

KU Discovery & Innovation

News from KU Research

October 2015

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Higuchi-KU Endowment Awards Announced

Faculty members from KU and K-State have been named recipients of the state's most prestigious recognition for scholarly excellence: the [Higuchi-KU Endowment Research Achievement Awards](#). This year's recipients are: **Paulette Spencer**, Ackers Distinguished Professor of Mechanical Engineering; **Michael Wehmeyer**, Ross and Mariana Beach Professor of Special Education; **David Nualart**, Black-Babcock Distinguished Professor of Mathematics; and **Stephen Welch**, Professor of Agronomy, K-State.



Spencer



Wehmeyer



Nualart



Welch

The four will be recognized Tuesday, November 10 during an invitation-only ceremony at the Lied Center. Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little will speak, as will Jim Tracy, vice chancellor for research. Past Higuchi Award recipients who attend also will be recognized.

The awards are given in four categories: humanities and social sciences, basic sciences, biomedical sciences and applied sciences. They were established in 1981 by Takeru Higuchi, a distinguished professor at KU from 1967 to 1983, and his wife, Aya. The awards recognize the exceptional long-term research accomplishments of faculty at Kansas Board of Regents universities. Each award includes a citation and a \$10,000 award for ongoing research efforts.

Policy Conference Focus: 'Economic Opportunity in Kansas'

KU's Institute for Policy & Social Research will hold its annual [Kansas Economic Policy Conference](#) on Thursday, October 22, from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Kansas Union. This year's theme is "Economic Opportunity in Kansas: What Does the Future Hold?"

Keynote speakers will be Kenneth Kriz, Regents Distinguished Professor of public finance at Wichita State and director of its Kansas Public Finance Center; and Gary Brunk, executive director of the Kansas Association of Community Action Programs. Panelists represent a variety of perspectives:

- **J. Bradford DeLong**, Professor of Economics, University of California, Berkeley and Washington Center for Equitable Growth;
- **Timothy Kane**, Research Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University;
- **Patricia Clark**, State Director of Kansas, USDA Rural Development;
- **Shannon Cotsoradis**, President and CEO, Kansas Action for Children;
- **Shawna Chapman**, Senior Analyst, Kansas Health Institute;
- **Senator Jim Denning**, Kansas Senate District 8, Overland Park;
- **Representative Melissa Rooker**, Kansas House District 25, Fairway; and
- Panel host **Jim McLean**, Executive Editor, Kansas Health Institute News Service.

The [full agenda is at the website and registration is done online](#). The \$55 conference fee includes lunch. This conference is co-sponsored by the Office of the Provost and the Kansas Health Institute.



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Baxendale Innovation Award Goes to Blagg, Dobrowsky for Reata Success

Outstanding success in pharmaceutical research and technology commercialization has resulted in special recognition for two University of Kansas faculty members.



Brian Blagg (left), the Lester and Betty Mitscher Professor of medicinal chemistry, and Rick Dobrowsky, professor of pharmacology and toxicology, are co-recipients of KU Innovation and Collaboration's 2015 James Baxendale Innovation Award. It honors persons whose

research has resulted in significant advances and commercial opportunities for the university.

The award presentation was made October 7 at the Bioscience & Technology Business Center during the BioKansas BioBreak networking reception that followed the half-day "A Celebration of Innovation: A Startup Showcase." Previous Baxendale Award recipients are Cory Berkland, professor in the Department of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering and the Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, and Lisa Stehno-Bittel, professor and chair of the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science in the KU School of Health Professions.

Blagg and Dobrowsky were cited for research that led to a major licensing agreement last year with Reata Pharmaceuticals of Irving, TX for a portfolio of drug technologies. The two are exploring the potential use of "novologues" for treating a complication of diabetes – diabetic peripheral neuropathy – that affects 60 to 70 percent of patients with diabetes. Novologues also show promise in treating cancer and neurodegenerative diseases.



Wally Meyer (left), director of entrepreneurship programs in the KU School of Business, participated in a Startup Showcase session on "The Commercialization Ecosystem at KU." More than 80 faculty, staff, students and community members attended the half-day event at the Bioscience & Technology Business Center.

Reata is working with Blagg and Dobrowsky on a strategy for collaboration with KU. The company expects to fund new research at KU while it develops the technologies it has licensed.

"A Celebration of Innovation: A Startup Showcase" provided an opportunity to see KU startup companies commercializing the latest life science, medical device, and cutting-edge technologies generated as a result of KU research. Participants included those interested in licensing, commercializing, investing or otherwise becoming involved with getting new discoveries to the marketplace.

Jeff Vitter, executive vice chancellor and provost, made opening remarks. A KU panel on "The Commercialization Ecosystem at KU" was followed by an industry panel on "Technology Acquisition." Later, there were presentations by six faculty startups and five student startups. [The full agenda is online.](#)



At the Showcase, Austin Barone (left), a KU finance major and founder of [Just Play Sports Solutions](#), won the student company "pitch" competition. He presented on his startup company and its outlook before a panel of external judges. Barone received a certificate from Jeff Vitter, provost and executive vice chancellor, and will present in January during the regional "[Pipeline Innovator of the Year](#)" event in Kansas City.

Research Notes

KU Research Offers Federal Public Access Guidance

In February 2013, John Holdren, director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), issued a memorandum requiring all federal agencies with more than \$100 million in annual R&D expenditures to provide increased public access to the results of federally funded research.

This policy requires grant recipients whose research results are published in peer-reviewed journals to submit the final, accepted manuscript to the federal granting agency or designated repository upon acceptance of the article for publication (or the final published version if approved by the publisher).

In 2005, the NIH began a voluntary program which later became mandatory. Many other federal agencies now require compliance with the open access policy.

The KU Office of Research has [developed a resource page](#) to assist you in finding agency-specific requirements. KU Libraries has [additional information online](#) as well.

Goffman is Next Humanities Lecturer



Alice Goffman (left), an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, will present the **second Humanities Lecture Series presentation of the 2015-16 year** on Wednesday, October 21 at 7:30 p.m. in The Commons at Spooner Hall. Her talk builds upon her 2014 book, *On the Run:*

Fugitive Life in an American City. The program is free and open to the public.

Goffman believes the 40-year “War on Drugs” has done little to curb drug use or sales in the U.S. It has, however, created a little-known surveillance state in America’s most disadvantaged neighborhoods. Her talk will examine the largely hidden world of police beatings, court fees, sentencing hearings, and low level warrants that pervade daily life for young people in one poor Black neighborhood in Philadelphia.



JIM TRACY (LEFT), VICE CHANCELLOR FOR RESEARCH, was the featured speaker September 25 at the monthly luncheon meeting of the **KU Postdoctoral Association**.

Tracy discussed his role at KU, his own experiences as a postdoc, and the support provided to KUPA by KU Research. His presentation coincided with National Postdoc Appreciation Week.

The next KUPA luncheon meeting is Friday, October 23, from noon-1 p.m. in the Relays Room at Burge Union. A panel of current postdoctoral researchers will discuss their specific fellowships, both local and national, and provide tips for creating successful applications. Lunch is free, but registration at the website is requested by October 16.

KU ‘Science to Art’ at KCALSI Dinner



KU bioengineering doctoral student Saba Ghazvini (above) and bioengineering postdoc Adam Mellott were featured in a video presentation at the **Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute Annual Dinner** September 30.

The two were recognized for their “Science to Art” submissions, which were auctioned at the dinner to support STEM and art (STEAM) education programs.

Ghazvini and Mellott attended as guests of KCALSI. Other guests included KU graduate students Eileen Cadel, Bioengineering; Doug Orsi, Medicinal Chemistry; Haifa Alhadyian, Olivia Arizmendi and Kawal Kaur, Molecular Biosciences; Lorena Antunez and Michael McNiff, Pharmaceutical Chemistry; and Mohammed Almutairi and Suyu Wang, Pharmacology and Toxicology.



Upcoming Topic is ‘Food Research, Policy’

Red Hot Research brings together scholars from all disciplines, in response to the call set forth in KU’s *Bold Aspirations* strategic plan. The format is simple: short, slide-based talks that introduce audiences to a topic.

The next edition is scheduled for 4 p.m. on Friday, October 23, in The Commons at Spooner Hall. The topic is “Food Research, Policy and Implementation.” Red Hot Research is open to everyone and refreshments will be served following the presentations.

Presenters will be Dietrich Earnhart, Economics; Paul Stock, Sociology/Environmental Studies Program; Helen Schnoes, Food Systems Coordinator, Douglas County; Elizabeth Stigler, Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies; and Eric Rath, History. The program will be emceed by Hannah Britton, Political Science.



THE “**ENTREPRENEURS @ KU**” PROGRAM WAS **RECOGNIZED** **SEPTEMBER 29** IN ANCHORAGE at the annual summit of the University Economic Development Association (UEDA). Julie Nagel, interim associate vice chancellor for innovation and entrepreneurship (second from right), made a formal plenary session presentation that summit participants selected as the best among four finalists in the Innovation and Entrepreneurship category of the Awards of Excellence program. Nagel is shown with the award certificate, flanked by UEDA officials.



THE **SECOND KU TECHNOLOGY TUESDAY NETWORKING** **EVENT OF THE YEAR** TOOK PLACE **SEPTEMBER 22** at the Bioscience & Technology Business Center Main Facility. Kevin Hahn, with **NextSource Biotechnology** in Topeka (left), and Eric Obersteadt of **JobsIncubator** in De Soto (right) were among the many campus and community members who came together to learn about partnering opportunities in several leading areas of research. KU Innovation and Collaboration licensing staff made presentations, and a reception followed. The next Technology Tuesday event is set for December 8.

Researcher Kudos

- Recipients of **\$10,000 Starter Grants from The Commons** are three cross-disciplinary research teams comprised of **Rachel Krause**, School of Public Affairs and Administration; **Ward Lyles**, School of Architecture, Design & Planning, and **Uma Outka**, School of Law; **Michael Vitevitch**, Psychology, and **Arienne Dwyer**, Anthropology and Institute for Digital Research in the Humanities; and **Mary Anne Jordan**, Visual Art and **Caroline Chaboo**, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology and the Biodiversity Institute.
- **Devon Mihesuah**, Cora Lee Beers Price Professor of humanities, is the author of “Sustenance and Health among the Five Tribes in Indian Territory, Post-Removal to Statehood,” published in the April issue of *Ethnohistory*.
- **Adrian Melott**, professor of physics and astronomy, is the author of “A possible role for stochastic radiation events in the systematic disparity between molecular and fossil dates,” forthcoming in the book *Earth and Life II*.
- Three Strategic Initiative Grant Level I awards were announced in May, but the level of funding was not yet confirmed. The three projects, lead investigators and amounts are as follows:
 - “VENTURES Satellite Mission for Ice Bed Imaging and Mapping of Basal Conditions,” **Rick Hale**, Aerospace Engineering, \$127,955, one year;
 - “Psychosocial Stress as a Vulnerability Factor for Problem Gambling,” **David Jarmolowicz**, Applied Behavioral Science, \$271,613, three years; and
 - “Smart Bio-Enabled Molecular Materials by Design,” **Mark Richter**, Molecular Biosciences, \$277,218, two years.



“**STARTUP WEEKEND**” ATTRACTED A LARGE GROUP OF **KU STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS** to the Bioscience & Technology Business Center September 25-27. The fun, competitive event was sponsored by KU Innovation and Collaboration, the KU School of Business, the BTBC, and the Lawrence Chamber. The winning team, Modern Nomad, composed of two KU students and two Lawrence residents, proposed selling modern, plywood furniture from an online store.

Upcoming Events

Additional events and details are available at the [KU Calendar](#).

OCTOBER 21

Hall Center Humanities Lecture Series: Alice Goffman, "On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City"

7:30 p.m.

Spooner Hall, The Commons

OCTOBER 22

Kansas Economic Policy Conference: "Economic Opportunity in Kansas: What Does the Future Hold?"

8:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Kansas Union, 5th Floor

Tuttle Lecture: Tiya Miles, "Goat Bones in the Basement: A Case of Race, Gender and Haunting in Old Savannah"

4:00 p.m.

Kansas Union, Woodruff Auditorium

Everyday Lives on the Eastern Front: WWI Lecture Series: Heather Perry, "Recycling the Disabled: Army Medicine and Modernity in the First World War"

7 p.m.

Spooner Hall, The Commons

OCTOBER 24

KU Libraries: Ideate Lawrence: 2015 Water

10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Anschutz Library, The Learning Studio

OCTOBER 29

Johanna Drucker: "Digital Humanities – A Status Report With Questions"

7:30 p.m.

Hall Center for the Humanities Conference Hall

OCTOBER 30

Dedication Ceremony: Learned Engineering Expansion Phase 2 (LEEP 2)

4 p.m.

School of Engineering

NOVEMBER 2

Everyday Lives on the Eastern Front: WWI Lecture Series: Laurie Stoff, "More than Binding Men's Wounds: Women's Wartime Nursing in Russia during the Great War"

7 p.m.

Spooner Hall, The Commons

NOVEMBER 6-7

14th Annual Great Plains Infectious Disease Meeting

School of Pharmacy

NOVEMBER 10

34th Higuchi-KU Endowment Research Achievement Awards

3:30 p.m.

Lied Center of Kansas, Pavilion (*by invitation*)

NOVEMBER 18

14th Annual GIS Day @ KU and Information/Job Fair

All Day

Kansas Union, 4th Floor

DECEMBER 2

Center for Open Science: Workshop on Reproducible Research Practices

9 a.m. – Noon, 1 – 4 p.m. (*identical sessions*)

Kansas Union, Alderson Room

ON DECEMBER 2, STAFF FROM THE CENTER FOR OPEN SCIENCE, home of the Reproducibility Project, will conduct two workshops at KU on reproducible research practices, emphasizing factors that contribute to low levels of reproducibility. Attendees will learn simple, practical steps to ensure reproducibility in their own work through a combination of lecture and hands-on activities. Sessions will be 9 a.m. to noon and 1–4 p.m. in the Alderson Room at the Kansas Union. More information will be provided online as the date approaches. This free program is sponsored by KU Libraries, KU Research, the KU Center for Research Methods & Data Analysis, and KU Information Technology.

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