

### Program Management Support

**Client** National Institutes of Health Laboratory

**Problem** The NIH maintains a laboratory with a core mission of understanding emerging infectious disease mechanisms with the ultimate goal of establishing vaccine and therapeutic drug candidates. In order to staff this facility, the NIH turned to an external contractor as a Government Owned, Contractor Operated laboratory with a specific prime contractor to manage the facility. Though the prime was an acknowledged leader in managing high containment medical research facilities and had a vast network of research scientists within the chem/bio-defense area, even they were challenged to fulfill senior scientific personnel gaps; especially expertise in highly pathogenic microorganisms that require high containment BSL-2/3/4 facilities.

**Approach** Tunnell participated as a key subcontractor to provide scientific personnel to perform and manage a portion of the basic and advanced research program. Once more, Tunnell's depth of scientific talent and recruiting skill provided an initial staff of BSL2/3/4 experienced Virologists, Immunologists, Bacteriologists, Cell Biologists, Molecular Biologists, Microscopists, Histologists, and Pathologists within 30 days. These scientists quickly pulled together as a cohesive team to meet the research mission of studying the pathogenesis of diseases caused by Class A microorganisms such as: ebola, marburg, smallpox, and monkey pox virus. This project is not only evidence of *Tunnell's* ability to quickly recruit highly specialized scientists, but also confirms *Tunnell's* capabilities in the biodefense arena.

**Results** The NIH laboratories are not yet move-in ready, however the scientists excelled in their temporary research laboratories. The team produced impressive data from state-of-the-art imaging modalities such as MRI and PET-SCINT, to image real-time viral pathogenesis. These data have enlightened our understanding of initial viral infectivity, entry, and viral predilection for specific tissues. Other data examined appropriate animal models for emerging viral diseases. Recently, an IRF scientist authored a comprehensive Simian Hemorrhagic Fever Virus text and the team authored a variety of prestigious international viral papers and presentations. The team has been cited as first rate and exemplary by the government management.