

THOMAS S. RISCH, Ph.D.

Curriculum Vitae

Vice Chancellor for Research, Rutgers University-Camden

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Cabinet-level research executive and academic leader with experience serving as chief research officer at public research universities and as a member of senior executive leadership teams. Current Vice Chancellor for Research at Rutgers University-Camden and former Vice Provost for Research and Technology Transfer and Executive Director of the Arkansas Biosciences Institute at Arkansas State University. Career record includes research growth, faculty support, sponsored programs, research compliance and integrity, technology transfer, major research facilities, interdisciplinary initiatives, student research, and partnerships connecting research, innovation, workforce development, and economic and community impact.

SELECTED EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP INDICATORS

Historic research growth at Rutgers-Camden: \$24.3M in sponsored award value in FY2024 and \$24.2M in FY2026, the two strongest award-value years in campus history.

Research enterprise growth at Arkansas State: Led A-State to FY22 institutional benchmarks: \$47.1M in new awards, \$89.3M in submitted proposals, and \$27.5M in research and sponsored program expenditures.

Executive leadership and institutional strategy: Served on senior executive leadership teams at Rutgers-Camden and Arkansas State, advising chancellors, provosts, and other leaders on research priorities, resource allocation, partnerships, compliance risk, and institutional investments.

Research operations and infrastructure: Former portfolio included 77 employees, 21 direct reports, an ABI stand-alone annual budget of \$3.2M to \$3.8M over which I had full administrative authority, and leadership of an approximately 100,000-square-foot research facility with core laboratories, research computing, animal research facilities, greenhouses, and incubator space.

Innovation and applied AI leadership: Created the Rutgers-Camden AI Campus and previously helped launch the Arkansas AI Campus, which evolved into the National AI Campus network; connected applied AI, ethical adoption, workforce development, external partnerships, and community impact.

CORE CHIEF RESEARCH OFFICER COMPETENCIES

- Research enterprise strategy and institutional research growth
- Sponsored programs and faculty support across the full grant lifecycle, from concept development through closeout
- Research compliance and integrity, including IRB, IACUC, IBC, radiation safety, conflict of interest, export controls, and institutional signatory responsibilities
- Technology transfer, intellectual property, faculty startups, licensing, industry engagement, and economic development
- Research centers, institutes, core facilities, research computing, animal facilities, and major research infrastructure
- Faculty development, early-career grant support, proposal competitiveness, and interdisciplinary collaboration

- Undergraduate and graduate research, faculty development, research culture, and advancement engagement
- Executive-team service, government relations, donor engagement, and partnerships with public, private, and community organizations

RESEARCH LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW

At Rutgers University-Camden, I serve as a cabinet-level executive and work across the senior leadership team to translate institutional priorities into research strategy. I have focused on growing sponsored activity, reorganizing the Research Office around an integrated grant lifecycle model, launching the Rutgers-Camden AI Campus, and transforming Research Week into SPARK!, an interdisciplinary celebration of projects, art, research, and knowledge. This work strengthens faculty success while connecting research with student opportunity, external partnerships, workforce development, and community impact.

Previously, as Vice Provost for Research and Technology Transfer and Executive Director of the Arkansas Biosciences Institute at Arkansas State University, I served on the provost's executive leadership team and worked with the chancellor, provost, deans, and other senior leaders to set priorities and align research investments with institutional goals. I led sponsored programs, technology transfer, research compliance, student research, research computing, core facilities, faculty startups, a high-tech incubator, a nonprofit research development institute, and external partnerships. Earlier service as a department chair and graduate program director provides additional experience in faculty leadership, curriculum, graduate education, budgeting, facilities, international programs, and hiring.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD AND SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2023-present Vice Chancellor for Research

Rutgers University-Camden, Camden, New Jersey

Serve as the campus chief research officer and a member of the senior executive leadership team. Advise campus leadership on research strategy, resource allocation, institutional investments, partnerships, and compliance risk. Lead sponsored programs growth, faculty support, research development and administration, student research, interdisciplinary initiatives, and external partnerships while improving the day-to-day systems that allow faculty to pursue and manage research effectively.

Research growth and sponsored award activity

- Led strategy to increase sponsored award activity and improve the infrastructure that supports faculty grant competitiveness.
- Rutgers-Camden achieved \$24.3M in sponsored award value in FY2024 and \$24.2M in FY2026, the two strongest award-value years in campus history.
- From FY2023 through FY2026, increased indirect-cost expenditures by approximately 33.3% and total sponsored-project expenditures by approximately 13.5%; FY2024 HERD expenditures reached \$9.849M, approximately 202% above FY2018.

Research office reorganization and grant lifecycle support

- Led a significant reorganization of the Rutgers-Camden Research Office to create a more integrated, service-oriented model of research administration.
- Built an integrated grant support structure in which investigators experience the Research Office as part of their team from early concept development through proposal preparation, submission, award management, and closeout.

- Moved the post-award grant management function from the finance office into the Research Office, strengthening continuity between proposal development and award management and improving investigator service across the full grant lifecycle.
- Preserved essential university controls by maintaining coordination with Rutgers Research Financial Services and central reporting, submission, and closeout processes.
- Improved efficiency by reducing the overall personnel footprint dedicated to post-award grant management while sustaining strong service levels through clearer roles, better workflows, and an all-hands approach when needed.
- Strengthened research development, corporate engagement, compliance navigation, and student research functions so faculty have a practical front door for support involving sponsored programs, industry engagement, university systems, and compliance questions.

Rutgers-Camden AI Campus

- Created and launched the Rutgers-Camden AI Campus, a campus-level initiative designed to make artificial intelligence accessible, ethical, applied, and impactful.
- Built the initiative as a collaborative, project-based learning and applied research hub for students, faculty, K-12 partners, professionals, businesses, and the broader community.
- Established programmatic directions in cohort-based AI learning and applied research for students and faculty, foundational AI programming for high school students, practical AI training for business owners and professionals, and monthly multidisciplinary AI conversations focused on literacy, innovation, and adoption.
- Positioned Rutgers-Camden as a regional platform for applied AI training, responsible AI education, workforce development, and external funding opportunities in AI literacy, K-12 education, ethics, public policy, health, business innovation, and community impact.

SPARK! and research culture

- Led the transformation of Research Week into SPARK!, the Showcase of Projects, Art, Research, and Knowledge, a broader celebration of research, creative activity, scholarship, and student achievement across disciplines.
- Expanded the model to include poster presentations, creative flash talks, research programming, and cross-disciplinary engagement.
- Created an intentional partnership between the Research Office and Advancement by inviting alumni, donors, community stakeholders, and university partners to engage directly with student research and creative work, including serving as judges for student presentations.
- Strengthened student professional development, increased alumni and stakeholder engagement with the research mission, and connected research visibility with advancement and external relations.

2019-2023 Vice Provost for Research and Technology Transfer; Executive Director, Arkansas Biosciences Institute

Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, Arkansas

Served as the university chief research officer and a member of the provost's executive leadership team, working with the chancellor, provost, deans, and other senior leaders to translate institutional priorities into research strategy, investments, and operating plans. Led research and scholarship growth, technology transfer and intellectual property, research compliance, student research, the Arkansas Biosciences Institute, and the Research Development Institute. Built partnerships with faculty, government, industry, donors, and statewide research networks to increase the scale, visibility, and impact of A-State research.

- Led A-State to FY22 institutional benchmarks of \$47.1M in new awards and \$89.3M in submitted proposals, representing a 119% increase in awards and a 215% increase in proposals compared with the previous five-year averages; FY22 research and sponsored program expenditures totaled \$27.5M.
- Supervised research enterprise areas with 77 employees and 21 direct reports, including sponsored programs, research compliance, technology transfer, student research, research infrastructure, core facilities, and institute operations.
- Provided leadership for ABI, a research consortium unit with a stand-alone annual budget of \$3.2M to \$3.8M over which I had full administrative authority, approximately 100,000 square feet of research space, research faculty and staff, core instrumentation, research computing, BSL-2 laboratories, growth chambers, research greenhouses, and animal research facilities.
- Strategically managed matching funds and cost sharing, supervised pre-award administration through executed contracts, coordinated with sponsored programs accounting on post-award administration, and participated in negotiation of the federal indirect cost rate.
- Oversaw institutional research compliance, including IRB, IACUC, Radiation and Safety Committee, Institutional Biosafety Committee, human and animal welfare assurances, conflict of interest policy, research integrity matters, and export controls related to international travel, research, intellectual property, and training materials.
- Led technology transfer and IP functions, including faculty start-up company issues, licensing agreements, research contracts, jointly owned patent discussions, and oversight of the Catalyst Innovation Accelerator, an approximately 8,000-square-foot high-tech incubator with wet lab and office space.
- Helped create and launch the Center for No-Boundary Thinking, an interdisciplinary AI, bioinformatics, data science, medical sciences, and public health research center with more than 35 faculty affiliates across multiple colleges.
- Led the creation of the Institute for Rural Initiatives to improve the lives of rural Arkansans through cultural, health, policy, and scientific support from an academic perspective.
- Led major student research visibility initiatives through Create@State, including abstract review, stakeholder judging, virtual and hybrid delivery models, and expansion to record levels of participation.
- Reconstituted the Research Development Institute board and worked with regional business leaders to build strategies for reinvesting donor, incubator, and IP-derived revenue into research and technology transfer infrastructure.

2018-2019 Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Research; Interim Executive Director, Arkansas Biosciences Institute

Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, Arkansas

- Provided transitional leadership for the university research enterprise, ABI, sponsored programs, research compliance, and technology transfer functions.
- Developed research growth strategy, strengthened institutional research support systems, and positioned the office for permanent vice provost-level leadership.

2011-2018 Chair, Department of Biological Sciences

Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, Arkansas

Led a large, research-active academic department with approximately 21 tenure-track faculty, 4 permanent full-time instructors, 5 temporary full-time instructors, adjunct research faculty, office staff, graduate students, technicians, postdoctoral associates, and approximately 550 majors. Managed degree programs spanning biological sciences, environmental science, environmental studies, science education, biotechnology, wildlife ecology and management, and multiple graduate programs.

- Managed an annual budget of approximately \$2.2M, including \$84,000 in discretionary spending and more than \$100,000 annually in lab fees; oversaw departmental grant activity averaging approximately \$2.1M per year.
- Supported growth in student credit hours, changed course offerings, improved upper-level teaching facilities, and differentiated teaching loads to preserve research productivity and teaching excellence.
- Led development of new programs, including B.S. and Professional Science Master's programs in Biotechnology, B.S. in Environmental Science, B.A. in Environmental Studies, and a Fisheries emphasis associated with a broader Wildlife, Fisheries, and Conservation program identity.
- Oversaw remodeling of 8 teaching laboratories, supported launch of the Biotechnology Program, directed investments in field equipment infrastructure, and helped initiate two field stations through donor-supported development.
- Supported faculty hiring and retention, including research-intensive faculty lines, a biotechnology program director, five assistant professors, and an associate professor; supported successful tenure trajectories for new hires.
- Led and supported international programs and partnerships in Nicaragua, Mexico, Sri Lanka, and South Africa.

2010-2013 Director, Graduate Program in Environmental Science

Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, Arkansas

- Directed an interdisciplinary graduate program involving faculty and resources across five colleges, with approximately 15 Ph.D. students and 3 M.S. students.
- Managed resource distribution to participating units, created buy-in among deans and department chairs, and chaired the faculty program committee.

ADDITIONAL LEADERSHIP ROLES AND PUBLIC SERVICE

- Member, Management Committee, South Jersey Institute for Population Health, 2025-present.
- Director for University Relations, National AI Campus network, 2022-present.
- Elected Chair, Science Advisory Commission, Division of Science and Technology, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, 2022-2023.
- Elected Chair, Graduate Council, Arkansas State University, 2009-2012.
- Appointed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to the National Red Wolf Recovery Team, 2021-present.
- Board of Directors, Southeastern Bat Diversity Network, 2008-2012; Chair, White-Nose Syndrome Committee, 2011.

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2023-present	Vice Chancellor for Research, Rutgers University-Camden
2019-2023	Vice Provost for Research and Technology Transfer; Executive Director, Arkansas Biosciences Institute, Arkansas State University
2018-2019	Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Research; Interim Executive Director, Arkansas Biosciences Institute, Arkansas State University
2012-2023	Judd Hill Endowed Chair of Environmental Biology, Arkansas State University
2011-2023	Professor of Animal Ecology, Department of Biological Sciences, Arkansas State University
2011-2018	Chair, Department of Biological Sciences, Arkansas State University
2010	Interim Chair, Department of Biological Sciences, Arkansas State University
2010-2013	Director, Graduate Program in Environmental Science, Arkansas State University

2009-2010	Interim Director, Graduate Program in Environmental Science, Arkansas State University
2007-2009	Graduate Program Coordinator, Department of Biological Sciences, Arkansas State University
2006-2011	Associate Professor and Curator of Mammals, Department of Biological Sciences, Arkansas State University
2001-2006	Assistant Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Arkansas State University
2000-2001	Post-Doctoral Research/Teaching Associate, Department of Biological Sciences, Auburn University
1998-1999	Instructor, Department of Zoology and Wildlife Science, Auburn University

EDUCATION

- 1999** Ph.D., Zoology, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama. Graduated Phi Kappa Phi. Dissertation: Significance of Litter Size and Costs of Reproduction in Small Mammals.
- 1993** M.S., Wildlife Management, Frostburg State University, Frostburg, Maryland. Thesis: An Experimental Study of the Relative Influences of Parental Quality and Egg Mass on Chick Survival in the Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*).
- 1986** B.S., Environmental Studies, Stockton State College, Pomona, New Jersey.

SELECTED INSTITUTIONAL AND RESEARCH GRANTS

PI or Co-PI on 57 sponsored grants and awards totaling \$8,230,371. Selected grants and institutional awards include:

Risch, T.S. CASE: Center for Advanced Surface Engineering. Arkansas Economic Development Commission, NSF EPSCoR. 2018-2021. \$668,789.

Risch, T.S. Preserving Groundwater Quality. U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2018-2021. \$1,233,500.

Risch, T.S. Computational Methods for Integrative Agriculture. U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2018-2021. \$282,591.

Risch, T.S. DART: Data Analytics that are Robust and Trusted. Arkansas Economic Development Commission, NSF EPSCoR. 2021-2023. \$356,251.

Risch, T.S. Agricultural Goods and Services. U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2018-2023. \$453,215.

Risch, T.S. and J. Hankins. USFWS American Red Wolf Recovery Challenge. 2021-2022. \$50,000.

Selected research grants and collaborative awards include:

Bouldin, J.L., A.A. Grippo, J.T. Kennon, C.A. Miller, and T.S. Risch. NSF Division of Graduate Education. GK-12 Environmental Sciences and Molecular Biosciences in the Natural State. NSF #0809317. 2008-2013. \$2,242,587.

Pratte, J.M., J.L. Bouldin, and T.S. Risch. NSF Research Experiences for Undergraduates: Research Internships in Science of the Environment. NSF #DBI-0552608. 2009-2011. \$388,945.

Risch, T.S. Distribution and Status of Indiana Bats. U.S. Forest Service, Ozark-Saint Francis National Forest. 2014-2018. \$463,574.

Risch, T.S. Distribution and Status of Indiana Bats. U.S. Forest Service, Ozark-Saint Francis National Forest. 2018-2022. \$213,700.

Risch, T.S. Investigations of New Technologies for the Early-detection and Control of White-nose Syndrome in Bat Hibernacula. U.S. Forest Service. 2016-2019. \$147,847.

Risch, T.S., and V. Rolland. Home range and habitat use of foraging gray bats in northern Arkansas. Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. 2013-2016. \$122,802.

Risch, T.S., R.J. Johnson, and D. Neupane. Genetic study of Asian elephant herds in eastern Himalayan region. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Asian Elephant Conservation Fund. 2012-2013. \$49,997.

Risch, T.S. Reproductive and Behavioral Ecology of Southern Flying Squirrel. Savannah River Ecology Laboratory Research Fellowships. 1992-1998. \$109,500.

SELECTED AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND APPOINTMENTS

- Member, Executive Board, Arkansas Chapter of The Wildlife Society, 2015-2019; President, 2016-2018.
- College of Science and Mathematics, Arkansas State University Faculty Award for Scholarship, 2007 and 2008.
- Beta Beta Beta, Auburn University Chapter, Teacher of the Year for the Biological Sciences, 2001.
- American Society of Mammalogists, Alberta R. and Alma Shadle Fellowship in Mammalogy, 1998.
- Long-term Graduate Research Fellowship, University of Georgia Savannah River Ecology Laboratory, 1993-1998.

SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH PROFILE

Author or co-author of 75 scholarly publications, including 67 peer-reviewed publications. Research areas include mammalogy, wildlife ecology, conservation biology, disease ecology, bat ecology, human-wildlife conflict, elephant conservation, white-nose syndrome, biodiversity, and environmental biology.

Selected peer-reviewed publications include:

- Custer, H.N., P.L. Roby, T.E. Inebnit, M.C. Anderson, D.B. Sasse, P.R. Moore, and T.S. Risch. 2023. Spring migration behavior of female Indiana bats overwintering in Arkansas, USA. *Southeastern Naturalist* 22:530-542.
- Kearny, V.M., R.W. Perry, T.S. Risch, and V. Rolland. 2023. Microhabitat of *Myotis leibii* summer roosts at the southwestern periphery of their range. *Canadian Journal of Zoology* 101.
- Neupane, D., S. Baral, T.S. Risch, and A. Campos-Arceiz. 2022. Broad scale functional connectivity for Asian elephants in the India-Nepal transboundary region. *Journal of Environmental Management* 321.
- Scherman, S.J., T.S. Risch, and V. Rolland. 2022. Fall and winter activity of two bat species in response to winter flooding and decreasing temperature. *Global Ecology and Conservation* 38.
- Doty, A.C., M.D. Connior, and T.S. Risch. 2022. Drivers of southern flying squirrel (*Glaucomys volans*) group size in South Carolina, USA. *American Midland Naturalist* 188:20-32.
- Kearny, V.M., R.W. Perry, T.S. Risch, and V. Rolland. 2022. Distribution and roost site selection of eastern small-footed bats (*Myotis leibii*) in mountains of west-central Arkansas. *Southeastern Naturalist* 21:74-92.
- Risch, T.S. and S.J. Scherman. 2022. Record of the northern yellow bat, *Lasiurus intermedius*, from Ometepe Island, Nicaragua, and bat diversity implications for this region. *Ecotropica* 24.
- Doty, A.C., A.D. Wilson, L.B. Forse, and T.S. Risch. 2022. Biomarker metabolites discriminate between physiological states of field, cave and white-nose syndrome diseased bats. *Sensors* 22:1031.
- Neupane, D., Y. Kwon, T.S. Risch, and R.L. Johnson. 2020. Changes in habitat suitability over a two-decade period before and after Asian elephant recolonization. *Global Ecology and Conservation* 22.
- Fuller, N.W., L.P. McGuire, E.L. Pannkuk, T. Blute, C.G. Haase, H.W. Mayberry, T.S. Risch, and C.K.R. Willis. 2020. Disease recovery in bats affected by white-nose syndrome. *Journal of Experimental Biology* 223.

Kwon, Y., A.C. Doty, M.L. Huffman, V. Rolland, D.R. Istvanko, and T.S. Risch. 2019. Management implications of sex-specific habitat use by *Nycticeius humeralis* in north-central Arkansas. *Journal of Mammalogy* 4:1263-1273.

Neupane, D., Y. Kwon, T.S. Risch, A. Williams, and R.L. Johnson. 2019. Habitat use by Asian elephants: context matters. *Global Ecology and Conservation* 17.

Neupane, D., R.L. Johnson, and T.S. Risch. 2017. How do land-use practices affect human-elephant conflict in Nepal? *Wildlife Biology* 2017.

Moore, P.R., T.S. Risch, D.K. Morris, and V. Rolland. 2017. Aerial telemetry to assess habitat use of female gray bats. *Journal of Wildlife Management* 81:1242-1253.

Neupane, D., S. Kunwar, A.K. Bohara, R.L. Johnson, and T.S. Risch. 2017. Willingness to pay for mitigating human-elephant conflict by residents of Nepal. *Journal for Nature Conservation* 36:65-76.

Pannkuk, E.L., T.S. Risch, and B.J. Savary. 2015. Isolation and identification of an extracellular subtilisin-like serine protease secreted by the bat pathogen *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*. *PLoS ONE*.

Robinson, T.J., L.M. Siefferman, A.B. Bentz, and T.S. Risch. 2014. The separate effects of egg size and parental quality on the development of ornamental plumage colouration. *Ibis* 156:15-42.

Pannkuk, E.L., T.S. Risch, and B.J. Savary. 2013. Profiling triacylglyceride contents in bat integumentary lipids by preparative thin layer chromatography and MALDI-TOF mass spectrometry. *Journal of Visualized Experiments* 79.

Risch, T.S., F.S. Dobson, and J.O. Murie. 1995. Is mean litter size the most productive? A test with Columbian ground squirrels. *Ecology* 76:1643-1654.

Complete bibliography available upon request.

TEACHING, MENTORING, AND STUDENT RESEARCH

Teaching experience includes Wildlife Investigative Techniques, Scientific Methods and Research Design, Evolution, Zoology, Comparative Physiology, Mammalogy, Neotropical Bat Ecology, Conservation of Neotropical Mammals, Human Dimensions of Wildlife Conservation, Animal Physiology, Comparative Behavior, Field Dendrology, Biological Sciences, Advanced Evolution, and Marine Mammals. Earlier teaching appointments included Auburn University, Frostburg State University, Allegheny Community College, and Stockton State College.

- Mentored undergraduate and graduate students in field ecology, conservation biology, mammalogy, bat ecology, elephant conservation, and wildlife disease research.
- Developed student research visibility models that included abstract review, stakeholder judging, professional presentation experience, and hybrid/virtual formats to expand participation.
- Advanced the connection between student research and institutional advancement by creating structured roles for alumni, donors, and external stakeholders in campus research showcases.

SELECTED EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICE

- Represented A-State and Rutgers-Camden research interests with state and federal agencies, research consortia, legislators, industry partners, donors, and external stakeholders.
- Served in statewide and regional research leadership roles involving Arkansas NSF EPSCoR, Arkansas INBRE, Arkansas Research Alliance, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, and the Arkansas Biosciences Institute consortium.
- Led A-State's American Red Wolf conservation efforts, including partnership development with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Red Wolf Species Survival Plan, local government, university stakeholders, alumni, donors, and community partners.

- Developed research partnerships and international educational programs involving Nicaragua, Mexico, Sri Lanka, South Africa, and other institutional collaborators.