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## Nutrition Research Consortium Receives \$1 million Contract



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Nutrition Research Consortium Receives \$1 million Contract  
for Troop Recruit Improvement (TRIM)

CHARLESTON, SC -- March 12, 2008 — The Nutrition Research Consortium (NRC), a program managed by SCRA, has received a \$1 million U.S. Department of Defense contract to improve military recruit readiness and fitness. This unique consortium draws upon the complementary strengths and resources of South Carolina's research universities: Clemson University, the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and the University of South Carolina (USC) -- as well as SCRA.

Almost 80 percent of recruits who exceed military weight-for-height standards at entry leave the military before they complete their first term of enlistment. "Issues of obesity threaten the long-term welfare and readiness of the US military forces," said Russell R. Pate, Ph.D., Professor and Associate Vice President for Health Sciences at the University of South Carolina. Pate is the scientific lead for the TRIM program. "TRIM research will focus on prevention of the problem – which must come before treatment can be addressed. We are pleased to be conducting this important research in conjunction with SCRA and with our colleagues around the state," he said.

The TRIM program uses a comprehensive approach to determine and combat the causes of childhood and adolescent obesity. According to Patrick M. O'Neil, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and the director of the Weight Management Center at MUSC, "The portion of the recruitment-age population too heavy to meet weight standards for enlistment is growing, and likely to continue to grow given rates of child and adolescent obesity." He said that "understanding the causes of obesity in these groups is the first step in preventing it to ensure the availability of a fit, healthy and reliable recruitment base."

TRIM will provide knowledge that may be used nationally to provide healthier, fit recruits. “This research may result in fewer children and adults plagued with diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and other debilitating conditions that stem from obesity,” said Susan Barefoot, Ph.D., Associate Dean for Food Safety & Nutrition at Clemson University. There is also an anticipated long-term benefit in reduced ongoing medical costs for active duty and retired military personnel.

TRIM undertakes a multi-year research program that will examine the root causes of childhood obesity and follow a group of subjects through to recruitment age and beyond. The NRC, The Cooper Institute in Texas, the University of Iowa and the Pennington Biomedical Research Center of Louisiana State University will collaborate with other partners, including South Carolina State University and Winthrop University. The program team will work with military recruiters at both Fort Jackson, the U.S. Army’s largest and most active entry training center, and Parris Island, the U.S. Marine Corps’ east coast basic training center.

The Nutrition Research Consortium was established in 2003 as a statewide collaboration to foster innovative research and outreach in nutrition, health and disease prevention. Consortium members have submitted more than 16 collaborative grant applications (totaling approximately \$29 million), and have been awarded close to \$8 million in grants and contracts. “The NRC is a testament to the power of collaboration,” said SCRA CEO Bill Mahoney. “As all research awards -- but particularly awards from the National Institute of Health, have become more difficult to capture, NRC has remained competitive – and successful in its target segments,” he said.

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About the Nutrition Research Consortium (<http://www.scnrc.org/>)

In 2003, Clemson University, the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), the University of South Carolina (USC), and SCRA® launched the Nutrition Research Consortium. This innovative program – a first in the State—has the potential to create a crucial mass and superior research capacity that will ultimately result in a healthier South Carolina. Today, more than 50 of the state’s nutrition scientists are participating in Consortium research and outreach activities.

About SCRA (<http://www.scra.org/>)

SCRA is a global leader in applied research and commercialization services with offices in Anderson, Charleston, and Columbia, South Carolina. SCRA collaborates to advance technology. SCRA provides technology-based solutions with assured outcomes to industry and government, and with the help of research universities like Clemson University, the University of South Carolina and the Medical University of South Carolina.

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