

# COMMENTARY

## The Providence Journal

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## Medical alliance is transforming biomedical research landscape across RI

### Your Turn

Bongsup Cho and Brett Pellock  
 Guest columnists

Federal research grants are vital to building and maintaining world-class research programs. The University of Rhode Island recently secured a five-year, \$21-million grant from the National Institutes of Health to support the Rhode Island IDEA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence program. Since its inception in 2001, the program has brought more than \$100 million to the state.

RI-INBRE is an NIH Institutional Development Award that promotes biomedical research and training at academic institutions across Rhode Island. At its heart, it is a biomedical capacity-building program. We work closely with and support each of our nine partner institutions, including Bryant University, Brown University, Community College of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, Providence College, Roger Williams University, Salve Regina University and URI. RI-INBRE provides unique opportunities for networking, faculty development, student training and resource sharing. This has nurtured a vibrant community of researchers dedicated to advancing biomedical science.

RI-INBRE supports faculty research and development through research grants for early-career and established faculty at every network institution. We also maintain a robust student training grant program that supports summer research and academic year students in labs across Rhode Island. In 23 years, the program has supported 802 research projects involving 218 faculty members who have trained 2,210 undergraduate students, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

Investigators and students across the state routinely interact and share ideas at networking venues. They present their work each summer at the Undergraduate Research Symposium, which showcases the next generation of scientists and is a vibrant celebration of biomedical research training in Rhode Island.

RI-INBRE continues to grow and improve its training programs to match the pace of the biomedical landscape here. We have recently established a workforce development program supported by a state Department of Labor and Training Real Jobs RI grant. The program offers intensive training in biomedical skills, equipping students with the expertise to thrive in the local biotechnology industry. We have also maintained and expanded our Centralized Research Core Facility, which contains an impressive array of state-of-the-art research instruments available for academic and industry investigators. By bridging the gap between academia and industry, RI-INBRE is shaping the future workforce and driving economic growth in our state.

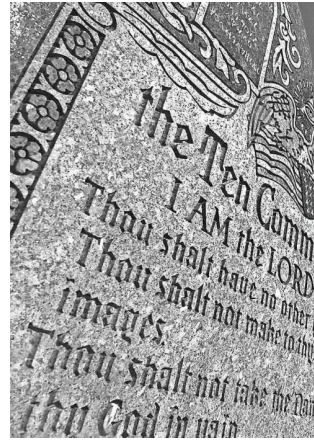
To enhance the impact of our program, we have cultivated partnerships with other capacity-building programs in Rhode Island's thriving biomedical ecosystem, including the Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence and Center for Translation Research, led by researchers at hospitals in Providence and Brown University. These collaborations and joint initiatives have fostered a culture of innovation, leading to scientific discoveries and improved health outcomes for our community.

In 2023 alone, Rhode Island received 23 IDEA awards totaling \$28.5 million, a testament to the quality and diversity of our research endeavors. These funds have fueled scientific discovery and stimulated local job growth by supporting research staff, trainees and administrative personnel. RI-INBRE and other federal capacity-building programs have become engines of economic prosperity, bolstering Rhode Island's position as an essential player in biomedical and life sciences.

As we reflect on the achievements made possible by the NIH IDEA programs, it is clear that Rhode Island has been blessed with an extraordinary endowment of resources. From pioneering research to workforce development, these initiatives have reshaped our scientific landscape, propelling us toward a brighter, promising future.

Looking ahead, we are not just hopeful, but excited to continue to harness the power of collaboration and innovation to build upon our success and further enhance the biomedical enterprise in the Ocean State, a future that we believe will be even more impactful and transformative.

*Bongsup Cho is RI-INBRE program director, University of Rhode Island. Brett Pellock is RI-INBRE program coordinator, Providence College.*



A tablet of the Ten Commandments on the grounds of the University of Rhode Island. LARRY KOLVOORD/AMERICAN-STATESMAN FILE

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### About those Ten Commandments

I wonder if Gov. Jeff Landry of Louisiana, promoter of displaying the Ten Commandments in public places, has discussed his plan with the leader of his Republican Party, a felon, sexual predator and twice impeached, disgraced former president.

Perhaps Gov. Landry could tutor his party's presidential candidate in the significance of the Ten Commandments. Is he even aware of their existence? Is Gov. Landry aware of the writings of Roger Williams or how those writings informed the thinking of the Founders?

*Jim Manchester, Bristol*

#### Children need moral guidance

Aren't Black Lives Matter and Gay Pride religions? Motifs from both of those are plastered all over schools. Kids in America are in serious need of moral guidance. A decade ago, I would have opposed the Ten Commandments display in Louisiana, but not now. Let's inject a dose of patriotism into these classrooms, as well!

*Scott R. Hammond, Providence*

#### Attack, not defend

This is to the Trump supporters. A headline in a recent Journal reads "Trump lawyer targets Smith" (News, June 22).

As usual, Donald Trump has no real defense so he attacks lawyers and judges and anyone who doesn't listen to his whining. Do you cultists ever get tired of the rants and bullying in place of factual rejoinders? Does Joe or Hunter Biden attack the judicial system and call the opposing attorneys childish names after Hunter's conviction?

When does the Republican Party look the clown in the face and tell him to take off the makeup and stop the kiddy act? Are we adults? This is The White House, not The Bounce House!

*Richard Donnelly, Providence*

#### More anti-Trump nonsense

We got yet another in an endless stream of anti-Trump letters to the editor from Mr. Gordon Rowley ("Are you ready for a smackdown?" June 23). Mr. Rowley, a staunch never Trumper, claims that the June 27 debate between Donald Trump and Joe Biden "is going to be a decision maker for the vast majority of voters."

Is this guy serious? I find it hard to believe that the vast majority of voters have not already made up their minds who to vote for in the upcoming presidential election, especially with someone as polarizing as Donald Trump as one of the candidates. You either love Trump or, as in Mr. Rowley's case, you hate him.

For the small number of undecided voters out there, ask yourself one simple question. Is the country and the world better off now or were we better off during the Trump presidency? Under Trump we had a booming economy with low inflation and low unemployment. We had a relatively secure southern border as opposed to the disastrous situation today costing the American taxpayers billions of dollars.

Under Trump there were no major wars in the world. We now have horrific fighting going on in Ukraine and Gaza. There is no way that anyone could look at what's gone on in the past three and a half years and tell me that Mr. Biden has been a better president than Trump. The only people who can do that are the ones who are so blinded by their hatred of Trump (like Mr. Rowley) that they can't see clearly.

*Frank P. Cardi, Cranston*

#### Between depravity and decency

Never before has the choice of candidates for the office of the presidency been made so abundantly clear. This fall we voters can easily choose between Depravity, based upon the demonstration of continuous lies, fraud, self-interest, and deceit. Or we can choose Decency, based upon the true care and compassion expressed by the other candidate, who truly