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LATEST NEWS

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Consortium of Tennessee Universities Receives \$20 Million Grant from the National Science Foundation

09/09/2010

Governor Phil Bredesen today joined a consortium of public and private universities in the state to announce a \$20 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to boost the state's energy-related research and education efforts. The grant is one of the largest ever awarded in Tennessee by the NSF.

A coalition of scientists, faculty and students from 11 public and private universities in Tennessee and Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) will be grouped together into "network nodes" for conducting research, mentorship and outreach.

"The research funded by this grant will further advance our leadership in the area of clean energy technology development and enhance our efforts to expand educational opportunities in the STEM disciplines of science, technology, engineering and math," Bredesen said. "I'm especially pleased that public and private higher education and research institutions partnered with one another to collaborate and win this grant funding."

The grant of \$20 million over five years was awarded through the National Science Foundation's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) Research Infrastructure Improvement Program. While eligible since 2002, Tennessee has not previously won an EPSCoR Research Infrastructure grant.

The funded project will draw upon the state's expanding energy industry and bring researchers from Tennessee universities and ORNL together to boost energy-related research and education across the state. The award is designed to encourage students to pursue the fields of science, technology, engineering and math, helping the state produce a more advanced workforce.

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"Tennessee will be hard-pressed to advance among states or even hold its own without strengthening its science, engineering and technology base. This sector will create jobs to meet challenges in energy, the environment, healthcare and more," said Dennis Hall, vice provost for research at Vanderbilt University. "The grant will enable Tennessee's higher education institutions to work together for the long-term greater good of the state."



For
Kids



Executive
Residence









Books
From Birth



Internship
Opportunities

Specifically, the grant will fund:

-  Awards to new faculty at non-research extensive institutions
-  Scholarships/stipends for graduate students participating in academic bridge programs between Fisk University, Tennessee State University, Vanderbilt University and other research universities
-  Summer research experience for undergraduates
-  Summer mini-sabbaticals for high school, community college and four-year college faculty
-  Outreach to K-12 classrooms
-  Summer internships and a yearlong undergraduate training program




Many of these opportunities will be available for faculty and staff from all Tennessee colleges and universities.

Faculty from 11 institutions are committed to participate in the nodes. The institutions include:

-  East Tennessee State University
-  Fisk University
-  King College
-  Middle Tennessee State University
-  Oak Ridge National Laboratory
-  Tennessee State University
-  Tennessee Technological University
-  University of Memphis
-  University of Tennessee, Knoxville
-  University of Tennessee Space Institute
-  Vanderbilt University

"Tennessee's selection for this grant is a demonstration of the superb collaborative effort of researchers in the University of Tennessee System, the Tennessee Board of Regents System and Vanderbilt University and ensures that the state will advance its agenda in alternative energy science and technology," said Paula Myrick Short, vice chancellor for academic affairs for the Tennessee Board of Regents.

These collaborative efforts and the research of TN-SCORE will focus on three main areas:

-  Advanced solar conversion and innovation
-  Components and devices for energy storage and conversion
-  Nanostructures for enhancing energy efficiency

"The research focus of TN-SCORE was strategically selected to align with Tennessee's economic priorities and complement existing research strengths across the state," said UT Executive Vice President and TN-SCORE Principal Investigator David Millhorn. "The base collaborations built through TN-SCORE will make all Tennessee institutions more competitive for additional research funding in the future."

TN-SCORE also will work with guidance from the Tennessee Strategic Research Board, an operating committee of the Tennessee Technology Development Corporation.

Under Gov. Phil Bredesen's leadership, Tennessee has launched the Biofuels Initiative and Volunteer State Solar Initiative, and has seen large solar energy product companies such as Wacker Chemie and Hemlock Semiconductor locate in the state.

For more information about EPSCoR, visit <http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?org=EPSC>.

 LIST

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