

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20550



Office of  
Inspector General

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 6, 1991

REPLY TO

ATTN OF: [REDACTED] Special Agent, Investigations Unit

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] of Grant Funds  
Case No. I91030010

TO: File

On March 18, 1991, we received an allegation that a principal Investigator (PI), [REDACTED], Department of Biological Sciences, [REDACTED] University, used grant funds allocated for undergraduate students to pay [REDACTED] who graduated in May 1990, and is now a graduate student at another university. The source of the allegation stated that [REDACTED] paid [REDACTED] salary with the grant funds because [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were having an intimate relationship. The source requested confidentiality and we granted.

A review of the grant files revealed the following:

1. On December 9, 1987, Grant No. BSR-8717564 for \$62,953 was awarded to [REDACTED] Research Foundation with [REDACTED] listed as the PI. The award, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] from January 1, 1988, through June 30, 1990.

2. On March 30, 1988, REU<sup>2</sup> amendment #1 for \$8,000 was awarded to [REDACTED] for additional support of the above-mentioned grant. [REDACTED] was one of two

<sup>1</sup>Research at Undergraduate Institution.

<sup>2</sup>Research Experience for Undergraduate.

undergraduates to receive support under this award.

3. On April 7, 1989, [redacted] amendment #2 for \$8,000 was awarded to [redacted] for additional support of the above-mentioned grant. Again, [redacted] was one of two undergraduates to receive support under this award.

4. On April 2, 1990, [redacted] and [redacted] submitted the final project report for this grant and amendments. According to the final project report, Watson was a contributor to the research and publications.

5. On June 28, 1990, Grant No. BSR-9006770 for \$82,163 was awarded to [redacted] with [redacted] listed as the PI. The award, [redacted]

[redacted] July 1, 1990 and will expire December 31, 1992. The budget list support of \$16,650 for three undergraduate students. In the proposal, [redacted] is listed as co-author on publications about the research from the previous NSF supported project. In addition, [redacted] applied for [redacted] supplement in 1991 and [redacted] was not listed as a student under the supplement. On April 22, 1991, the [redacted] supplement request was denied because limited funds in the program were targeted for diverse new projects.

On April 22, 1991, I interviewed [redacted] Program Director, Ecology Program, who is the program officer for these grants. [redacted] told me that [redacted] awards differ from the [redacted] supplements. According to [redacted] grants are administered in accordance with the terms and conditions of a regular research grant. The spirit of [redacted] grants are to advance research at undergraduate institutions and the research should involve and have an effect on undergraduates. [redacted] said that [redacted] awards do not have specific restrictions on how to use funds allocated for undergraduates. If the PI needed to use funds for a graduate research assistant, the PI may use some of the funds allocated for undergraduates, but the PI can not change the objective or scope of the research or violate any of the other conditions stated in the general grant conditions.

According to [redacted] awards or supplements have restrictions. The funds from a [redacted] award or supplement can only be used in support of the undergraduates. [redacted] stated that since there were no [redacted] funds involved in the projects after June 1990, [redacted] could continue to pay [redacted] for her work on the project after she graduated in May 1990. These payments would have been used from [redacted] grant funds as opposed to [redacted] funds.

I obtained and reviewed the Program Announcement for [redacted]

" Under section I,  
the program announcement states,

" The General Grant Conditions allow budgeted funds to be used for other purposes only if the objective or scope of the research is not changed. I found nothing in the program announcement or grant files indicating that there were any specific restrictions on money budgeted for support of undergraduate students.

#### Conclusion

Because: (1) no funds could have been involved in the project after June 1990; (2) payments to from funds would be allowable; and (3) there is sufficient evidence in the grant files that actually did contribute to the research, there is no basis for continuing this investigation at the present time with the limited resources of the Investigations Unit.

This file is closed.