliminate Health Disparities

Studies show that certain health problems such as diabetes, heart disease, and infant mortality happen more often among minorities or citizens with lower incomes. How important do you feel it is to conduct medical or health research to understand and eliminate these differences?

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2016.
Most Trusted Spokespersons for Science?

How trustworthy do you consider each of the following to be as spokespersons for science?

- Scientists: 9 Very trustworthy, 9 Somewhat trustworthy, 16 Not very trustworthy, 19 Not at all trustworthy, 33 Not sure
- Health care professionals: 9 Very trustworthy, 12 Somewhat trustworthy, 15 Not very trustworthy, 19 Not at all trustworthy, 24 Not sure
- Patient organizations: 15 Very trustworthy, 16 Somewhat trustworthy, 16 Not very trustworthy, 15 Not at all trustworthy, 19 Not sure
- Journalists: 16 Very trustworthy, 16 Somewhat trustworthy, 11 Not very trustworthy, 11 Not at all trustworthy, 8 Not sure
- Bloggers: 15 Very trustworthy, 15 Somewhat trustworthy, 15 Not very trustworthy, 15 Not at all trustworthy, 10 Not sure
- Business leaders: 13 Very trustworthy, 13 Somewhat trustworthy, 13 Not very trustworthy, 13 Not at all trustworthy, 10 Not sure
- Elected officials: 12 Very trustworthy, 12 Somewhat trustworthy, 12 Not very trustworthy, 12 Not at all trustworthy, 5 Not sure

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2014
Public Perceptions of Science and Scientists Mostly Favorable

According to the latest National Science Board poll:

• 41% of Americans express high levels of confidence in the scientific community. This ranks second only to the military.

• 70% of Americans say that they believe the benefits from science are greater than the harms, and 90% agree that S&T will create more opportunities for future generations.

Source: 2016 National Science Board Science and Engineering Indicators
Public Confidence in Institutional Leaders

- 41% of Americans express high levels of confidence in the scientific community. This ranks second only to the military.

Figure 7-17
Public confidence in institutional leaders, by type of institution: 2014

Source: 2016 National Science Board Science and Engineering Indicators
And Yet, Despite High Levels of Public Confidence, Scientists are Invisible in Our Society...
Can Americans Name a Living Scientist?
Most Americans Cannot Name a Living Scientist

Can you name a living scientist?

- I can
  - Stephen Hawking (40%)
  - Neil deGrasse Tyson (15%)
  - Jane Goodall (7%)
  - Bill Nye (6%)
  - Michio Kaku (4%)
  - Richard Dawkins (4%)
  - James Watson (2%)
  - Ben Carson (2%)
  - Other (20%)

- I cannot

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2016.
Do Americans Know Where Research is Conducted?
Most Americans Don’t Know Where Research is Conducted

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

- I can: 34%
- I cannot: 66%

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2016.
Most Americans Don’t Know Research is Conducted Nationwide

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

- Yes: 34%
- No: 37%
- Not Sure: 28%

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in January 2016.
Important for Scientists to Engage with Public on Research

How important is it for scientists to inform elected officials and the public about their research and its impact on society?

- **51%** Very Important
- **33%** Somewhat Important
- **10%** Not Very Important
- **5%** Not Important At All
- **2%** Not Sure

Source: A Research!America and ScienceDebate.org poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in September 2015.
Science in Real Time

- People are understandably confused by the three steps forward/two steps back *dynamic process* of science.
- By standing back or failing to engage, researchers and advocates aren’t helping resolve public confusion. Healthy skepticism is a good thing in science and in public discourse!
- Public support for science is at stake.
What Can You Do?

• Talk about aspirations for better health, and talk about return on investment
• Use in-the-moment news to illustrate public aspirations for better health
• Emphasize how research drives economic activity in every state and creates good jobs
• Convey your personal commitment
• Encourage your colleagues to engage the public
THEN... 130,000 new cases of HIV infection occurred annually during the peak of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, and most cases were fatal.

NOW... The development of Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART), revolutionized the battle against HIV/AIDS and transformed the virus from a death sentence to a manageable chronic condition.

IMAGINE... A universal HIV vaccine and complete eradication of HIV/AIDS.

Research is the future!
The combined salaries of the top ten highest-paid athletes in 2015 totaled more than $610 million.

That amount is enough to fund all NIH-sponsored head and spine injury research for more than 3 years.

Sources: Forbes, NIH
Relatable Communications
AKA Social Math

• The Department of Homeland Security’s budget in 2016 totals $41.2 billion.

• Health Security: The National Institutes of Health budget in 2016 is $32.3 billion.

Sources: DHS, NIH
“Everybody in the science and technology community who cares about the future of the world should be tithing 10 percent of his or her time to interacting with the public in the policy process.”

John P. Holdren, PhD
President Obama’s Science Adviser
Put a Face on Research: YOURS!
The most important four words a researcher can say and convey are ...
“I work for you.”
Research!America Works for You

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www.twitter.com/researchamerica
www.youtube.com/researchamerica