



Monday, March 19, 2001

Biology conference showcases OU student research

By **Jeff Samoray**, *OU Web Writer*

The OU **Biological Sciences Department** is offering a unique forum for its students to share their talents and research findings as well as gain valuable experience in their field.

The department is hosting the 24th Annual Student Research Conference in Biological Sciences on Sunday, March 25, from 1-4 p.m. in Room 168 of the Science and Engineering Building. The conference is open to students and their families, faculty, staff and the public.

Among this year's presentations are laboratories on cancer research, DNA vaccines for dealing with parasitic viruses and cell biology.

The conference is modeled after professional scientific meetings, with 15-minute presentations and poster presentations. Of the ten participating students, five are undergraduates.

Biology professor and conference coordinator Keith Berven said the conferences began in 1969 after the department received a grant from the National Science Foundation to encourage undergraduate research. He added that the high-quality work is solid preparation for future professional endeavors.

"The presentations are done in collaboration with a faculty member and tend to be publication-quality research," Berven said. "It gives the students a chance to know how it feels to do a professional presentation, which many will go on to do. It's important to the department because a big part of what science is involves sharing your research. Several of the presentations will result in a professional publications in peer review journals."

The conference also is a large reason why the department received a four-year, \$600,000 grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Berven said.

Biological Sciences Department chairman Virinder Moudgil said the faculty assistance on the presentations represents Oakland University at its best.

"Our department believes that the accomplishments of our faculty are incomplete without the accomplishments of our students," Moudgil said. "The conference is really training ground for our students to go on to bigger and better things. The level of presentation is remarkably very high. As a member of the audience, you're just in awe of the high quality of their presentations, which showcase the student/teacher partnership. It's mentorship at its very best. And OU allows for that. We're big enough to do the big things, but still small enough to allow for this kind of mentorship."

For more information on the conference, contact Keith Berven at (248) 370-3581 or berven@oakland.edu. A reception is scheduled before the lecture, starting at 11:30 a.m.

SUMMARY

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