



Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research

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Successful BRIN application creates Vermont Genetics Network (VGN)

VT EPSCoR Staff

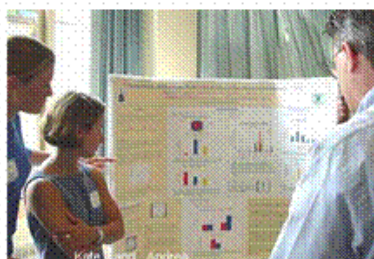
- Director, Christopher W. Allen, Ph.D.
- Associate Director, Judith Van Houten, Ph.D.
- Project Coordinator, Lillian Gamache
- Project Business Manager, Peggy Burbank
- Project Secretary, Marion Green
- BRIN Project Coordinator, Teri Hart

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The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has recently accelerated its efforts to enhance the biomedical sciences in EPSCoR states through its Institutional Development Awards (IDeA) program. The IDeA program has two components; Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) and Biomedical Research Infrastructure Networks (BRIN). Vermont has been very competitive in both programs. Two COBRE awards have been at UVM; one in lung biology and one in neurobiology. Recently the state has received a BRIN award of nearly \$6M over three years to establish the Vermont Genetics Network (VGN). VGN is a collaboration among the University of Vermont, and four baccalaureate colleges to build critical mass and infrastructure in the broad



area of genetics; to increase competitiveness of the new genetics faculty at UVM

and the baccalaureate schools; to increase the number of undergraduates, who go on to biomedical careers from the baccalaureate colleges; to create a human network, support it through electronic communications, and make it sustainable; to provide a new bioinformatics capability in the state; and to increase the diversity of biomedical scientists. VGN Co-Directors are and Judith Van Houten and Chris Allen. To accomplish all of this, a plan is being developed for supporting recruit-

ment of faculty at UVM, creating a Bioinformatics Core (Dr. Jeffrey Bond, Director), a Mentoring Core (Dr. Judith Van Houten, Director), and an Administrative Core (Dr. Christopher Allen, Director) tying all of these components together. VGN is playing the lead role in establishing a microarray facility at UVM. This will allow researchers to establish links between genetics and disease states as well as answering other basic biomedical research questions. Teri Hart is the VGN Project Coordinator and can be reached at (802) 656-4087 or vgn@uvm.edu. The baccalaureate colleges participating in VGN, Middlebury College, Norwich University, Johnson State College and St. Michael's College, are interconnected by a group focused on baccalaureate education chaired by Dr. James Larrabee of Middlebury College. (VGN page 3)

SBIR Phase (0) celebrates 10 years in Vermont

The Vermont EPSCoR SBIR (Small Business Innovation Research) Phase (0) program has generated tremendous results for Vermont's Science and Technology entrepreneurs. This program provides seed funds to assist Vermont companies to be more competitive for federal research and development funds. This program originated in Vermont and is now replicated in all the

other EPSCoR states. Another example of Vermont providing national leadership in connecting research and development to state needs. In 2001, 7 (or 78%) of the 9 SBIR Phase I (up to \$100K/yr) and Phase II (up to \$750K/yr) awards given to Vermont investigators, went to companies who had received Phase 0 awards in previous years. Established in 1992 with

an initial investment of \$20,000 from the Vermont NSF EPSCoR the Phase 0 program has resulted in over \$8M in follow-up activity through October, 2001. Chief Engineer of Green Mountain Radio Research Company and Phase 0 recipient, Frederick H. Raab, Ph.D. agrees: "I feel that the results of these preliminary (continued on page 3)