TRSM PROFESSOR FEATURED IN PROMINENT GRANTEE PROFILE
The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Highlights Stellar Researcher

Gainesville, FL – The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) recently profiled five-time grantee Dr. J.O. Spengler in recognition of his Foundation-funded research projects. This is a great honor as the Foundation has hundreds of researchers, but only chooses to profile a select few. The multi-billion dollar Foundation launched a national program in 2000 which supports research to examine physical activity and the prevention of childhood obesity. This program, aptly named Active Living Research, seeks to translate research findings into practice and policy that communities can use for decision-making at the local level. Research grantees for the program come from peer institutions from all over the United States and research funding is competitive. Spengler has been fortunate to receive five consecutive grants from the RWJF over the past ten years that have allowed him to pursue research questions relevant to physical activity and childhood obesity prevention.

Spengler’s primary interest focuses on “shared use” whereby schools and municipal parks allow their facilities to be used by community residents and organizations for sport and recreation activities. A long-time advocate and expert in sport and recreation management law and policy, Spengler plans to continue his research line of inquiry by studying the influence of school policies on recreation and physical activity through funding sources such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Below is a brief explanation of Spengler’s work that has resulted from funding from the RWJF Active Living Research program:

1) Studied legal considerations relevant to opening schools to the community as a resource for physical activity.
2) Surveyed principals of K-12 schools across the U.S. in lower-income communities and communities of color to understand their perspectives on the shared use of school physical activity spaces.
3) Studied the nature and frequency of parks’ shared use across the U.S. by surveying local park administrators (with Dr. Yong Jae Ko, a sport management professor at the University of Florida).
4) Informed policy guidance and sample legislative language on the shared use of recreational facilities (in conjunction with the Public Health Law Center and the American Heart Association).
5) Evaluated outcomes of Minnesota state legislation that supported the shared use of school recreational facilities. (Grant research still in progress.)

For more information on Dr. J.O. Spengler or to see a summary of his research findings, view his full profile at the following website: [http://www.rwjf.org/en/about-rwif/newsroom/newsroom-content/2012/11/sharing-spaces--a-researcher-learns-what-motivates-or-discourage.html](http://www.rwjf.org/en/about-rwif/newsroom/newsroom-content/2012/11/sharing-spaces--a-researcher-learns-what-motivates-or-discourage.html).

The Department of Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management is committed to national and international excellence in the generation, dissemination, and communication of knowledge in tourism, recreation and sport management. The Department is also dedicated to excellence in the preparation and training of future industry and academic professionals, and providing relevant outreach to stakeholders.

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