



From the Inspector General

On behalf of the Office of Inspector General of the National Science Foundation, I am pleased to present this summary of our accomplishments for the six-month reporting period ending in March 31, 2002. The audits, investigations, reviews and other activities described in this report reflect our strong commitment to helping NSF maintain and improve the integrity and efficiency of its programs and operations.

The past six months have been extremely productive. Our office issued 19 audit reports that identified \$1.4 million in promised cost sharing that is at-risk of not being contributed, and an additional \$447,573 in questioned costs. NSF disallowed \$940,564 in this period, mostly from audits conducted prior to last October. We closed 101 investigative cases, including 16 civil/criminal cases, and made \$229,828 in recoveries. We also referred 6 cases to the Department of Justice, and assisted the agency in making two findings of misconduct in science that were based on OIG reports.

In January we issued our annual list of the most important management and performance challenges facing the NSF. In developing this list, we employ our best effort to identify the most vulnerable operational and programmatic areas of the agency. These challenges are those requiring significant management attention and resources to either resolve current issues or prevent future ones from arising. During this period, we also contracted with an independent public accounting firm to conduct an audit of the agency's financial statements. For the fourth consecutive year, NSF received an unqualified opinion for the financial statements.



Dr. Stanley Jaskolski, Chair, Audit and Oversight Committee, and Dr. Boesz, at a recent Committee meeting.

Within the Inspectors General community, I chair a workgroup on misconduct in research charged with assisting agencies and Offices of Inspector General (OIGs) to achieve consistency in handling research misconduct issues. Toward that goal, our group has developed standards for administering inquiries and investigations, and are currently testing their effectiveness. Another goal of the workgroup is to develop tools that will facilitate fair, timely, and high quality resolution of misconduct in research allegations. For example, best practices for coordinating investigations by OIGs and agencies are being documented and will be made available for training staff.

Finally, as I write this, the terms of several members of the National Science Board are about to expire, including the Chairman, Dr. Eamon Kelly, and the Chair of the Audit and Oversight Committee, Dr. Stanley Jaskolski. We greatly appreciate the leadership and support they've provided our office, and I personally want to thank them for their vital role in making NSF one of the most respected and effective government agencies. The OIG staff looks forward to working with the Board's new leadership.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Christine C. Boesz'.

Christine C. Boesz, Dr.P.H.
Inspector General
May 6, 2002