

## School of Industrial Engineering

### CENTER FOR MATERIALS PROCESSING AND TRIBOLOGY

#### SEMINAR

#### **Partnerships for Innovation: The NSF-PFI (and BIC) Program, the Nature of Partnerships, and Considerations Pertaining to their Development and Support**

**Sara B. Nerlove, Ph.D.**

National Science Foundation (Retd.)

**Wednesday, May 3, 2017 – 11 AM**  
**Grissom Hall 302, The Gilbreth Library**

**Abstract** The talk will address some of the following questions:

How has the NSF PFI (and BIC) program evolved to date and what can be learned from these changes?

Might we attribute certain institutional changes to program impact or might these changes simply be considered further reflections of changing times, such as those which inspired the creation of the program? What constitutes a good partnership?

What are some mechanisms for maintaining productivity and equanimity?

What are some local resources with first-hand knowledge and experiences of the ins & outs and ups and downs of crafting and navigating partnerships?

What insights can be provided that could contribute to the proposal preparation process?

**Bio sketch** Sara Nerlove earned a BA from Radcliffe College and MA and PhD degrees from Stanford University, all in the field of cultural anthropology. Prior to joining the Measurement Methods and Data Improvement Program at the National Science Foundation (NSF) in 1980, she engaged in research and teaching in various contexts, notably all but one of these were interdisciplinary: UC Irvine (School of Social Sciences); Carnegie-Mellon University (School of Urban and Public Affairs); SUNY Binghamton (Department of Anthropology); Cornell (Department of Human Development and Family Studies); and she served as a Research Scientist at Battelle Memorial Institute (Human Area Research Center, Seattle, WA) in a Population and Development Policy Program, based in Washington, DC. She has also consulted for the RAND Corporation (Department of Economics). Conducting her first anthropological fieldwork at the age of 21, Dr. Nerlove has spent a total of more than 3 years doing anthropological field research in southern Mexico, southwestern Kenya, highland Guatemala--east of Guatemala City, and Cajamarca in the highlands of Peru. One of her publications--perhaps, in some obscure way--that is most relevant to the seminar topic is the following: Shephard, R. N., Romney, A. K., and Nerlove, S. B. (Eds.), 1972, Multidimensional Scaling: Theory and Applications in the Behavioral Sciences, Seminar Press.

While at NSF, Dr. Nerlove served in eight programs, five of these were in the social sciences--the quintessential anthropological experience is to wander around in the cultures of foreign disciplines of social science!--and also included was a program run out of the Research Facilities Office (the last brick and mortar program offered by NSF) as well as a Detail spent in the SBIR/STTR program. The last approximately 23 ½ years at NSF were spent in the Directorate

for Engineering. For 14 years of those years, she was a Program Director in the Small Business Innovation Research Program, and, while there, drafted the first Small Business Technology Transfer Program Solicitation—representing a major attraction that she had for academe-industry collaborations. In 2006, she was named Program Director for the then Partnerships for Innovation Program (PFI). The PFI program, began in the year 2000, and is now named (as of 2012) Partnerships for Innovation: Building Innovation Capacity. The PFI Program became part of the Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships (IIP), when that division was created in 2007. Dr. Nerlove remained Program Director for the Partnerships for Innovation Program during the last 10 years of her tenure at NSF.

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\* For entry to Grissom Hall, please use the front entrance on Grant Street