First University of Oregon Research Innovation Awards announced June 7

The first University of Oregon Research Innovation Awards were presented on June 7. A total of 12 university researchers were recognized for outstanding achievements of creative endeavor, including their many contributions to society and economic development.

Three specific areas were highlighted, covering five years of activity (2001 through 2005): competitively awarded research grant funds (awards presented by Linda Brady, senior vice president and provost); U.S. patents assigned to the university (awards presented by Richard Polley, partner, Klarquist Sparkman, LLP and David Brabender, partner, Endeavor Law Group); and, creation of leading spin-off companies (awards presented by David Chen, general partner, OVP Venture Partners).

This awards ceremony is a reminder that the University of Oregon is a wonderful and vibrant research community," said university President Dave Frohnmayer. "We are fortunate to have researchers who seem to have a limitless curiosity for the world around us and find creative ways to define and address the most fundamental concerns facing our future."

The event was sponsored by TIAA-CREF and hosted by Richard W. Linton, the university's vice president for research. It was the first in a continuing series of annual events celebrating the diversity of the university's achievements in research and scholarship.

The focus of the inaugural event was on the innovation cycle, from basic research to societal application and commercialization. It is expected that the annual event will honor the wide range of the university's scholarly endeavors, including humanities, natural sciences, social sciences, and professional and applied disciplines.

"The University of Oregon has an extraordinarily rich tradition of research and innovation, reflecting the creative contributions of its faculty and associated student researchers and support staff," said Linton. "This occasion serves to recognize our talented researchers in their collective passion to explore and apply new ideas."

The award winners are:

**Competitively awarded research grant fund**
- Thomas J. Dishion, professor of psychology, College of Arts and Sciences
- Hill M. Walker, professor of human development, College of Education
- Monte Westerfield, professor of biology, College of Arts and Sciences

**U.S. patents assigned to the University of Oregon**
- John F.W. Keana, professor emeritus of chemistry, College of Arts and Sciences
- James E. Hutchison, professor of chemistry, College of Arts and Sciences
- S. James Remington, professor of physics, College of Arts and Sciences

**Creation of leading spin-off companies**
- Cerebral Data Systems
Allen Malony, professor of computer and information sciences and
Don M. Tucker, professor of psychology, College of Arts and Sciences

Kaibridge
Kent A. Stevens, professor of computer and information sciences, College of Arts and Sciences

Language Learning Solutions
Carl Falsgraf, director of the Center for Applied Second Language Studies, Office of the Vice President for Research

Mitosciences
Roderick Capaldi, professor emeritus of biology, College of Arts and Sciences and
Michael Marusich, director of the Monoclonal Antibody Facility, Office of the Vice President for Research

About the three award categories:

External grant funding in university research has grown about 50 percent over the past five years and has consistently recorded over $80 million each year for the last two years. The university recognized the top three faculty who were each responsible for more than $15 million in awards in the past five years and have a long tradition of attracting major grant support.

The patent category included the top three individuals who were named on multiple U.S. patent assignments during the period 2001-2005. The event also honored the approximately 200 university researchers who have had inventions disclosed to the university in the prior five years. The university's invention rate disclosure has increased about five-fold relative to five years ago, and now represents about one new invention disclosed per week. Disclosure rates on a per faculty member or per research dollar basis compare favorably to top research institutions nationally.

In addition, the university has dramatically increased its technology transfer productivity in recent years. Licensing revenue has grown about 10-fold in five years, and currently provides about a four percent return on research expenditures, putting the University of Oregon in the top tier of U.S. research universities.

The event also honored researchers who were instrumental in the creation of four university spin-offs in the past several years that have been especially successful. All four companies are housed at the university's Riverfront Research Park. The researchers involved in the spin-offs continue to pursue their university research and teaching, while also working on entrepreneurial outlets for their innovations.

Eight start-up companies have been created over the past five years, with six of those created just in the past two fiscal years. The average rate of start-up creation for major research universities is about one company per $100 million in research expenditures. On that basis, the university is currently creating companies at a rate well above most of its peer research universities nationally.

Klarquist Sparkman, LLP and the Endeavor Law Group provided additional support for the event.

Inside Oregon is the official newsletter for employees of the University of Oregon and is published biweekly.

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