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KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | Office of Governmental Relations

K-State, Kansas community colleges sign agreements to launch DirectLink

Kansas State University and the state's community colleges have joined to improve the success of transfer students through the creation of DirectLink.

DirectLink is a dual advising initiative between all 19 community colleges in Kansas and K-State. It's designed to support community college students as they transition to bachelor's degree programs at the university by providing consistent and frequent interaction between the student, the community college advisor and the K-State academic advisor.

DirectLink launches this fall with eight degrees offered K-State's colleges of Agriculture Business Administration, Education, Engineering and Human Ecology. The degrees are accounting, agriculture, education, athletic training, civil engineering, early childhood education, elementary education, mechanical engineering, and nutrition and health.

"We are excited about this initiative as it will help community college students complete a bachelor's degree at Kansas State University even more efficiently," said K-State President Richard Myers. "This enhanced interaction and increased support provides great next steps in offering more tools to ensure academic success for all of our students."

Participating students have access to K-State resources, a customized campus visit, degree audits and activities designed specific to DirectLink transfer students. The initiative also will improve the transition to K-State by addressing changes in curriculum or degree requirements early in the students' academic career.

Additional information is available at the DirectLInk website, global.k-state.edu/directlink.

Kansas State University teams awarded more than $2.5 million by National Science Foundation for research instrumentation

Teams led by three Kansas State University researcher have been awarded National Science Foundation Major

Research Instrumentation (NSF MRI) grants. The grants will provide more than $2.5 million to advance understanding of lipids, agriculturally significant gasses and nanoparticles, as well as student training and regional research capacity.

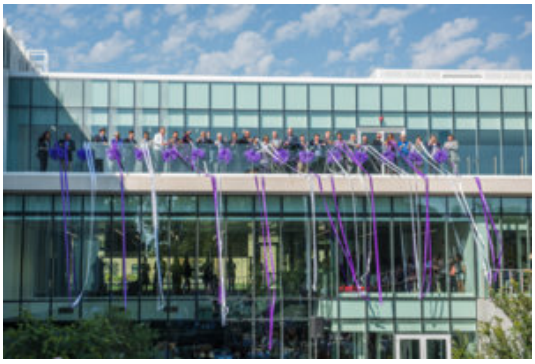
Universities are allowed to submit only three proposals each year to the NSF MRI program, and having all three proposals funded is relatively rare. Out of 154 organizations competing this year, Kansas Sate University was one of only five universities to receive three awards. Beth Montelone, senior associate vice president for research, said the university's proposals likely were successful because the projects demonstrate benefits to more than one field.

"I think one of the reasons all three were funded is that they're all collaborative, interdisciplinary efforts with involvement from investigators from multiple departments and projects," Montelone said.

The largest of the three awards, $1.69 million, will support the development of a new instrument that is the result of a groundbreaking collaboration between physics and agronomy. The project will work to adapt a Nobel Prize-winning technology that precisely measures optical frequencies. The optical-frequency comb allows such exact measurements that it can help researchers tell one molecule from another. The team will work to adapt dual-comb spectroscopy to characterize interactions between soil, plants and atmosphere in crops. Ultimately, they hope the instrument will help agronomists improve crop genetics and feed the world's growing population.

A second award of $496,823 will help researchers enhance food, industrial and energy crops by advancing understanding of lipids, compounds that help plants store energy and conduct other vital biological processes. The Kansas Lipidomics Research Center will purchase a new, powerful mass spectrometer that will improve the speed and specificity of its analyses. The instrument maker is awarding another $50,000 through the SCIEX Academic Partnership program to help maintain the new instrument. The researchers are working to identify and characterize the functions of genes associated with desirable traits in plants, such as cold and heat tolerance. Now that many plant genomic sequences are available, researchers can identify alleles of specific genes associated with desirable traits. Studying lipids helps to characterize the molecular basis of the traits.

The third award of $350,000 will support acquisition of a graphic processing unit (GPU) enabled computer cluster. The GPU-enabled cluster will be used to enhance efforts to gain atomic-level insights into chemical mechanisms and biological interactions of nanoparticles an biomolecular simulations in general. The new cluster will be housed on campus and will be available to other researchers at the university and other colleges and universities in Kansas.



College of Architecture, Planning & Design dedicated Seaton and Regnier Halls

Science Communications Week features NPR science correspondents, National Geographic photographer

The 195,000 square feet of renovated and newly constructed spaces in K-State's College of Architecture, Planning & Design's Seaton Hall and Regnier Hall was formally dedicated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on October 13, 2017.

With 17 new design laboratories housing 47 studio sections, the facility now supports the educational integration across all disciplines and year levels. The spaces also include a 20,000-square-foot fabrication facility, technology-enriched classrooms, conference rooms and mobile technologies, allowing all public spaces to be used for teaching and collaboration in line with the college's aspirations to build the ideal 21st-century educational environment.

The new facility also includes 21 critique/class spaces as well as numerous "convertible" spaces inside and out for lounging, teaching and collaborating; an all-new library, gallery and rooftop conferencing area round out the public amenities of the facility. An additional highlight is the 280-seat auditorium with a 4K-laser projector, state-of-the-art sound system and full lecture capture capabilities.

Bonnie Rush named interim dean of College of Veterinary Medicine

Bonnie Rush has been named interim dean of theCollege of Veterinary Medicine at Kansas State University, effective immediately. Rush will lead the college while a national search is conducted to find a new dean.

During this interim period, Rush will lead all areas of the college, including its academic, research and administrative functions. The college has three academic departments and is home to a number of prestigious research centers and units, including theCenter of Excellence for Emerging and Zoonotic Animal Diseases, Center of Excellence for Vector-Borne Diseases, Beef Cattle Institute and the U.S.-China Center for Animal Health.

A professor of internal equine medicine, Rush's area of clinical expertise is equine respiratory disease with an emphasis on respiratory physiology, immunology and aerosol drug therapy. Rush began her career as a

To communicate science and celebrate big ideas, Kansas State University and community partners have organized the first Science Communications Week for Nov. 6 to 11.

Science Communications Week is part of the Kansas Science Communication Initiative (KSCI) and will incorporate events such as research and the State, Science Cafe, Science on tap and Science Saturday.

KSCI brings together Kansas State University and the community to engage people in talking about science and research. Community partners include the Sunset Zoo and the Flint Hills Discovery Center.

"We're using Science Communication Week to provide opportunities for K-Sate students, faculty and scientists to learn how to best communicate their research," said Michael Herman, associate dean of the Graduate School and one of the event organizers. "We organized the week to jump-start these conversations and let folks know about all the opportunities we have to talk about science."

Highlights of the week include presentations and workshops given by NPR science correspondents Joe Palca and Maddie Sofia and National Geographic photographer Jim Richardson. For a full list of events, visit k-state.edu/scicomm/events.

Biosecurity Research Institute director gives testimony to congressional subcommittee

Dr. Stephen Higgs, associate vice president for research and director of the Biosecurity Research Institute (BRI) at Pat Roberts Hall on the Kansas State University Manhattan campus, testified before the Research and Technology Subcommittee of the U.S. House Science, Space, and Technology Committee on Nov. 2, 2017.

Dr. Higgs' testimony described the agriculture research done at the BRI and the expected role or relationship between BRI and the National Bio and Agro Defense Facility (NBAF) located in Manhattan, KS. The testimony described the important role played by Kansas and Kansas State

faculty member at K-State in 1993. She served as the head of the clinical sciences department from 2006 - mid-2017. She has been a core course coordinator, led curriculum reform and maintained responsibility for clinical outcome assessment.

A national search for the college's new dean will begin later this fall.

DID YOU KNOW?

General Joseph F. Dunford Jr, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will give the next Landon Lecture on Nov. 27, 2017 at 10:30 a.m. in Forum Hall at the K-State Student Union.

University in the field of agriculture research and bio agro security.

Higgs also addressed the capability of K-State and the BRI to provide workforce training in the realm of biosecurity. NBAF will require a workforce of approximately 400 people when it opens in 2022-2023. The BRI research contributes to this workforce training effort because graduate, veterinary, and undergraduate students are working on many of the projects which will ultimately be part of the work in NBAF.

Higgs testimony concluded "awareness of the impact that readily available biological agents would have if they were used against us is increasing - in both ourselves and in those who would harm us. Such action would not only disrupt "putting food on the table," but also would have serious consequences on employment, trade, and the global economy."

K-State Governmental Relations Staff
Sue Peterson, Director of Governmental Relations
Kristin Holt, Assistant to the Director
Caleb Hurst, Legislative Assistant
Lacy Pitts, Legislative Assistant

Contact Information
Office of Governmental Relations
110 Anderson Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506
785-532-6227
www.ksu.edu/govrelations