2-11-2005

Washington University Record, February 11, 2005

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New method makes genetic changes easier to identify

'Major technological breakthrough'

BY MICHAEL C. PERDUE

I t is now significantly easier to search long stretches of DNA for genetic changes associated with disease, thanks to School of Medicine scientists. WUSTL researchers have developed a method called "direct genomic selection" that accelerates the transition between family or population-based studies of disease inheritance patterns and identification of genetic variations that may contribute to disease.

That transition normally slows down dramatically when scientists sequence regions of interest in patients' DNA, determining the letter-by-letter genetic code found in those regions. With the base sequences from many patients' DNA, scientists can conduct comparisons that highlight the changes most commonly linked to disease, which provide the leads they need to better understand and treat a wide range of disorders.

Researchers reported in a recent issue of Nature Methods that they've already applied direct genomic selection to regions of DNA linked to heart disease, a diagnosis that is typically debilitating or deadly.

"We quickly found 100 previously unidentified genetic variations with potential links to heart disease," said senior author Michael Lovett, Ph.D., professor of genetics and of pediatrics. "It really is a much quicker and more affordable way of getting at these types of variations and has potential for applications in other areas, including cancer research."

Lovett is working with his colleagues at the Genome Sequencing Center to make direct genomic selection available to a much wider group of researchers. The approach will further empower the University's BioMed 21 initiative, which is dedicated to harnessing genetic studies and other basic research for improved patient diagnosis and treatment.

"This is a major technological breakthrough," said Mark Johnston, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Genetics. "It's clearly an enabling technology that will let us extract the region of interest from each individual's DNA and sequence it."

Direct genomic selection answers a growing need for what geneticists call resequencing — sequencing the same genetic region in many individuals.

Scientists measure DNA by its individual units of code, which are known as base pairs. Current automated DNA sequencing technology can process pieces of DNA 700-1,000 base pairs long, but inheritance studies can leave researchers searching for changes in segments of DNA hundreds of times longer.

Scientists formerly had only two proactive options for combusting this disparity and sequencing such large regions. One, which reproduces patients' entire genomes, can take up to a year, costs tens of thousands of dollars and discards most of the genetic material produced.

The other uses a process that focuses more directly on the region of interest in patients' DNA but leaves the genetic material intact.

"It's a major step forward," said Philip Earnest, associate professor in the Department of Genetics. "This is a breakthrough technology for understanding the genetic basis of complex diseases like heart disease."

Researchers have developed automated DNA sequencing technologies that incorporate a vital calcium signaling process that normal cells use to communicate. But calcium signaling is not normal in cardiac cells, where heart arrhythmias can result in death.

"It's a great advance," said Robert Colucci, professor in the Department of Genetics. "This method allows us to get at the genetic basis of these diseases and understand how they're caused."

Lovett said the database will be updated often.

"Our staff expects to move into a new office in Prince Hall by March 1. With the formation of the office, several initiatives have been planned — the Undergraduate Research Digest, the Undergraduate Research Symposium and a series of research scholarships to be awarded this spring."

The digest will be a collection of undergraduate research projects posted on the OUR Web site. It will include submissions from a variety of fields.

"The idea of the digest is to promote what is out there," Bisga said. "I think a lot of the research done by undergraduate students is not getting the recognition it deserves.

There is major research being done that nobody knows about, and we'd like to be able to reveal a little bit more to the undergraduate student body, to the WUSTL community and to the outside public as well. It also gives students a chance to understand what's required in publishing an article and what needs to be done to communicate to an audience."

The Undergraduate Research Symposium will be March 21-23 and will provide students a chance to briefly describe their research through posters and visual presentations. The symposium will be divided into sessions focusing on specific disciplines, humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. Applications for the symposium will be accepted.

BY NEIL SCHNEIDER

The College of Arts & Sciences has announced the formation of an office to help promote undergraduate research projects.

The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) will help place students in research positions, promote their findings and award scholarships.

"The office was started with the hope of really promoting undergraduate research for students in all areas," said Henry Bisga, Ph.D., associate dean in Arts & Sciences and director of the Office of Undergraduate Research. "The natural sciences have some great programs already, but we'd like to develop the social sciences and humanities more than we have in the past."

"I see this office as being a central place for students to locate research opportunities and a way for us to facilitate the undergraduate research experience."

Bisga said a centralized database of positions will be a valuable asset in matching students to positions, thus removing at least one of the obstacles that keep willing students from finding vacant openings.

While research and laboratory work are commonplace in the sciences, Bisga said students from all disciplines can find participating valuable.

"We list research positions from a wide variety of academic areas, including the humanities."

The searchable online database is at ur.wustl.edu.

BY TONY FITZPATRICK

University scientists have developed the first mathematical model of a canine cardiac cell that incorporates a vital calcium regulatory pathway that has implications in life-threatening cardiac arrhythmias, or irregular heartbeats.

The work was done by Thomas J. Hood, Ph.D., a postdoctoral researcher in the laboratory of Jeffrey K. Safitz, Ph.D., M.D., the Paul E. Lacy and Ellen Lacy Professor in pathology and immunology in the School of Medicine; and Susana Rudy, Ph.D., the Fred Singh Distinguished Professor of Engineering.

They have incorporated the Calcium/Calmodulin-dependent Protein Kinase II (CaMKII) regulatory pathway into their model, improving the understanding of the relationship between calcium handling in cardiac cells and the cell's electrical activity.

Normal contraction of the heart relies on normal generation of electrical signals, called action potentials, and their organized spread through cardiac tissue. The normal conduction of action potentials is reliant upon sodium channels.

But slow conduction of action potentials that can lead to heart arrhythmias depends on calcium channels, which, in turn, are modulated by cell calcium.

"CaMKII mediates an important regulatory pathway that influences calcium cycling in the cell and modulates many processes involving calcium, including activities of calcium channels," Rudy said. "Having this pathway modeled is a valuable research tool because there is a strong link among abnormalities of calcium handling and cardiac arrhythmias."

"In addition, being a first mathematical model of a regulatory pathway involved in cell electrophysiology, it can serve as a paradigm for modeling effects of other regulatory pathways on cell function."

Rudy and Hund published their findings in a recent issue of Circulation, a journal of the American Heart Association. The work was funded by grants from the National Institutes of Health's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and a Whitaker Foundation Development Award.

"Throughout all living cells, there is a broad array of charged atoms called ions interacting in a number of ways. One approach to understanding this complexity is through modeling," Rudy said.

"Using mathematical models we can observe the consequences of changes we make to the model. This helps us to see what happens when we change the system under different environmental conditions."
Upgraded bike locks available through WUSTL police

By ANDY CLENDENNEN

As an effort to stay one step ahead of would-be bad guys, the University Police Department has upped their game with more Kryptonite bike locks that are designed to be resistant to being picked than prior styles. These use a flat-key locking system and resistant to being picked than prior styles. These use a flat-key locking system and resistant to being picked than prior styles. These use a flat-key locking system.

In late January, the police department received a supply of upgraded bike locks from Kryptonite, a radio engineer at the Puget Sound Yard in Bremerton, Wash.

"Ed Murty and his wife, Margaret, supported the engineering school in many significant ways, especially with the Murty Electronic Imaging Laboratory in the Department of Electrical and Systems Engineering, as well as a generous scholarship. This professorship is the capstone of his long, philanthropic relationship with our school," said Christopher I. Byrnes, Ph.D., dean of the School of Engineering.

Edward H. and Florence G. Skinner Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton, who has been working on for some time, said Lorraine Goffe-Rush, HRNews.

The group will work through real and imagined classroom situations geared toward interpreting problematic test passages, events or social issues involving ethnicity, and will also discuss the cultural differences that hinder cross-ethnic dialogue and attempt to develop ways of lecturing on ethnicity in self-conscious, publicly sanctioned ways.

The group will also discuss how to help students grapple with the complexities of ethnicity.

The ultimate goals are to help institutions fulfill the civic mission of education by presenting students in citizenship and to help students grapple with the complexities of ethnicity.

"I'm very excited about this opportunity to help students look forward to working with colleagues from other institutions to gain a better understanding of ethnicity," said Murty. "Ethnicity is a subject of central importance for higher education because it is fundamental to all of our goals, universities and colleges should embrace it —namely, to educate students in the vir-

cular influences and emerging needs.

Christopher I. Byrnes, Ph.D. (right), dean of the School of Engineering & Applied Science and the Edward H. and Florence G. Skinner School of Engineering and Applied Science, has been working on this project for some time. In an effort to stay one step ahead of would-be bad guys, the University Police Department has upped their game with more Kryptonite bike locks that are designed to be resistant to being picked than prior styles. These use a flat-key locking system.

In late January, the police department received a supply of upgraded bike locks from Kryptonite, a radio engineer at the Puget Sound Yard in Bremerton, Wash. A new model of bicycle lock, Kryptonite New York, was announced and available to the public.

"The new bike locks are designed to be more resistant to picking than previous models," said Glenn, a police officer at the University Police Department. "They are available at the campus police station and can be purchased for $20.

The Kryptonite New York lock features a unique key system that makes it extremely difficult for would-be thieves to pick.

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**Jost named chairman of radiological society**

**BY MICHAEL C. PURDY**

R. Gilbert Jost, M.D., the Elisabeth Mallinckrodt Professor and head of radiology, has been named chairman of the board of directors of the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA).

"The society comprises more than 57,000 radiologists, radiation oncologists and related scientists committed to promoting excellence in radiology through education and research, with the ultimate goal of improving patient care," Jost said.

The RSNA's scientific meeting is one of the largest annual medical meetings in the world with approximately 60,000 attendees from more than 93 countries.

Jost will serve as chair for one year. Then he will serve successive one-year terms as president-elect and president of the RSNA.

He has been active with the organization for years, serving on numerous committees and serving as a member of its board of directors in 1999.

Jost also is the director of Mallinckrodt Biomedical Research at the School of Medicine and an affiliate professor of computer science.

"He is internationally known for his work to expand and improve the use of information technology in the practice of diagnostic radiology," Jost became head of the Department of Radiology and director of the Mallinckrodt Institute in 2001 after serving as interim holder of both positions for two years.

Prior to that, he was chief of diagnostic radiology, overseeing several services at BJC HealthCenter, which is part of Washington University School of Medicine.

Jost attended Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital and medical school at the University of New Orleans.

He earned a bachelor's degree at Harvard University and a medical degree at Yale University.

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**Improved stem cell procedure offers superior results**

**BY GWEN ERICKSON**

An improved stem cell transplant regimen that was well-tolerated and has a high success rate has been developed by School of Medicine researchers.

The procedure holds promise for treatment of blood and bone marrow disorders, immune dysfunction and certain metabolic disorders.

Designed for transplants that replace a patient's bone marrow with stem cells from donor marrow or peripheral blood, the procedure allows early recovery of immune function. It also nearly eliminates transplant rejection and decreases the incidence and severity of graft versus host disease, which occurs when transplanted immune cells attack various cells in the body and is a common complication in transplants.

Termed a "reduced-intensity" protocol, in pediatric patients it may minimize damage to sensitive growing organs and the brain and reproductive organs.

The pilot study of the procedure is currently reported in the journal Bone Marrow Transplantation.

The regimen was administered to 11 pediatric and five adult patients who had normalizing bone marrow or metabolic disorders, such as sickle cell anemia, thalassemia or Hunter's syndrome.

The patients were at St. Louis Children's and Barnes-Jewish hospitals and at the Children's Hospital of New Orleans.

Symptoms and disease parameters improved or improved in patients who underwent successful transplants.

In a successful stem cell transplant, the donor stem cells become permanently established, or engrafted, in the patient's bone marrow and continually produce healthy blood cells.

To generate the host immune system from the foreign stem cells, patients receive a pretransplant protocol in a transplant immune suppres- sion setting.

We wanted an approach that would effectively knock out the patient's immune system to allow the transplanted cells to engraft, but then allow immune function to return quickly, explained study leader Shalini Shenoy, M.D., assistant professor of pediatrics and a Siteman Cancer Center faculty member.

A key innovation in this study changes the timing of administering a powerful pretransplant conditioning drug, called Campath-1H, which destroys the only one experienced late-graft rejection, an unusually high rate of success, according to Shenoy.

Furthermore, the grafts took hold quickly.

Donor stem cells had established in the bone marrow completely at one month, contrasting with other reduced-intensity protocols, in which donor engraftment is gradual and often takes many months.

The protocol also reduced the incidence and severity of graft versus host disease. For the majority of patients who experienced graft versus host disease, the symptoms were limited to the skin and were controlled with treatment that was generally well-tolerated.

The regimen's promise for minimizing damage to growing tissues, such as the brain and reproductive organs in pediatric patients, the protocol uses smaller doses of standard conditioning drugs.

"In the past, physicians had to weigh the benefits of treatment and damage to the immune system against survival of the patients," Shenoy said. "We're trying to provide treatments that protect developing tissues."

"We had our first pregnancy and normal delivery in one of our stem cell transplant patients, so we think the protocol offers hope," Shenoy plans to evaluate whether changing parameters and further reducing chemother-apy doses would enhance the protocol.

She will also conduct studies targeted at sickle cell anemia and chronic myelogenous leukemia to explore the potential for successful transplantation in children with these disorders.

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**Passion for social justice, medical education earns Mathews award**

**BY GWEN ERICKSON**

Faith, formal education and life experiences have shaped the character of Katherine Jahnige Mathews, M.D., assistant professor of pediatrics and a Siteman Cancer Center faculty member.

"My whole wonder in my coming to St. Louis," she said. "Much of what I've been involved with has been part of a broader energy in the community. I believe there was a wonderful grace in my coming to St. Louis."

As co-director of the Program for the Elimination of Cancer Disparities (PECaD) at the Siteman Cancer Center, Mathews and her colleague Diane M. Ferris, M.D., assistant professor of radiology, have coordinated efforts to promote breast health in the St. Louis area.

Drawing together partners in Siteman and the local community, with funding support from the Korean Foundation, Mathews helps provide breast cancer information, make screenings available, and improve timely treatments for more than 3,500 uninsured and underserved women in the African-American, refugee and immigrant communities.

She believes PECA-D can serve as a national model for eliminating economic and social barriers to high-quality health care. Having begun with a focus on breast health, PECA-D is now working to expand PECA-D’s efforts to include cervical, prostate and colorectal cancer.

Fresh from college, Mathews worked overseas in Kenya and Tanzania, serving with the Anglican Church in a community health-worker training project. After returning to the United States, she earned a medical degree, a master's degree in public health and a degree in theology.

"My home since moving into St. Louis has been south St. Louis," Mathews said.

Mathews' efforts have earned her the Association of American Medical Colleges' E. N. Curnow Award of Excellence and the School of Medicine's Outstanding Teacher Award for 2004. The annual award honors an outstanding junior faculty member involved in addressing inequities in medical education and health care.

An ex-officio director of the Program for the Elimination of Cancer Disparities (PECaD) at the Siteman Cancer Center, Mathews and her colleague Diane M. Ferris, M.D., assistant professor of radiology, have coordinated efforts to promote breast health in the St. Louis area.

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The celebrated spoken-word artist Saul Williams will give a presentation on "The Connection Between Hip-Hop and Poetry" at 11 a.m. Feb. 16 in Grube Chapel. The Assembly Series event will serve as the Social Justice Center Lecture. His poetry, known as "spoken word," consists of lively exchanges and political debate, as well as the birth of two new literary creations. At Mary she develops her novel Pandora, Benjamin's biographer and personal physician Wilhelm Polster (senior John Studler) gathers material for his biography of the writer's Draevas.

"Much has been made of that practically mythical summer," noted Island Cannon, a graduate student in English in Arts & Sciences who directs the cost of the trio. "Was that original little band of free-thinkers simply wallowing around in self-indulgence? Were they — in some deep, dark way — actually orgiastic little band of free-thinkers simply" — "so very deeply, perhaps too deeply — certainly more deeply than most of us allow ourselves: to be good, great and just beautiful and free."

The production team is led by seniors Sally Doyle (costume design) and Lindsey Neman (set design). Lighting and sound design are by senior Les Karpas and freshwater Andrew Benard, respectively. Dramaturge is sophomore Ashlin Claypool. Tickets — $12 for the general public; $8 for senior citizens and WUSTL faculty, staff and students — are available through the Ed-assemblyseries.wustl.edu or call 935-4620.

For more information, call 935-6540.
Men's basketball stays in third-place tie
The 17-7 Bears basketball team remained in a tie for third place in the University Athletic Conference after splitting weekend games.
The Bears fell to New York University 61-52 Feb. 4 at the WUSTL Field House. The game was延定a 64-38 margin over the Field House in 1983-84. Four players scored 10 points or more, led by Ruths's career-high 18 points and five rebounds. Junior David Skiba helped the Bears, recording a team season-high 15 points in the first half of 7.81 seconds in the first 10rebounds. The second half was for sixth place in the event.
Senior Lancer Meri posted a home season-best time in the 400, clocking a 50.97 to finish fourth. The men's 1,600 relay squad finished making four splits in the event with a mark of 3:24.55, just one second off the record.
Women hoopsters split home games
The women's basketball team split its two UAA home contests at the Field House in 1983-84. Freshman Troy Ruths finished with 13 points and five rebounds off the bench, led by Ruths's career-high 18 points.
Senior Bob Keller finished with 14 points, while added two blocked shots. The Bears moved to 10-1 in the conference with an 81-71 win over the Social Work Bears, earning a team-high 14 points in the game.
Bears senior Anthony Hollins drives to the hoop in a recent game against New York University. Hollins is shooting a team-best .571 from the floor and has grabbed 110 rebounds in helping the Bears to a 13-7 record with five games remaining in the regular season.

Sports
Bears basketball will be televised to broadcast for the second time this season on Charter TV Cable Channel 20 at 1:30 p.m. Feb. 19, while the doubleheader against USTA rival Carnegie Mellon University on Feb. 18 will be filmed and re-broadcast on Feb. 19.
Season-bests the norm for track at Titan Open
The women's squad took sixth place with 38.33 points, while the men finished ninth with 7.95 points.

On the Web
For complete sports schedules and results, go to bearsports.wustl.edu.

Fiction writer Kathryn Davis to read
On Feb. 18, the Writers' Center will host Fiction writer Kathryn Davis to read Bloody Poetry by Evan Connell and has rented a team-high 110 rebounds in helping the Bears to a 13-7 record with five games remaining in the regular season.

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Was there a football game, too? More than 100 students, faculty and staff from the Olin School of Business gathered Feb. 6 at the Charles F. Knight Executive Education Center for the annual "Super Ad Bowl," an opportunity to watch and evaluate the advertisements broadcast during the Super Bowl. The event included presentations by area advertising associates such as Todd Crombeekes (above), senior vice president and account director at Leo Burnett, who spoke about what makes an effective advertisement. Students were voted for their favorite spot based on the criteria laid out by Crombeekes. The hands-down winner: Diet Pepsi's ad in which musician P. Diddy unexpectedly creates a fist for the soft drink's truck.

Model
Method provides tool for diagnosis, treatment — from Page 1

dynamic environment. Ion channels along cell membrane open at a closer to allow these interactions.

In heart cells, for instance, two different kinds of ion channels interact to generate the action potentials that go through the heart and cause a synchronous contraction.

In a normal heart, action potential forms very organized waves of activity and contraction. In arrhythmia, though, normal wave of action potentials can be disrupted, either by a focal activity or a conduction of heart cells or by electrical waves that break the heart's synchrony in a number of different scenarios.

The largest killer of Americans is heart disease, claiming 1 million Americans annually. More than 500,000 of these deaths are attributed to arrhythmia, 7 million worldwide.

Researchers used a computation- al-biology approach to study arrhyth- mia. They used computer models (ion channels, cell, multicellular tissue) of the cardiac system, and re- sults from his laboratory have also developed detailed computer models of the workings of cardiac cells and their alteration by genetic mutations.

Until recently, heart specialists had no noninvasive tool like MRI and CT to better understand the heart's electrical function. In its work supported by a Merit Award from the NIH, Ford has pioneered a novel, non- invasive imaging modality for cardiac electrophysiology and arrhythmias.

The new method, electrocar- diographic imaging (ECGI), adds a much-needed clinical tool for arrhythmic diagnosis and treatment of cardiac rhythm disturbances. It also provides a noninvasive method for measuring the electrical field around a pacemaker implant, and an effective diagnostic tool for patients with pacemaker malfunction.

Gene — from Page 1

A state that requires considerable effort to prepare this DNA for sequencing.

The challenge now is that we have to find a way to identify all not-all-or-nothing factors — they can't rely on a single gene, or knock out the disease, but to not guaranteed development of the disease. Louis, To do this, researchers have a variety of tests and therapies that can be used to improve the patient's quality of life.

Research — from Page 1

until Feb. 14. Only two will also award a series of scholarships this spring, from $300-$4000. Students who have worked in any field and are invited to apply and have their applications reviewed by a departmental committee.

The deadline for student applications is Feb. 25. Students will be notified by March 11 if they are accepted.

There is no question that a student can show that a well-trained employer that they have a pub- lished article in a journal. They can also show that they have presented their work before their peers and professors, it really gives them quite an edge in get- ting hired," Rigg said. "We think the degree in clinical psychology will give students presentation and networking experience in the far beyond their work done in their particular field.

For more information, go online to wustl.edu.

Hilltop Campus
Phase IVA Housing
Construction has begun on the east of Liggett Resi- dential Hall, replacing Kemig House. The last slab-pour was completed Feb. 4. Indeed, weather has affected much of the progress, but time will be recovered on the roof work and interior-finish scheduled activi- ties. Completion and occupancy is still scheduled for August.

Fox Arts Center
The construction fencing has been removed and the project has begun. The project, at the southeast corner of the Hilltop Cam- pus, is scheduled for late spring 2006.

Social Sciences/ Law Building
The programming and planning for the new building at the east end of parking lot No. 31, be- tween Anheuser-Busch Hall and Simon Hall, is under way.

University Center
The programming and planning for the new building in the vi- neyard parking lot No. 34, just west of Mallinckrodt Student Center, is under way.

MetroLink
Forest Park- DeBaliviere station to Kingsland Ave.

The programming and planning for the new building at the corner of the intersection of Kingsland Ave. and the CU-B downs at the south- east of Mallinckrodt Student Center, is under way.

Kingsland Ave. to Ritz-Carlton Drive
Current work includes installation of tunnel roof sec- tions west of Big Bend Boule- vard, installation of the roof on the University City-Big Bend station, backfilling over the tunnel east of Big Bend Boulevard, construction of platforms at the Forest Park-University City Big Bend sta- tions, and construction of the tunnel floor and walls east of Big Bend Boulevard.

Planned work for the next three months includes installation of the concrete approach walls and excavation of the tunnel east of Skinker. In the next three months, researchers can expect to see the start of installation of tunnel roof sections west of Skinker, and the concrete construction of tunnel roof sections east of Skinker and the Skinker station, and the construction of tunnels and approach walls west of Skinker.

Campus Box 8002, St. Louis, MO 63130-8002

The renovation of the University City-Big Bend station — also part of the MoPAC plans, is slated to be completed by the end of April.

The structure of the Medical Campus is a 40,000-square-foot facility.

Specialized Research Facility

Specialized Research Facility will be built by the end of April.

The Rudi Garage demo- nstration is slated to be finished by the end of February.

The building will also award a series of scholarships this spring, from $300-$4000. Students who have worked in any field are invited to apply and have their applications reviewed by a departmental committee.

The deadline for student applications is Feb. 25. Students will be notified by March 11 if they are accepted.

There is no question that a student can show that a well-trained employer that they have a pub- lished article in a journal. They can also show that they have presented their work before their peers and professors, it really gives them quite an edge in get- ting hired," Rigg said. "We think the degree in clinical psychology will give students presentation and networking experience in the far beyond their work done in their particular field.

For more information, go online to wustl.edu.
Center for Research on Innovation & Entrepreneurship awards grants

By Jessica Martin

The Center for Research on Innovation & Entrepreneurship has awarded eight research grants to faculty members.

The awards support a variety of individual research projects focusing on different aspects of innovation and entrepreneurship.

One of those grants was made possible by a three-year research grant by the Foundation for Entrepreneurial Promotion to supplement the five-year, $3 million grant awarded to the center by the Kauffman Foundation. The grants will support research on various topics related to innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic development.

At recent Board of Trustees meetings, the following faculty members were awarded grants:

- A. Mary Jane Olson, as associate professor of operations and management at the Olin School of Business, effective Oct. 1, 2004
- S. E. Breyer, as associate professor of orthopedic surgery at the School of Medicine, effective Oct. 1, 2004
- K. W. Black, as associate professor of operations and management at the Olin School of Business, effective Sept. 1, 2004
- T. M. Lennon Olsen, as professor of law in the School of Law, effective Oct. 1, 2004

Faculty members receive promotions, tenure

At recent Board of Trustees meetings, the following faculty members were promoted to associate professor with tenure or granted a track change to tenure:

- Jennifer Neuwald, a doctoral candidate in the School of Social Work, has been promoted to associate professor with tenure, appointed with tenure, effective March 1, 2004.

Program for Communal Innovation

The program for Communal Innovation, which is supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation, has awarded grants to researchers in the School of Arts & Sciences.

The program's goal is to foster innovation and entrepreneurship among university students.

The program has awarded grants to researchers in the School of Arts & Sciences and the Olin School of Business.

The grants are intended to support research projects that focus on various aspects of innovation and entrepreneurship.

The program aims to provide students with resources to conduct research, develop new technologies, and foster collaboration with industry partners.

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Taking things to a personal level

Nanette Tarbouni gets to know potential students as well as possible

BY ANDY CLENDINNEN

Nanette Tarbouni did everything wrong when she looked for a college. Exaos! Tarbouni took the ACT and the SAT scores in — in her senior year of high school. Visitin’? She didn’t see her new school until the day she moved into Tulane University.

So she knows exactly what to tell kids NOT to do when looking at prospective schools. “We just weren’t very sophisticated when looking at colleges in the mid-’70s,” Tarbouni said. “All the advice I would never give, I was the example of.”

“But maybe that tells us that there are lots of places people can be happy, and that’s one of the messages we try to convey to families.”

Tarbouni conveys messages to families just about every day of the year, but that’s just a small part of her role as director of undergraduate admissions.

From flying across the country to visit high schools to reading 12-page application forms, from hosting prospective students visiting the campus to organizing events for guests, Tarbouni plays a big role in the makeup of the University, a role she’s played since graduating from Tulane.

Following her undergraduate years, she stayed on three years as an academic advisor in the dean’s office, then moved to St. Louis.

“Of course there was nowhere you’d want to work in St. Louis except Washington U.,” she laughed, “but there were no openings at the time, late 1982.”

So she headed to the University of Missouri-St. Louis, where she again worked as an academic advisor, this time for just eight months.

“Then I left, and behold, there was an advertisement in the paper for this job (admissions counselor), back in the days when you could actually find jobs in the paper,” she said. “I immediately applied and came to interview. I had done advising for 3-4 years, I thought I would do admissions for a couple of years and graduate school as well as be to go to student services for a couple years and then settle on what I liked best.

“But this admissions thing just got in my blood, and I cannot leave!”

Which might sound odd to some, but for her colleagues in the admissions office, Tarbouni has stayed, and her efforts — and loyalty — are appreciated.

“It is so rare in the world of admissions that a person of Nanette’s talent would remain at one place for more than 20 years,” said John Berg, associate vice chancellor of admissions that a person of Nanette’s talent would remain at one place for more than 20 years. When I think of Nanette, I think of someone who can whip up a mean jambalaya while she’s discussing all the nuances of the University. I think of someone who would force me into going to a scary movie just because John Cusack was in it. I think of a friend who will always be there when needed. Everyone should have someone like Nanette in their corner.”

As much, Snow finally settled it so that her friend and Tarbouni attended the same party.

“She had been trying to fix us up for a long time,” Tarbouni laughed. “She kept bringing him by the office, and I kept saying, ‘I don’t want to meet anybody, I don’t want to get married.’ So finally we were at the same party together... and she was right. I owe her much of my happiness.”

Thanks in no small part to Snow, Tarbouni and her husband, Younasse — who teaches English as a second language at Saint Louis University — are going on seven years of marriage.

“Hey it’s a very good teacher,” Tarbouni says. “He’s very patient, and we balance each other, because he tells me ‘You are not (patient).’”

“Just that. I hear it at the office, and it’s really told when you meet John Cusack in real life.”

But a lack of patience, increased emphasis on programs numbers, and efforts of a former co-worker. “She’s been wonderful to work with,” said Jan Snow, a longtime friend of Nanette. “She’s great with the kids, she’s an outstanding representative for Washington University and she’s never too busy to return a call or answer questions.”

KATHLEEN JASPER

“Shes been wonderful to work with. Shes great with the kids, she’s an outstanding representative for Washington University and she’s never too busy to return a call or answer questions.”

BY ANDY CLENDINNEN

Nanette Tarbouni and her husband, Younasse, hope to take a trip to Morocco this year to visit his family.