Included in this report is a summary of activities at the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center (NCERC) and its staff on a month-by-month basis throughout Fiscal Year 2022. This report is published annually in October at its Annual Meeting for stakeholders and reflects NCERC's mission to commercialize products and technologies to be utilized in the biofuels and biotechnology sectors.

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7   FY22 Financials Summary
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17  Thank you to our Supporters!
NCERC PLAYS IMPORTANT ROLE AT FEW 2021

The 2021 Fuel Ethanol Workshop was a busy week for NCERC’s Director of Research Dr. Yan Zhang and Director of Business Development & Client Relations Jackie Pohlman. Between four presentations and three moderating slots, NCERC’s leadership team had seven stage appearances and also participated in the FEW Exhibition.

Pohlman showcased NCERC’s role in the ethanol industry via her presentation, “Surveying the Role that Research has Played in Advancing the Frontier of Corn Biorefining” at Ethanol 101. After months of research and data collection, Dr. Yan Zhang presented three presentations: (1) Single Cell Protein Production to Replace Fishmeal for Salmon Feed; (2) Maximize the Cellulosic Converted Fraction in Corn Kernel Fiber; (3) Low-Cost Low Energy Deconstruction of Industrial Hemp to Make Biofuel and Bioproducts

In addition to participating in the conference, Pohlman also hosted the RFA Young Professionals Network’s (YPN) first in-person event on Wednesday where over 30 YPN members participated and networked with their peers in the industry.

NCERC CONTRIBUTES TO "ALAKA'I" PROPOSAL WITH UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT HILO

In partnership with the University of Hawaii at Hilo and Dr. Jim DeKloe of Solano Community College, NCERC contributed to a proposal that was submitted to BioMADE, a member-driven organization dedicated to enabling domestic bioindustrial manufacturing at all scales. The contributions from NCERC would utilize its expertise to create a bioindustrial manufacturing curriculum.

The team for the proposal is led by UH Hilo and established "ALAKA'I" (Aloha Life-Science Academy; Knowledge Advancing Industry), a project with a multi-phase strategy to develop a Hawaiian academy to advance the bioindustrial manufacturing workforce to benefit rural America, and then disseminate this program for further implementation at a national scale.
NCERC HOSTS FIRST LEGISLATORS TO LABORATORIES TOUR IN ILLINOIS

On Tuesday, August 24, NCERC hosted three members of the Illinois General Assembly for the first of multiple "Legislators to Laboratories" tours in Illinois. This series of events is part of an advocacy effort to build support for the Industrial Biotech Partnership Act, a bill that would support the biotech business community in Illinois and leverage the existing assets, including centers like NCERC, to better attract biotechnology innovation and investment to the state. The guest list included Illinois Senators Terri Bryant and Doris Turner and Representative Charlie Meier, who were joined by a staff member of IL Senator Rachelle Aud Crowe's office, SIU President Dan Mahony, SIU Executive Director for Governmental & Public Affairs John Charles, and SIUE Chancellor Randy Pembrook.

DR. JIE DONG TO CONTRIBUTE ON $1.6M DOE FUNDED PROJECT

Through a project led by Ohio State University, Director of Fermentation Dr. Jie Dong is part of a team of researchers who received a $1.6 million award from the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) to produce advanced biofuel. The funding will be used to develop engineered microbial consortia for the production of biobutanol from renewable biomass with higher product yields and zero carbon dioxide emissions.

Dong's collaborators include Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering Professor Shang-Tian Yang, the project's principal investigator, and Ting Lu, PhD, from University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The project team will develop a novel fermentation process by combining three bacterial species and an electrochemically-reduced formate to maximize carbon conversion and butanol production with zero or negative carbon dioxide emissions. Butanol is generally used as an industrial solvent, but can also be blended with gasoline and used in engines of light-duty vehicles. Biobutanol is produced from fermentation of the same feedstocks as ethanol.
NCERC ACTIVE AT THE 2021 FARM PROGRESS SHOW

As part of the Illinois Corn and Illinois Soybean tent, NCERC Executive Director John Caupert and Director of Business Development & Client Relations Jackie Hayes were active at the Farm Progress Show and at NCERC's display, which featured the exciting opportunities for corn in the growing industrial biotechnology sector. Staff also utilized NCERC's Ethanol Process Demonstration boards to provide students and show-goers with an overview of the corn-to-ethanol process.

On Wednesday, September 1, at the Congressional Biofuels Summit hosted by Congressman Rodney Davis, Caupert gave an ethanol industry overview and provided the audience with an update on market opportunities and challenges facing the US ethanol industry. During his remarks, he highlighted the domestic opportunities for higher blends as well as the regulatory challenges facing the industry.

NCERC BECOMES BIOMADE MEMBER

NCERC announced that we are now a member of BioMADE – the Bioindustrial Manufacturing and Design Ecosystem – a new Manufacturing Innovation Institute dedicated to advancing bioindustrial manufacturing across the nation. BioMADE brings together a diverse range of member organizations, from large corporations to universities to start-ups. Launched with federal support in 2021, BioMADE harnesses the power of biology to create and domestically source the manufactured goods that people use every day.

RENEWED DISCUSSIONS AROUND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

On September 17, the NCERC team met with the Principal, Vice Principal, and Guidance Counselor at Waterloo High School to discuss a new apprenticeship program and how to best tailor it to students with plans to pursue careers in engineering, operations, or manufacturing.
NCERC ANNOUNCES $1.9M EXPANSION TO RESEARCH CAPABILITIES THROUGH DCEO GRANT

On October 20, NCERC announced that it had been awarded $1.9 million through the Rebuild Illinois Wet Lab Capital program by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). NCERC joins seven other laboratories from across the state who received a total investment of $15.4 million.

As a renowned research and development center that leads the nation in commercializing biotechnologies, NCERC’s facility houses fermentation and processing vessels ranging from bench- to demonstration-scale, enabling companies hoping to introduce their biotechnology to the marketplace to perform all their research at the same facility using NCERC’s leading staff of researchers, scientists and engineers. NCERC plans to utilize award funding to dramatically expand its intermediate-scale capabilities.

NCERC HOSTS FIRST HYBRID ANNUAL MEETING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

On Tuesday, October 19, NCERC hosted its first hybrid Annual Meeting, attracting over 50 participants from across the country. Topics of discussion included a review of NCERC’s FY2021 activities and financials. We also introduced a new suite of videos that were produced over the summer in 2021 and focus on the various benefits of working with NCERC’s team of experts. Leadership from the SIU system level and SIUE were present at the meeting and gave a welcome to the guests who were there in-person and participating virtually.

During the meeting, Executive Director John Caupert presented Illinois Department of Agriculture Director Jerry Costello II with a Certificate of Appreciation for his continued dedication to the Center and Illinois' agriculture sector.
NCERC's research and business development teams were active at the 2021 Alternative Fuels & Chemicals Coalition Conference meeting with potential clients and presenting new research. Director of Research Dr. Yan Zhang presented twice at the conference during the various breakout sessions and showcased two important areas of research in the bioeconomy.

Her first presentation, titled "Low Cost Conversion of Hemp Biomass to Ethanol", focused on an ongoing project taking place at NCERC and converts various biomass feedstocks into fermentable sugars through a novel pretreatment process. Her second presentation, titled "Biodegradable polyhydroxyalkanoate production from plasma oxidized non-degradable polypropylene" featured research led by NCERC Director of Fermentation Dr. Jie Dong, and showcased the results of a research project that successfully used a non-degradable plastic waste (PP) as feedstock to produce biodegradable PHA, and fulfilled the degradation and recycling of plastic waste.

In addition to Dr. Yan's presentations, NCERC Graduate Assistant Muhammad Shehu presented a poster featuring his research on the production of isoprenol, an intermediate chemical for Sustainable Aviation Fuel.

In compliance with SIUE COVID protocol, facility tours at the NCERC returned with a strong presence. In the fourth quarter of 2021, NCERC hosted nearly ten tours for groups and individuals.

NCERC's facility poses an incredible learning opportunity for students pursuing educations in STEM fields, and is also a popular tour stop for groups touring the Edwardsville area and want to see one of SIUE's most unique assets.
NCERC TEAM TRAVELS TO WEST COAST TO MEET WITH CLIENTS AND COLLABORATORS

Following a busy conference season in the fall of 2021, NCERC’s leadership team made one final trip to the Bay Area of California to meet with potential clients and collaborators before the end of the calendar year. With industry on the rebound from the COVID pandemic, there was a renewed sense of opportunity for early stage and growing companies that are scaling up biotechnologies in preparation of market entry.

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I, HILO AND NCERC PARTNER TO FORM THE ALAKA‘I PROJECT

Through funding provided by BioMADE, the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo (UH Hilo) and the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center (NCERC) at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) have partnered to form “ALAKA‘I”, Applied Life-Science Academy: Knowledge Advancing Industry, a project that establishes a bioeconomy academy to accelerate climate change solutions by developing industry-relevant training for delivery in Hawaii and across the United States.

The primary objective of the ALAKA‘I is to provide unique training for high-impact professionals in the bioeconomy by providing necessary multi-disciplinary understanding of the many factors behind making transformational change. UH Hilo leads the ALAKA‘I project and the ALAKA‘I curriculum will draw on traditional Hawaiian and Pacific Island cultural perspectives to provide insights and guiding principles for effective sustainability.

After performing interviews with leaders from across the bioeconomy, a curriculum was designed and offered through a three-day workshop at the UH Hilo in July 2022. Another series of workshops will be offered in July 2023.
## Revenue & Funding

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<td>SIUE Support</td>
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<td>Indirect Cost Recovery</td>
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### Pillar I: Contractual Client Research

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<td>Fermentation Laboratory - Client Contractual Research (Paid)</td>
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### Pillar II: Grants and Sponsored Projects

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### Pillar III: Workforce Training and Education

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<td>US Air Force (BioMADE)</td>
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<td>Department of Energy, Ohio State</td>
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### Pillar IX: Appropriation

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## Total Revenue

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<td>Net Revenue after Capital Investment</td>
<td>$760,266.45</td>
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In March 2022, NCERC published its first Workforce Training & Education Report, showcasing the multiple programs that bring students through NCERC's doors on their pathway to employment. Through the report, seven students/employees were featured, giving a glimpse into the life of a student or full-time employee of NCERC. It also showcased two student-led research projects that gave both an undergraduate and graduate student at SIUE the opportunity to work hands-on in NCERC's laboratories and lead research on high priority topics. This report is available for download on the NCERC website.

In addition to publishing the report, NCERC reinvigorated its Visiting Research Fellowship program by hiring four visiting research fellows in Fiscal Year 2022. Those employees work full-time at NCERC during their nine-month appointments and are featured on NCERC's Staff Directory on Page 16. In addition to these fellows, NCERC brought on board Dr. Mingjun Ma, a Postdoctoral Research Fellow who has worked alongside Director of Research Dr. Yan Zhang on multiple self-initiated research projects related to NCERC's "low cost/low carbon" conversion method used to convert a variety of feedstocks into fermentable sugars. Dr. Ma is also featured on our Staff Directory.

Learning resources for K12 students and teachers remained top of mind throughout Fiscal Year 2022. As COVID restrictions began to lift and local schools started hosting visitors again, NCERC was present at multiple student-focused events and showcased the opportunities for careers in the bioeconomy.

After several years of use, an update was made to the Ethanol Demonstration Kit through collaboration by the marketing/PR and research teams of student workers and employees. To celebrate, NCERC gave away a kit and $100 gift card for school supplies through a contest on social media to an Illinois teacher. Demo Kits are available for purchase on the NCERC website.
As a successful public/private partnership, NCERC oftentimes seizes opportunities to showcase the unique relationship between all of the sectors we serve, including industry, academia, and state and federal levels of government and research laboratories. This role allows us to demonstrate the value of collaboration between these groups and help foster continued innovation through research and workforce development. For NCERC, this comes to fruition through meeting with various stakeholder groups and discussing policy that improves the business environment of our clients and promoting the sectors we serve.

As COVID-restrictions were being lifted, NCERC hit the ground running in Fiscal Year 2022, hosting several events and tours, including multiple tours for state- and federal-level policymakers and staffers. We also renewed our commitment to meeting with elected officials in Washington, DC by meeting with them via Zoom and in-person.

One important example of advocacy through policy is NCERC’s participation in public comment periods. On January 31, 2022, NCERC submitted comments to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding the 2020-2022 Renewable Volume Obligations (RVOs) and regulatory concerns related to the implementation of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS). The comments authored by Executive Director John Caupert highlighted the harm brought by retroactive cuts to the 2020 RVO and why a strong RFS is important for consumers, rural America, our economy, and our environment.

To stay up to date on NCERC’s advocacy work, subscribe to NCERC’s monthly newsletter, “NCERC at Work”, via the NCERC website.
THE VISITING RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM IS REINVIGORATED WITH TWO NEW FELLOWS

In January, NCERC welcomed two new Visiting Research Fellows, Blas Quiroga III and Krystin Polhemus. Quiroga, a graduate of Texas A&M University and Cleveland State University, has both a bachelor's and master's in chemical engineering and utilized his skillset to assist on projects in NCERC's larger-scale laboratories, including the Fermentation Suite and Pilot Plant.

Polhemus received her bachelor's in biology from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in December 2021. As an undergraduate student, she joined NCERC as a laboratory intern and worked closely with NCERC's research team to support contractual research and sponsored projects taking place in NCERC's Fermentation and Analytical Laboratories.

RESEARCH TEAM SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES SCALE-UP OF LOW ENERGY/LOW COST PRETREATMENT METHOD

Through the support of the Illinois Corn Growers, NCERC has successfully scaled up its novel "low energy, low carbon" pretreatment method that encourages the breakdown of fiber during fermentation. Following the pretreatment method, two different types of yeasts were used during the fermentation. The fermentation was successfully completed on Friday, January 28, when the material was harvested from the 150L fermenter.

Once dried, the result was a high protein DDGS that was sent to the team at the Aquaculture Research Institute at the University of Idaho for testing and incorporation into fish diets. The experiment was documented through pictures and video and was featured on NCERC’s social media channels. This project was also used as a training ground for new employees who work extensively in NCERC’s Fermentation Suite.
NCERC welcomed Mingjun Ma, Ph.D. in February as its new Postdoctoral Research Fellow. Ma joins NCERC’s growing team of researchers who focus on a variety of research topics that help to support the expansion of the bioeconomy in the United States and across the globe. The Postdoctoral Research Fellow program is supported through funding from the Illinois Corn Marketing Board who has been a longtime supporter of the NCERC and its workforce training programs. Ma joins NCERC after completing a Ph.D. in Agriculture and Biosystems Engineering at Iowa State University where he performed research in corn fermentation, pet food and animal ingredients, and grain processing.

**Jackie Hayes Presents and Moderates Panel at 2022 NEC**

At the 2022 National Ethanol Conference, NCERC Director of Business Development & Client Relations Jackie Hayes led a panel that explored knowledge gaps and strategies to best prepare the ethanol industry’s future leaders for success. To kick off the panel, Hayes presented the results of a survey conducted in January 2022 with YPN members and provided an overview of young professionals’ attitudes towards different themes, such as access to industry leaders, access to networking events/learning opportunities, organization- and industry-wide succession planning, and other important topics related to preparing the next generation of leaders.

**Research Team Launches Project Studying Levels of Ethyl Carbamate in DDGS**

NCERC’s research team kicked off a multi-month project that will verify the accuracy, precision, and limit of quantitation of a published analytical method that measures the level of ethyl carbamate in Dried Distillers Grains with Solubles (DDGS). A special thanks to the Renewable Fuels Associations and multiple state corn organizations for their support of this project!
On March 29, NCERC hosted a meeting for Advisory Board Members and Stakeholders, including SIUE's new Chancellor, Dr. James Minor. For the first time in several years, the meeting met quorum requirements for its Advisory Board. During the meeting, NCERC staff and student employees shared insight on the current status of NCERC's impactful workforce training programs, which included the publishing of the first annual Workforce Training & Education Report. The meeting also included a dynamic discussion around preparing for NCERC's updated strategic plan and a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis, which is being updated using feedback from meeting participants.

Meeting attendance included the SIU System through President Dan Mahony, Illinois Department of Agriculture through Director Jerry Costello, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity through Tracey Glenn, IL Corn Growers Association through President Marty Marr, National Corn Growers Association through President-Elect Tom Haag, Renewable Fuels Association through CEO Geoff Cooper, Southern Illinois University Carbondale CALPS through Dean Eric Brevik, and University of Illinois College of ACES through Adam Davis.

**WORKFORCE TRAINING REPORT IS PUBLISHED**

Since opening our doors nearly 20 years ago, NCERC has hosted hundreds of students on their way to careers. With an incredible success rate, countless NCERC “alumni” are now serving companies in the private sector, academia, and in government laboratories.

NCERC anticipates that it will publish this report on an annual basis, reflecting the previous academic year’s successes. Learn more about NCERC's Workforce Training programs on page 8 of this report.
The Department of Chemistry of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) initiated the Probst Lecture series in 1975 as a memorial to one of its founding faculty members, Professor William J. Probst. Each year a noted chemist is invited for a visit that features multiple lectures on SIUE's campus.

This year's speaker was Dr. Shang-Tian Yang of Ohio State University. He was invited by SIUE Chemistry Professor and NCERC Director of Fermentation Dr. Jie Dong, also a former student of Dr. Yang. Dr. Yang’s presentation, "Industrial Biotechnology and Biorefineries in a Circular Bioeconomy", featured his work from more than 40 years of research, including 12 related patents, some of which have been licensed to companies for commercial development. During his time on campus, Dr. Yang also took a tour of NCERC and met with NCERC staff.

Through the collaborative work between NCERC's marketing and research teams, the Ethanol Demonstration Kits received a much-needed refresh after several years serving as a great tool for K-12 teachers, FFA leaders, and community organizations.

To celebrate the new design, NCERC hosted a contest that was publicized through our social media channels and allowed community members to nominate worthy teachers to win an Ethanol Demonstration Kit and $100 for school supplies. Multiple teachers were nominated throughout April and Brian Wiltz, an Agriculture Teacher and FFA Advisor at Lexington High School in Lexington, IL was selected to win the prize.

On April 21, NCERC participated in "One Day, One SIUE", a day dedicated to celebrating SIUE through online giving and an evening event. This campaign marked NCERC's first fundraiser ever and we raised $160 for self-initiated research projects.
As part of an ongoing campaign to connect the Illinois farming community to mental health resources, Illinois Department of Agriculture Director Jerry Costello II visited NCERC on Thursday, May 12 for a press conference highlighting the Farm Family Resource Initiative (FFRI). The FFRI was established in Illinois in 2019 to address the mental health needs of farming and agricultural communities.

During the last legislative session, the Illinois General Assembly appropriated an additional $500,000 to ensure the program remains operational in all 102 Illinois counties throughout fiscal year 2023.

The press conference at NCERC marked the third of a seven-stop campaign throughout the state with the goal of bringing awareness to this program and increasing accessibility to the farming community. SIU President Daniel Mahony, Representative Katie Stuart (D-Edwardsville), and Karen Stallman of the FFRI joined Costello as speakers at the event.

After having served as student workers and graduate assistants on NCERC's research team throughout the 2021-2022 Academic Year, five students graduated with their degrees from SIUE. Drs. Yan Zhang and Jie Dong served as technical advisors and mentors during their time at NCERC.
FEW 2022: SEVERAL STAGE APPEARANCES

The NCERC team made multiple on-stage appearances at the 2022 Fuel Ethanol Workshop, providing the ethanol industry with updates regarding the exciting self-initiated research that helps to build and strengthen markets for ethanol and ethanol coproducts.

Director of Business Development & Client Relations Jackie Hayes was the final presenter at preconference Ethanol 101 and gave new industry entrants an update on the exciting new markets for products that have the potential to be made at ethanol facilities across the country. Director of Research Dr. Yan Zhang presented NCERC's research related to producing high protein DDGS by converting the fiber in corn to ethanol and feeding the DDGS to aquaculture. Director of Fermentation Dr. Jie Dong presented his research on using corn and other feedstocks to produce intermediate chemicals for Sustainable Aviation Fuel.

NCERC TEAM OF VISITING RESEARCH FELLOWS GROWS BY TWO

In June, NCERC welcomed two new Visiting Research Fellows: Colin Buck and Philip Kukielski. Buck earned a bachelor's in chemical Engineering in May 2022 from Missouri University of Science & Technology in Rolla, Mo. and works in NCERC's larger laboratories, specifically the demonstration-scale Pilot Plant. SIUE alumnus Kukielski completed a bachelor's in environmental toxicology in May 2022. During his time as an undergraduate student, he was a laboratory intern and worked closely with NCERC's research team. As a fellow, he will expand upon this role as a full-time member of NCERC's staff.

IN THE MEDIA: "NCERC AT SIUE IS LEADER IN BIOFUELS RESEARCH"

On June 7, NCERC was featured in an article in the Edwardsville Intelligencer, showcasing its unique assets and leadership in the ethanol and bio-based research industries. The article was authored by Staff Writer Scott Marion.
THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

SIUE

ILCORN

SIEMENS

SHIMADZU

RFA

growth energy

American Coalition for Ethanol

St. Louis Agribusiness Club

BioMADE

BIOSTL

Alternative Fuels & Chemicals Coalition

Biotechnology Innovation Organization