Biology Professor Receives Four Grants

Four agencies recently provided a total of $75,000 in funding to Millersville biology professor Dr. James Cosentino to support three research projects.

“The most wonderful part about these projects is that written into the grants are fellowships that provide undergraduate students with real-life research experience,” said Cosentino.

KIG Grant
The Keystone Innovation Grant (KIG) provided Cosentino with $10,000 in funding to support his research of an aptamer-based sensor for the detection of ovarian cancer. He and his research partner, Dr. Lyman Rickard, a chemistry professor, are researching the use of nucleic acid aptamers, which are synthetic, single-stranded RNA or DNA that, like antibodies, can bind target molecules with high affinity and specificity. However, unlike antibodies, aptamers are easier to develop, synthetic and thermally stable. Dr. G. Thomas Caltigerone, CEO and president of Aptagen, LLC, in York, Pa., will provide the purified aptamers for the project.

NSF Grant
The National Science Foundation partnered with Partnership for Innovation and provided Cosentino with $40,000 in funding to support research concerning his novel approach to targeted drug delivery to tumors. Such a system has the potential of delivering high concentrations of drugs directly to the targeted area without causing damage to otherwise healthy tissue. This innovative approach will minimize toxic side effects to other tissues and establish a new targeted drug treatment for cancers and other localized diseases. Cosentino will team up with Aptagen, LLC, who will be providing the purified aptamers for the project.

Chemical Sciences Grants
The International Organization for Chemical Sciences in Development and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization provided Cosentino with $16,000 and $9,000, respectively, to provide university-level books and computers to developing countries in Africa. Recent wars and continued poverty have created a need for new university libraries. Materials donated are typically no more than 15 years old and in very good condition. Donated items will be shipped to the recipient country by large shipping container, 20,000 books per shipment. Target universities for 2011 include Kadi Ayyad University, Marrakech, Morocco; Mekelle University, Mekelle, Ethiopia; University of Liberia, Monrovia, Liberia and Ecole des Sciences de Musanze, Musanze, Rwanda.
SAM the Robot (and his handlers) Wins First Place

Semi-autonomous Marauder, or SAM, a robot built by the Robotics Team at Millersville University recently demonstrated its national championship, award-winning skills in Stayer Hall.

The team took first place at the Association of Technology, Management and Applied Engineering (ATMAE) conference held in Panama City Beach, October 27-30. Each team’s robotic vehicle moved across the beach in an effort to autonomously detect the location of multiple steel cylinders of varying sizes in the sand. Once the location was found, the robot was supposed to automatically extract and pick up a steel cylinder and return to its starting position under operator control. The Millersville University vehicle was the only one to successfully use autonomous control to detect and pick-up a cylinder and move about the sand with ease – they did this using vision, which adds to the complexity of the task.

Millersville’s robotics team won first place overall in the Robotics Cup, first place in performance and first place for best/electrical/control methodology. The team, advised by Drs. John Wright and Chris Erickson, industry & technology, received numerous prizes including $950 in cash, free software and robotic kits; Rixan Robotics Training for team members (valued at $1,000 per seat); a professionally printed vinyl banner for the department and a trophy, passed on to Millersville University from the previous year’s winning team.

“The combination of challenges made this competition that of a graduate level control problem, in my opinion,” said Wright. “The team worked very hard all year and did a wonderful job representing Millersville University.”

Individual students were eligible to win special awards such as the “Best Driver Award.” Greg Betz, a technology education student at Millersville, received this award, and a $25 cash prize. Other student robotics team members, majoring in industry technology, computer science, technology education and physics, who attended the competition included David Oliver (team captain); Bradley Sensenig, Pauline Gemberling, Michael Edkin, Adam Fox, Joshua Jordan, Sean Farrow, Jake Girton, Mylinda Johe, Brendon Fowler and Curtis Rosche.

You can check out a video of the robotics team at http://www.millersville.edu/itec/.
Peer educators awarded for their good work

The presence of peer educators on a university campus is necessary for building a healthier environment by sharing information, teaching skills and encouraging fellow students to practice healthy behaviors. For their educational programming efforts, the peer educators at Millersville University were named “Best Network Affiliate” at the 2010 BACCHUS Network General Assembly, held November 4-7, in Indianapolis, Ind.

“Receiving the Best Network Affiliate award was very exciting for the students. It was a clear indication to them that what they do on campus matters,” said Jayme Trogus, director of the Elsie S. Shenk Wellness and Women’s Program. “The students put a lot of time, effort and enthusiasm into their programming efforts, and I am thankful to the BACCHUS Network for recognizing that they are an outstanding contribution to our campus.”

The students received this award for universities between 5,000-10,000 students by the BACCHUS Peer Education Network. The “Outstanding Advisor” award went to Trogus. The peer educators nominated her for this award.

At the assembly, peer educators gained new ideas and strategies for their programming and awareness events. Advisors learned how to make prevention efforts stronger on their campuses, while supporting the students who make it happen.

Millersville University was selected to present three of their educational workshops during the conference: Body and Mind (mental health awareness); New Friends, New Environment: What Every Student Needs to Know about Sexual Assault and Who in the World (diversity).

The BACCHUS Network is a university and community based network focused on comprehensive health and safety initiatives. For more information about peer education at Millersville University, visit Peer Education Programs.
MU Theatre Becomes Accessible for the Hearing Impaired

“Open captioning,” which provides a scrolling dialogue on an LED screen is now being used by Millersville University Theatre in an effort to reach out to the hearing impaired.

On Sunday, Oct. 31, for the matinee performance of Moliere’s “School for Husbands,” open captioning was used for the first time. The 4-foot-wide by 1-foot-tall screen hung over the acting area in Rafters Theatre for audience members to see.

“The text of the play is entered into a laptop in a sign program and is manually advanced to keep up with the actors during the performance,” said Victor Capecce, communication & theatre professor. “Open captioning is favored over signing a performance because the audience does not need to know sign language and those with marginal hearing loss can refer to the screen as needed.”

The open captioning equipment is available to area nonprofit organizations that participate in the Lancaster-York Cultural Access Project. Training on the equipment is required for each organization; Capecce completed his training in December at the Fulton Theatre, which houses and schedules equipment throughout the region.

“We have had some immediate responses from two groups of audience members of different ages, who were pleasantly surprised to see the captioning,” said Capecce.

“The purpose of publicizing the captioning is to let those with hearing issues know about our enhanced accessibility. They do not have to identify themselves, make an appointment, obtain equipment or know sign language. Just look for the ‘OC’ logo on the performance date.”

The next performances scheduled to use open captioning are “Earth and Sky,” Sunday, Dec. 4, at 2 p.m. and “Heathen Valley,” Sunday, March 20, at 2 p.m.

Undergraduate Research Journal Established

The Keystone Journal of Undergraduate Research (KJUR), a journal focused on undergraduate research, has been created and will interest faculty at Millersville who have students engaged in innovative research projects and who are searching for a suitable outlet for publication.

KJUR is designed to showcase outstanding scholarship
of undergraduates attending Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education universities and serves as a means to foster scholarship of undergraduate students by providing them with an opportunity to publish their work in a statewide forum.

“Publication of one’s intellectual work is the desirable final outcome for anyone engaged in research work,” said Dr. Robert Vaillancourt, earth sciences. “Research results are of no use to society if they are kept locked up in your notebooks and never see the light of day. Publishing your results is great for your career, too, as it demonstrates perseverance by your ability to see a project through to its completion.”

Student authors are eligible to submit articles to KJUR if they have completed their projects under the direction of a faculty member when the authors were undergraduates. Students have up to one year after graduation to submit a manuscript to KJUR. Submissions can be made at any time. The anticipated publication of the inaugural print issue for KJUR is winter 2011.

“We’re hopeful that our first edition will include some interesting articles from some of Millersville University’s brightest students,” said Vaillancourt.

KJUR recently received an International Standard Serial Number from the Library of Congress for the journal’s online edition as well as its print edition. The first article was published online in September and additional articles will be published on the website after passing through a review process.

University faculty or students interested in publishing in KJUR should contact Vaillancourt, Millersville’s campus editor, in the earth sciences department, at 717-872-3294 or by email, at Robert.Vaillancourt@millersville.edu.

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**St. Albans South African Boys Choir at MU-Lancaster**

The Mayor’s Office of Special Events, along with Millersville University, will host the St. Albans South African Boys Choir, December 14 at 7 p.m. The concert will be held at Millersville University – Lancaster, 42 N. Prince St. The choir will perform in Lancaster as part of the group’s two-week tour in the United States.
The St. Albans South African Boys Choir is a renowned group of 100 chorale members who perform traditional South African songs, while integrating an assortment of international choral and musical traditions. The Choir has toured Argentina, France, England and Australia and has won several awards in South African competitions.

“The Mayor’s Office of Special Events is thrilled to be hosting the St. Albans South African Boys Choir in Lancaster. We are excited to welcome them to our city and to add them to our holiday events this season,” said Jennifer Baker, director of the Mayor’s Office of Special Events.

“Partnering with Mayor Gray's office to present the St. Albans South African Boys Choir is a wonderful example of providing an outstanding music program for the public. We plan to open the building [MU-Lancaster] to the community in similar collaborations for a long time to come,” said Amy Dmitzak, University Communications & Marketing.

Tickets for the concert are free; however, they are required for admission. Tickets are available at the Ticket Office Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Gerhart Hall (22 E. Frederick St.), by calling 717-872-3811, online at www.muticketsonline.com or by visiting the registration desk at Millersville University – Lancaster.

For a full schedule of all holiday events taking place, visit www.lancastercityevents.com.

Music Newsletter

The 2010 edition of Millersville University’s Music Newsletter has arrived! Featured in this newsletter are articles and events happening in the music department. Read about the upcoming Glorious Sounds of the Season concert, new facilities under construction, Millersville’s very own craftsman and musician, upcoming events and more. Also check out the video link to the Millersville University Marching Band to watch the students perform. Please click on the following link: Music Newsletter.
Once a Marauder, Always a Marauder

During a luncheon held November 10, the largest wooden replica of a Millersville Marauder was unveiled at Millersville University.

This project began seven months ago as a special tribute to the Marauder. Made from a 1,100-pound block of basswood, today the colorfully carved life-size Marauder statue stands at six feet tall and weighs approximately 500 pounds.

It took seven individuals nearly 700 hours to complete the wooden sculpture, with more than 400 hours dedicated to carving alone. Six Millersville University alumni were instrumental in the purchase and crafting of this project: Robert E. Lehr ’57, master carver and painter; Kelly (Lehr) Gallagher ’94, detail painter; K. Eugene “Gene” Forrey ’76/’91M and K. Matthew Forrey ’95, planning and gluing, and Dominick DiNunzio ’53, major wood financier. Local Millersville carpenter and saw-man, Martin Stopli, was also enlisted to help.

The life-size Marauder statue resides in Jefferson Hall, Millersville University’s athletics department on campus. Expenses for this project totaled approximately $3,200 – all donated by alumni.

Check out the Millersville Athletics Facebook page for additional photos of the Marauder statue.

MBA to Sponsor Christmas Tree Lighting

The Millersville Business Association (MBA) invites the Millersville area community to its annual Christmas Tree Lighting.

The Christmas Tree Lighting will be held Friday, December 3 at 7 p.m. on the lawn of Millersville International House, located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Manor and Leaman Avenues, rain or shine.

Santa will be on sight with his sleigh, and Mrs. Claus will be there, too. Children will receive special gift-filled
stockings, and one lucky child will be chosen that night to light the tree with Santa. The traditional lighting of the tree will be followed by caroling to welcome the holiday season.

“It’s a great community event. We just love the tree lighting because it brings the community together on a special night. Last year, we had about 350 people here on the field. It doesn’t take long, but it’s important. When people drive by on Manor Avenue, (they) see the tree, and it has become the community tree,” noted Dave Patterson, MBA president.

Faculty and Staff Activities

Dr. Robert J. Bookmiller and Kirsten Nakjavani-Bookmiller, government & political affairs, had their article “Canada and the Human Security Network, 1998-2009—RIP?” published in the British Journal of Canadian Studies. This work was funded by Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. For this project, diplomats from Austria, Canada, Costa Rica, Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland were interviewed.

Dr. Natalia Dushkina, physics, gave a presentation, “Brief Mathematics Refresher Lesson Preceding a General Physics Course,” at the 36th annual conference of the American Mathematical Association of Two-year Colleges, November 11-14 in Boston. In addition, Dushkina gave a presentation, “How much a student learns from studying: take-home tests,” at the AAPT New Faculty Workshop Reunion, November 5, in Washington, D.C. Dushkina and Dr. Tariq Gilani, physics, gave a presentation, “The undergraduate optics course at Millersville University,” also at the AAPT Reunion.
Dr. Mehmet Goksu, physics, and Dr. John Wright, industry & technology, received a $6,600 donation in photovoltaic modules from British Petroleum (BP) for alternative energy research and education. In addition, Goksu published an article with co-authors Drs. V. Aravind and J. Heard of Clarion University in the international peer-reviewed physics journal *Latin American Journal of Physics Education*. Their article, titled "Natural cooling of hot water: An experimental study in thermal processes," can be accessed in full from the following link: www.journal.lapen.org.

Dr. Joseph Labant, elementary and early childhood, and Dr. Stratton (Chip) Schaeffer, wellness and sport sciences, recently co-presented and coordinated a session titled “Using Kinesthetic Activities for Including All Students in Social Studies Instruction” at the 2010 Conference for the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies. The event was held at the Lancaster Convention Center. The session included dances of seven different nations that were taught by undergraduate students in Labant and Schaeffer’s fall classes. Students included Jackie Adams (Mexico); Steph Cornwell (Ghana); Jenna Meyers (Israel); Alex Bartlett (Greece); Phil Griffith (Italy); Shane Kishel, Jen Flick and Schaeffer (Philippines) and Dawn Mergenthaler and Labant (France). Passport materials for session participants were created by Diane Fortney.

**Photo caption:** From left to right: Schaeffer, Jenna Meyers, Labant, Jen Flick, Jackie Adams, Alex Bartlett, Shane Kishel, Steph Cornwell, Phil Griffith, Dawn Mergenthaler and Dr. Mark Previte, PCSS President.

Dr. Todd D. Sikora, earth sciences, was recently elected to the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR) Membership Committee. The committee considers applications for election and reelection of UCAR members and academic affiliates (Millersville University is a founding member of the academic affiliates). The committee also regularly reviews the UCAR membership criteria and procedures. In addition, Sikora recently attended the 2010 Science and Energy Research Challenge Poster Competition at Argonne National Laboratory. The competition showcased the research projects of Department of Energy-funded undergraduate students and interns at the national laboratories. Sikora was invited to attend the competition in support of Millersville graduate Travis Toth’s presentation. Toth performed an internship at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory during the summer of 2010. Toth won first place in his category, environmental science.
Dr. Sepi Yalda, earth sciences, and two students, Stephen Baxter ’10 and Robert Junod ’10, both graduates from Millersville’s meteorology program, had their paper based on an undergraduate research project, titled “A climatology of the wintertime jet stream and lower tropospheric temperature over the mid-latitude United States related to global atmospheric oscillations” published in the peer-reviewed Journal of the Pennsylvania Academy of Science. The publication costs for this manuscript were offset through a faculty publication grant. Baxter is a first-year graduate student at the University of Maryland and Junod is a second year graduate student at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. They are both pursuing their master’s in atmospheric sciences.

Retired staff

Jack Cassidy, retired faculty, recently received the Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers (ALER) Laureate Award at the annual ALER conference in Omaha, November 6. The criteria included influence on other reading professionals through mentoring, teaching and other activities; and research, publications and presentations that involve collaboration with students, teachers and other professionals. Cassidy has co-authored more than 40 national publications with junior faculty including many faculty at Millersville. He has also co-authored many national publications with graduate students, many of them from Millersville. In addition, Cassidy gave two presentations in Omaha: “What's Hot in Literacy for 2011” and “Award Winning Teacher Preparation Programs for Teaching Reading.” On December 18, he will retire as associate dean at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Dr. Thomas C. Tirado, professor emeritus of history, has become more involved in the San Diego art scene. In addition to having been named “Outstanding Visual Artist for the San Diego Region” three years in a row, in November he was one of the featured artists of the San Diego Art Institute’s Museum of the Living Artist. The work that was chosen for exhibition is “My Pantheon.” The painting is a diptych in acrylic on two canvases measuring 40”x60.”

Concurrently, in association with the Townley Gallery of Laguna Beach, California, Tirado is exhibiting several recent works in its juried
Who Makes Millersville Special

This issue of the Exchange features Dr. Eric Blazer, associate professor of business administration at Millersville University.

Q: How long have you been working at Millersville University?
A: I am in my 15th year at Millersville.

Q: Where did you go to school? Major?
A: I went to Virginia Tech for both undergraduate and graduate school. As an undergraduate I had a double major in accounting and finance. I then earned a master’s in accounting and my doctorate in finance.

Q: What attracted you to the college you chose?
A: I went to Virginia Tech because I planned on becoming an electrical engineer and Virginia Tech has an outstanding engineering program. That and it had a short one to two page application and tech didn’t require and essay! After my freshman year I did a one year co-op with IBM, after which I changed my major.

Q: What do you like most about Millersville University?
A: The students. My favorite part of the job is the time in the classroom and working one-on-one with students. I wouldn’t be happy at a research institution where teaching takes a back seat to research.

Q: What is your favorite business class to teach? Why?
A: My favorite class to teach is managerial finance. It provides a good blend of my fields,
finance and accounting. More importantly it is a hands-on class that requires students to dig in, use Excel and make a lot of real-world connections.

Q: **What do you find most rewarding about being a professor?**
A: The most rewarding part of being a professor is getting the emails and letters from former students that thank you for challenging them and caring.

Q: **We understand that you’re a runner. How long have you been running?**
A: I have been running for about 25 years. I swam in high school and thought my older brother was bit odd for running cross-country (and other reasons). After graduating from college I began competing in triathlons and couldn’t avoid running if I wanted to finish a race. Now, running is my passion.

Q: **What do you find most rewarding about running?**
A: The most rewarding aspect of running, particularly trail running, is the challenge. Can I run a little faster, or more often these days a little farther? It is a great way to relieve stress and clear my mind.

Q: **As a runner, what goals have you set and accomplished?**
A: I have completed eight marathons and two 50-mile trail runs. It may sound odd, but my biggest goal is to remain healthy and keep running until I am 80. I do a lot of cross-training (usually swimming) and haven’t had any significant injuries for more than 25 years.

Q: **Do you have any other running goals set for yourself?**
A: When I turn 50 I might try a 100-mile trail run or an Ironman triathlon.

Q: **What is one thing (anything) you wish to accomplish in your life?**
A: At this point my biggest goal is that my wife and I stay close and involved with our kids once they leave home.

Q: **What is one thing most people would be surprised to learn about you?**
A: My dad worked for the CIA. As a kid I lived in Korea for three years and Taiwan for two years.

Q: **What do you love about accounting/finance?**
A: There is always something new happening. To stay current you have to keep up with economic, business and political news.

Q: **Why did you choose to be an accounting/finance/business professor?**
A: In college my fiancée’s parents were both professors at Virginia Tech. They had a flexible work schedule, and a marvelous lifestyle. I also enjoyed the one-on-one relationships I had with my undergraduate professors.
Q: What is the hardest part about being a professor?
A: Putting up with the slow pace of change in academia.

Q: What is your favorite food?
A: Pizza.

Q: What do you always carry around in your giant water bottle?
A: Diet Coke! The accountant in me takes advantage of Turkey Hill’s cheap refills.