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**Twelve Morris faculty receive Universitywide Research Enhance Funds**

*Summary: Morris Faculty Research Enhancement Funds were awarded this fall to support research-related activities. Professors Stephen Burks and Chris Cole received \$5,000 awards. Ten faculty received awards ranging from \$70 to \$1,000, and 37 Travel Differential Awards of \$300 were awarded.*

(December 15, 2010)-Morris Faculty Research Enhancement Funds (FREF), sponsored by the University of Minnesota Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR), were awarded this fall to support research-related activities. Stephen Burks, associate professor of economics and management, and Chris Cole, professor of biology, received \$5,000 awards. Ten faculty members received awards ranging from \$70 to \$1,000, and 37 Travel Differential Awards of \$300 were awarded.

Since the program's 2005 inception, Morris has received \$350,000 from the OVPR to support projects ranging from Ireland archaeological digs to the completion of a book published by a respected academic press, from solo art exhibits to research in Denmark, from theatre auditions to purchasing atomic physics research equipment. In many cases, FREF funds helped faculty position themselves to be competitive candidates for external funding.

Burks seeks new measurement techniques for business ethics research

Burks' FREF grant will support groundwork towards a larger coordinated program of research in experimental economics utilizing field experiments in the financial services industry and laboratory work.

Burks and research partner Erin Krupka, University of Michigan assistant professor of information, state, "The recent financial crisis, as well as historical scandals like Enron, have highlighted not only the importance of ethics in business, but the implications of business ethics for the economy as a whole. However, a significant problem with existing literature is that there is no incentive compatible instrument for measuring ethical norms. Further, even in studies in which ethical norms are identified through surveys or questionnaires, relating those norms to the individual behavior of employees or to the business outcomes of the organizations that employ them is difficult because of the highly sensitive nature of the research question. This, in turn, hampers the testing and development of theory."

Burks' and Krupka's research will seek to contribute to advancing the measurement and theory norms by applying a new technique to generate data.

Cole to serve as Visiting Scholar in Sweden

Cole's FREF grant will help support a sabbatical in Umea, Sweden. From June until December 2011, Cole will serve as Visiting Scholar at the Umea Plant Science Center (UPSC). UPSC, a premier institution for research in plant genomics, molecular ecology, bioenergy production, and a wealth of related fields, draws researchers from 35 different countries. Much of the research conducted at UPSC focuses on aspen trees, which relates directly to Cole's research into the molecular ecology of North American aspens. Cole has linked genetics and ecology of aspens to large-scale changes in climate and carbon dioxide.

“These molecular traits are of major importance both in the ecology of natural populations and in application to applied breeding and management programs,” states Cole. “Past neglect of these issues led to the widespread propagation of ‘hybrid poplar’ cultivars that grew rapidly but are highly susceptible to attack by pathogens and pests. Indeed, all across the Midwest one now sees hybrid poplars that grew rapidly but are now dead or dying.”

Cole states that his work in Sweden will be valuable for both basic and applied biology, and can be expected to lead to research publications, course development, and research opportunities for Morris students.

#### Recipients of \$1,000 grants

Recipients of \$1,000 grants are Joe Carucci, assistant professor of music, Donna Chollett, associate professor of anthropology, Ann DuHamel, teaching specialist in music, Brooks Jessup, instructor in history, Jong-Min Kim, associate professor of statistics, Jessica Larson, associate professor of studio art, Brook Miller, associate professor of English, Ted Pappenfus, associate professor of chemistry, and Julia Dabbs, associate professor of art history.

#### FREF process

Calls for FREF proposals are made in September, January, and May. The next deadline is Monday, January 10, 2011. Categories for support in January are project-based faculty research support and travel differential support. The FREF review group consists of division chairs and a representative from each division.

The Office of Grants Development is available to assist faculty members who wish to apply for FREF funding. Learn more [online](#)) or contact the Dean’s Office at 320-589-6018.

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