Tech, Hopkins invest $10 million to combat diseases

By Neysa Call, VBI

Virginia Bioinformatics Institute (VBI) at Virginia Tech and the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Bloomberg School of Public Health announced today a $10 million Tech bioinformatics research collaboration to target human infectious diseases.

Each university will invest a minimum of $1 million per year for five years to better understand tuberculosis, AIDS, malaria, ebola, and other deadly illnesses. Worldwide, more than 17 million people each year succumb to these and other infectious diseases.

This collaboration will provide much-needed information to discern how infectious pathogens spread, how pathogen genomes change over time because of various environmental factors, and how humans respond to pathogens on the molecular, cellular, and organismal level. Technologies for rapid detection, identification, and remediation will be developed as part of this research. VBI and JHU will also pursue significant additional extramural funding for this effort.

“This effort will significantly advance our understanding of interactions between infectious disease pathogens, hosts, and their environments, VBI Director Bruno Sobral said.

With this partnership, we will be able to compare gene regulation across different organisms and evaluate human immune responses to numerous pathogens simultaneously. This enormous amount of data will then be compiled into an integrated pathogen database to form a common asset against these global maladies,” Sobral said.

The bioinformatics capabilities at VBI will allow comparisons of multiple human responses to different pathogens as opposed to traditional models that looked at only a single response for one disease. Experiments that were traditionally conducted on a single pathogen in a petri dish will now be performed on supercomputers housed in VBI’s core computing facility. The new technology will complement the wealth of medical and molecular biology research being conducted by the Bloomberg School.

“We have burning scientific questions we are trying to answer about the nature of many infectious diseases,” said Diane Griffin, professor and chair of the Department of Molecular Microbiology and Immunology at the Bloomberg School. “This technology will enable us to explore new approaches to test these answers and expand our knowledge of parasites and microorganisms,” Griffin said.

“The world has seen infectious-disease outbreaks that have decimated millions of people and little progress is being made to eradicate some of the world’s most serious diseases. It is vital that experts in public health and bioinformatics work together to develop tools to react to epidemic problems and to more importantly, eradicate them. This collaboration will be a crucial component to the well-being of the world,” Griffin said.

(See TECH on 3)

Parasitologist developing test for equine disease

By Jeffrey Douglas

Work is under way in the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine to develop an improved test for equine protozoal myeloencephalitis (EPM), a neurological disorder caused by the parasite Sarcosytis neurona that is considered one of the most serious disease threats in the horse industry.

Under the leadership of David Lindsay, associate professor, Department of Biomedical Sciences and Pathobiology, a research team is attempting to perfect a direct agglutination test for the presence of the parasite that could lead to improved specificity and sensitivity for EPM testing.

EPM causes gait abnormalities, loss of balance, muscle wasting, weakness, paralysis, seizures and even behavioral disorders in its victims.

Initially recognized about 35 years ago, the disorder has received considerable attention among horse owners, veterinarians and equine researchers since a diagnostic test for S. neurona became available about 10 years ago.

EPM is considered the most significant parasitic disease affecting horses in the Americas, according to Lindsay.

Most cases are diagnosed in the summer and fall, according to a major study undertaken by USDA-APHIS’s “Equine ’98” National Animal Health Monitoring System study.

Some seroprevalence testing in states such as California, Colorado, Florida, Kentucky, Ohio and others has suggested that as many as 30 to 60 percent of horses have been exposed to the parasite, yet researchers do not fully understand why some develop clinical signs of EPM and others do not.

Researchers do know that oppossums are the definitive host for S. neurona, and that the parasite is ingested as horses graze on infected pastures. The parasite eventually moves to the horse’s central nervous system.

The disease is best treated with a combination of antimicrobial/antiparasitic drugs, and anti-inflammatory drugs and nutritional supplements are often used as supportive therapy. But it is expensive to treat, can cause lingering problems that can impair athletic performance, and can affect a horse so severely it must be euthanized.

Improving the existing diagnostic tests can help veterinarians begin treatment earlier, and help them better gauge the progress of their therapeutic interventions.

The diagnostic test for EPM is a Western Blot that tests cerebrospinal fluid for the presence of antibodies to S. neurona.

The agglutination test under development in college laboratories actually quantifies the level of antibodies present as they clump around a foreign agent.

The test promises to be more accurate, less expensive, and will not require specialized laboratory equipment. Validation testing among horses is under way with the cooperation of Anne Cook, Sharon Witosky and Virginia Barchner-Maxwell, all with the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences.

While promising, the research will require another two years to complete, so commercial application of the new diagnostic test is likely years away.

(See CITIDEL on 4)

New donor-recognition society established

By Terry McGauley

A select group of longtime supporters of Virginia Tech has been honored as chart-t members of a newly established donor-recognition society.

The supporters, whose lifetime giving to the university totals between $50,000 and $100,000, are the first to qualify for the Caldwell Society, which carries the name of the first student enrolled at Virginia Tech, William Addison Caldwell. The university’s oldest donor-recognition organization, the Ut Prosim Society, was founded in 1987 and will now include donors whose lifetime giving totals $100,000 or more.

“The Caldwell Society will give recognition to many of the university’s most loyal supporters,” said Elizabeth Flanagan, vice president of Development and University Relations.

“These are individuals who have contributed significantly to the quality of this institution and to the strength of its faculty and programs. They have made it possible for many young men and women to pursue their educational goals.”

Society members will be encouraged to attend occasional events and activities on campus and will receive university news of interest throughout the year. Members will also receive a specially designed certificate of membership signed by President Charles Steger.

To qualify for membership, an individual’s contributions during his or her lifetime must total between $50,000 and $100,000 and must have been received by the university. Contributions in the form of outright gifts, payments on pledges, receipt of matching gifts, the deductible value of deferred gifts, and the adjusted value of in-kind gifts are credited toward membership.

Tech-led group to build CITIDEL

By Sally Harris

A consortium of universities led by Virginia Tech has received nearly $1 million in grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to build the Computing and Information Technology Interactive Digital Educational Library (CITIDEL).

The CITIDEL will be built as part of the National Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Digital Library (NSDL) under construction with funding from the NSF. According to its web site, the NSDL “will offer, via the Internet, high-quality materials for science, mathematics, engineering and technology education.” The NSDL, to be released in the fall of 2002, “is likely to be the largest and most heterogeneous digital library yet built.”

“The accessibility of its collections and range of services will enable the NSDL to enhance education in all disciplines across the nation,” according to the web site. “In the words of NSF program staff, the NSDL ‘will strongly affect education at all levels, including pre-K-12, undergraduate, graduate, and life-long learning, by providing anytime, anywhere access to a rich array of authoritative and reliable interactive materials and learning environments.’”

The consortium, of which Virginia Tech is a part, will establish, operate, and maintain CITIDEL, the part of the NSDL that will “serve the computing-education community in all its diversity and at all levels.” Topics for the consortium include “computer engineering, computer science, information science, information systems, information technology, software engineering, and all discipline-specific topics.”

(See CITIDEL on 4)

Police officers attend training classes

By Sherri Box

The Virginia Tech Police Department (VTPD) constantly strives to provide a safe environment to work, live and study for faculty and staff members and students.

To help further that goal, 17 Virginia Tech Police Department officers were in “school” recently learning the importance of working together as a team, learning supervision skills, decision-making, standards of conduct and ethics.

The classes were sponsored by Cardinal Criminal Justice Academy in Salem, who contracted with the Institute of Police Technology and Management (IPTM) to provide this training.

IPTM was established in 1980 to provide (See POLICE on 4)
**Activities**

**Events**

**Friday, 25**
- *CommonHealth Program*, 12:10 to 12:55 p.m., Southgate Personnel Classroom.

**Saturday, 26**
- Science Saturday, 11 a.m. to noon, VTMNH.
- Chamber Music, 8 p.m., Squires Recital Salon.
- Women’s Basketball, 7 p.m.: At Notre Dame.
- Men’s Basketball, 7 p.m.: At Syracuse.

**Sunday, 27**
- Chamber Music, 3 p.m., Squires Recital Salon.
- YMCA Hikes: 1:30 p.m., YMCA parking lot.

**Tuesday, 29**
- Women’s Basketball, 7 p.m., Cassell Coliseum: Connecticut.
- *CommonHealthProgram*, 12:10 to 12:55 p.m., DBHCC conference room A.

**Seminars**

**Friday, 25**
- Highlands in Chemistry, 11:15 a.m., 3 Davidson: Y. Kazakevich, Seton Hall.
- MCBB, 12:20 to 1:10 p.m., Fralin auditorium: Sue Emerson, NAID/NIH.
- STS, 4 p.m., 132 Lane: Joel Hagen, Radford University.

**Monday, 28**
- Women’s Basketball, 7 p.m., Cassell Coliseum: Connecticut.
  - *CommonHealthProgram*, 12:10 to 12:55 p.m., DBHCC conference room A.

**Nominees for XCaliber Award**

To recognize the outstanding contributions to learning that faculty members and teams of faculty and staff members make as they develop coursework using technology, the Center for Innovation in Learning has developed the XCaliber Award (shorthand for exceptional, high-caliber work). This award is granted to individuals and teams who have made major contributions to courseware development in the last two years. Information about the process is available at http://www.edtech.vt.edu/cil/xcaliber.html. Nominations are due March 1.

**Off-campus housing fair scheduled**

An off-campus housing fair is scheduled for Tuesday, February 12, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Squires Commonwealth Ballroom. Faculty and staff members seeking housing in the New River Valley area can receive free information at the fair. For more details, call 1-3466 or visit [http://www.vtch.una.edu/](http://www.vtch.una.edu/)

**VTMNH offering Saturday Science**

The Virginia Tech Museum of Natural History is offering Saturday Science tomorrow from 11 a.m. to noon for K-3 grades and their parents.

**Bullets**

**Center for Innovation in Learning offers grants**

The Center for Innovation in Learning (CIL) aims to develop on-line courses and provide related infrastructure, technical support and assessment of results in targeted curricular areas.

Faculty members are invited to submit proposals for grants to use in course development to integrate technology into teaching in four curricular areas: Distance-learning programs for graduate and professional students (two to three awards); core-curriculum courses with high student demand (two to four awards); and multiple-use courses that could be used for graduate and professional continuing education such as course modules, certificate programs, etc. (two to three awards).

Information about submitting proposals is available at [http://www.edtech.vt.edu/cil/CIL_Grant_Appl.pdf](http://www.edtech.vt.edu/cil/CIL_Grant_Appl.pdf). Proposals are due to the center by February 11.

**University to participate in V-Day movement**

*The Vagina Monologues* will be performed at Squires Haymarket Theatre on February 8 and 9, at 7:30 p.m. and February 10, at 2 p.m.

The ground-breaking, Obie Award-winning play will be performed as part of the V-Day 2002 College Campaign.

The benefit performance is sponsored by the V-Day Initiative, a student organization at Virginia Tech, with support from the Women’s Center and the Department of Theatre Arts.

V-Day is a world-wide movement to stop violence against women and girls and to proclaim Valentine’s Day as the day to celebrate women and demand the end of abuse. Inspired by the world première of *The Vagina Monologues* at HERE, off-Broadway theatre in New York City, the first V-Day was held in 1998.

Virginia Tech joins 547 other college campuses across the United States and around the world mounting productions of *The Vagina (See UNIVERSITY on 4)"*
**Employment**

**Classified Positions**

The following classified positions are currently available. Position details, specific application procedures/position closing dates may be found on Personnel Services web site http://www.pee.vt.edu. Positions are also listed on the Job Line, a 24-hour recorded message service. For information on all job listings, call 1-3500.

**Full Time**

Seven full food-service positions available.

**Administrative Assistant**

000729R, PB 3, President’s Office.

**Administrative Staff Assistant**

001771Y, PB 3, VP for Administration/Treasurer.

**Electronics Specialist**

001308B, PB 5, AOE.

**Housekeeping Worker**

003400H, PB 1, RDP.

**Senior Systems Administrator**

006602J, PB 2, University Libraries.

**Lab Instrument Maker**

001747H, PB 4, Physics.

**Laboratory Specialist**

007860H, PB 3, CVM.

**Medical Technologist**

002596H, PB 4, VTH.

**Radiologic Technologist**

002394M, PB 3, VTH.

**Senior Systems Administrator**

000241G, PB 6, Mathematics.

**Sous Chef**

007881H, PB 3, RDP.

**Sous Chef**

000404H, PB 3, RDP.

**Student Services Assistant**

007886R, PB 3, Graduate School.

**Website Designer**

006824S, PB 4, WARD.

**Part Time**

**Animal Care Technician**

0002556M, PB 2, CVM.

**Animal Care Technician**

0022914M, PB 2, CVM.

**Computer Support Technician**

003324R, PB 3, VTH.

**Graphic Artist**

002056H, PB 3, RDP.

**Virginia Tech**

**Virginia Tech does not discriminate against employ-"KEY"
es, students, or applicants on the basis of race, color, gender, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran status, national origin, religion, or political affiliation. Any-"Site"one having questions concerning discrimination or at-"Present"cessibility regarding the programs described in this newspaper should contact the Equal Opportunity Affirmative Action Office: 540-231-7500 (v), 540-231-9460 (TTY).

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**ICU Veterinary Technologist Large Animal**

W202218M, PB 2, VTH.

**In-Vehicle Experimenter**

007886B, PB 2, VTTC.

**ISB Program Assistant**

002336M, PB 4, Biochemistry.

**Laboratory Specialist**

002335M, PB 3, APS.

**Laboratory Specialist**

002336M, PB 3, Biochemistry.

**Office Services Specialist**

0020596J, PB 2, SCCenter.

**Research Applications Programmer**

0023347R, PB 4, VTI.

**Research Assistant**

0023351M, PB 3, AAE.

**Veterinary Technician**

002340M, PB 4, VTH.

**Research Specialist**

007465M, PB 3, Horticulture.

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**OFF CAMPUS**

**Adult Program Assistant**

006604J, PB 2, Prince William County.

**Adult Program Assistant**

006602J, PB 2, HNCF.

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**LETTER AND RESPONSE**

An open letter to the campus Police Department and Parking Services:

I, for one, am very angry at having someone riding a bicycle whizz past me at speeds exceeding 20 to 30 miles an hour.

Four bicyclists passed me today as I walked from Randy Hall, to Overlow Hall, all four exceeding the speed limit automobile drivers must maintain when traveling around the Drill Field. My personal observations have been that the bicyclists who travel the fastest usually are wearing a helmet and knee pads, while the individuals they zoom past have no such protection.

It is time the campus police take some action before someone gets seriously injured or worse. I have seen first-hand what happens to a pedestrian who has a run-in with a fast-moving bicycle and it is not a pretty sight. Bicycles, skateboards, and roller skates have no place on a sidewalk with pedestrians.

Perhaps, if those of us non-bicyclists write to the campus police and Parking Services, maybe we can get some of their ticket-writing employees to stop issuing summons to faculty and staff members unable to find parking spaces and start taking some dramatic action to stop the illegal and dangerous practice of riding bicycles on sidewalks.

Judy Poff, Water Center

By Sally Harris

The bumbling servant who causes complications by doing things such as mixing up letters, but often brings about a happy ending.

An old, lecherous, but wealthy, businessman wearing a helmet and knee pads, while the individuals they zoom past have no such protection.

These are a few of the stock characters who make up commedia dell’arte, comedy presented by the actors working out situations, a framework or a plot, and adding to the audience says. If you saw the play two nights in a row, “Ifigenia in Tauride”,” Latta said.

The alumni also want to get students interested in interning with TriArts, she said. “Also to open the door,” Loevner said. “We love Virginia Tech. Our theater is so based on what we learned here, and we hope to provide professional experience for students and provide us the ability to do workshops and educational programs and then go back and make what we do even better.”

**Theatre Arts alumni give workshops in commedia dell’arte**

By Sally Harris

TRIARTS INC.

“An open letter to the campus Police Department and Parking Services:

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Judy Poff, Water Center

The audience is very important in commedia. “Usually,” said Don Drapeau, head of Virginia Tech’s Department of Theatre Arts, “the actors work out situations, a framework or skeleton situation for the characters to build on but then, during the production, they improvise according to audience reactions. The emphasis is on the physical. Commedia dell’arte is in its purest form was mime, but they added sound and music as entrances and exits.

The actors work it through and have certain things to do, but always have spontaneous responses, for example, to something the audience says. ‘What do you do the play two nights in a row, it would be different.”

Another reason for the alumni’s visit to campus was to help prepare students to audition for two Moliere plays that were presented this fall. Moliere’s plays require some commedia dell’arte,” Drapeau said.

Gregory Justice and Susanna Rinehart of Virginia Tech’s Department of Theatre Arts each directed one of the two Moliere pieces.

**Tech**

Continued from 1

the global community,” said President Charles Steiger.

The project will begin in February 2002. During its first phase, researchers will study how disease parasites resuscitate from dormancy, model cellular responses to viruses, collect data from malaria-outbreak sites in cooperation with local medical centers, and de-velop gene chips to assess virulence factors of pathogens. The second phase will involve computational analysis to understand mechanisms of disease resistance and the development of new tools for prevention, diagnosis, and cure.

“The future looks bright for this project, particularly in the areas of vaccine development and therapy,” said Alfred Sommer, dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine.

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**Contact:** Raymond Smoot, Jr., 312 Burress (0142), Review begins Feb. 15.

**Forestry Extension Associate—Foresty.** Contact: Robert Shaffer, 228 Chesteam (0324). Deadline is March 1.

**University Students-Union Activities.** Assistant Director for Programming. Contact: David O’Rourke, 225 Squires (0318). Review begins Feb. 15.

**University Provost.** Fiscal Officer. Contact: Dixon Hanson, 330 Burress (0132). Review begins Feb. 15.

**Virginia Cooperative Extension.** Extension Agent, Agriculture/Natural Resources (internal search). Contact: Fitzhugh Umberger, 121 Hunches (0437). Review begins Jan. 25.

**Biological Sciences/Pathobiology.** Postdoctoral Associate. Contact: Stephen Boyle, 1410 Prices Fork Rd., Blacksburg, VA 24060-342. Review begins Jan. 15.
Mack receives national entomology teaching award
By Stewart MacInnis
Timothy P. Mack, professor of entomology and head of the Department of Entomology, has received the top teaching award for 2001 from the Entomological Society of America.

The society’s Distinguished Achievement Award in Teaching was presented to Mack in December at the society’s annual meeting in San Diego, Calif. Only one teaching award is presented by the 6,500-member society each year.

Mack teaches the largest on-line entomology course in the country at Virginia Tech. The undergraduate course, “Insects in Human Society,” is delivered via the World Wide Web to hundreds of students in North America.

Mack considered in the award were the 13 years Mack taught traditional classroom courses at Auburn University before joining the faculty at Virginia Tech in 1994.

In addition to his academic duties, Mack is assistant dean for information technology for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

“In many ways this is a departmental accomplishment,” Mack said. “Putting on a course like [Insects in Human Society] requires the help a number of people.”

American Indian religious-freedom documentary on campus today
By Sally Harris
Malinda Maynor will present a free showing of the widely acclaimed film on American Indian religious freedom, In the Light of Reverence, today from 4 to 7 p.m., in the Donaldson Brown Hotel and Conference Center auditorium.

The 76-minute documentary focuses on the struggles of the Waite (California), Hopi (Arizona), and Lakota (South Dakota, Wyoming) to practice their ceremonies and protect their sacred sites amidst threats from rock climbers, miners, and skiers.

“In the Light of Reverence explores American culture’s relationship to nature in three places considered sacred by native peoples…”

Maynor is a citizen of the Lumbee Nation, a graduate student in history at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and co-producer of the film. She will visit Virginia Tech for this special screening and will facilitate a question-and-answer session immediately following the film.

In OTHER NEWS

CITIDEL giving sets another record
The Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign (CVC) at Virginia Tech has set another record for charitable giving in the 2001 season.

The total amount raised was $230,988 which exceeded the previous record set the year before at $222,657. Steve Mouras, chair of the CVC Steering Committee, said he was very feel good about the support they are providing to the CITIDEL, “it is clear that CITIDEL will continue to support CITIDEL,” he said. The Undergraduate course, “Insects in Human Society,” is delivered via the World Wide Web to hundreds of students in North America.

POLICE
Continued from 1
management, traffic and specialty training to municipal, county, state and federal law enforcement officers. Since its establishment, the institute’s role in the police community has expanded to include publishing texts and serving as management consultants to police organizations throughout the world. IPTM annually trains more than 12,000 civilian and military law enforcement personnel from throughout the United States and abroad. IPTM contracts with law enforcement agencies throughout the country.

The institute’s faculty consists of professionals who combine practical law enforcement technical and management skills with many years of police training experience and the academic backgrounds necessary to effectively train in-service law enforcement officers. The full time staff is supplemented by a highly qualified adjunct faculty from government, private industry and the academic community. Participants who successfully complete the course of instruction in any IPTM program will receive an appropriate certificate to recognize their achievement.

UNIVERSITY
Continued from 2
Monologues” between February 8 and March 8. Hailed by the New York Times as “funny and "poignant"” and by the Daily News as “intelligent” and “courageous,” “The Vagina Monologues,” chronicles the mystery, humor, pain, power, wisdom, outrage and excitement buried in women’s experiences.

Tickets are $10 for adults and $8 for students (suggested donation) and may be purchased (or reserved) by calling 1-7635. Proceeds from the production will benefit the Women’s Resource Center of the New River Valley. Students with a valid Virginia Tech student ID are admitted free.

For more information, call 953-0386.

BLACK HISTORY
Continued from 2
a semi-formal dining event that includes a fashion show, cultural performances, and an awards ceremony for the College of Arts and Sciences. For information, call 953-0386.

February 26—“Does Racism Still Exist?” at 7:30 p.m., Squires Brush Mountain Room A, a panel discussion. For information, call 552-9216.

February 28—Highlights of significant contributions of pioneer men of Phi Beta Sigma to civil rights and racism, 7 p.m., Squires Black Cultural Center, a potluck showcase and coloring book contest display. For information, call Kweku Quansah, 951-8904.

Persons with disabilities who desire assistance or accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean of Students, which coordinates Black History Month, at 1-3787 TTY or 1-8718.