



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

## College of Human Sciences™

Recently, I was awarded a National Institute of Health (NIH) grant that will help me with my long-term research project regarding nutrition and chronic diseases. This grant is very important to me, and I would like to thank the College of Human Sciences, the Department of Nutrition, Hospitality and Retailing, and the Burleson family fund for their support in providing me with the equipment and seed grants necessary to start this project. Without this support, my group would not have been able to generate preliminary data to win the award.

In general, NIH grants are very competitive, and good grantsmanship is really important for one's success. Based on my experience, I think the following suggestions are critical to win an award: First, applicants have to understand the NIH mission, identify the mission priority, and know grant application and peer review processes. The NIH website and TTU grantsmanship seminars are good sources for finding this information. Second, researchers should generate a good idea. The idea should be innovative and understandable. Researchers should know their research area very well, including what has and has not been done within it, where the gaps are, and whether the current body of knowledge can fill the gap. If the gap is filled, one should understand if it will lead to dramatically enhanced health, lengthening life, and reduced illness and disability. Third, one should manage one's time very well. Researchers should know roughly how many proposals they will submit in a year, when the deadline will be for each proposal, and what preliminary data are needed for each proposal. In this way, researchers can plan their work monthly, weekly and daily. Fourth, applicants should secure collaborators for areas in which they lack experience and training. Fifth, one should try to finish one's proposal well before the deadline and send it to others for review. Sixth, applicants should not ignore NIH reviewers' comments. If applicants do not succeed the first time, which is likely, they need to read reviewers' comments and develop strategies to address the reviewers' feedback. Seventh, researchers should not be too ambitious for their first grant proposal. After successfully finishing several projects, researchers can propose a million dollar project. For the first grant proposal, applicants need to project a realistic amount of work. Eighth, applicants should not allow their "specific aims" #2 and #3 to be dependent on their specific aim #1. If the specific aim #1 is not successful, the entire grant may be lost. Finally, applicants should remember that the NIH wants them to be successful scientists. I wish you success with your NIH grant application.