Congress left Washington, D.C., for its August break having made progress passing the FY 2015 appropriations bills that fund all of the federal agencies. Overall, the funding levels for research programs are positive; however, a yearlong continuing resolution is expected to be passed this fall, which will keep the government funded at current levels for several months. To date, the House Appropriations Committee has marked up 11 of the 12 annual appropriations bills, seven of which have passed the full House of Representatives. In contrast, the Senate has reported eight draft bills from the Senate Appropriations Committee, but none have passed the full Senate. Congress will only be in session for a few weeks before the November elections. Following the elections there may be a lame duck session where Congress will attempt to finalize the appropriations bills.

To learn more, contact Tim Leshan, VP for government relations, at northeastern.edu/governmentrelations

INNOVATION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE

Northeastern Launches Burlington Innovation Campus

With the goal of being a model for how nimble, private universities can lead innovation in the 21st century, Northeastern has reimaged its 14-acre campus in Burlington, Massachusetts.

Once a site largely devoted to adult and executive education classes, the Burlington Innovation Campus is now integral to the university’s focus on forging strategic partnerships with industry and government to create new knowledge and technologies that can be translated into commercial solutions, said Senior Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Education Melvin Bernstein.

The opening of the George J. Kostas Research Institute for Homeland Security in Burlington three years ago gave Northeastern a core facility to literally build upon. In addition to housing university laboratories—including the 2,000-square-foot Structural Testing of Resilient and Sustainable Systems (STReSS) Laboratory—the Kostas center has fostered the Rogers Innovation Center, a unique research collaboration between the Rogers Corporation and Northeastern.

Rogers, a leader in advanced materials and components for electronics, transportation, energy, telecommunications, and defense systems, officially opened its 4,000-square-foot lab and office complex within the Kostas Research Institute in March. As part of this partnership, the company has made a multiyear commitment to fund research programs in the labs of Northeastern faculty that are colocated at the Kostas Institute; this program continues to grow as more faculty projects are developed and added. The Kostas Institute is now more than 40 percent occupied with faculty and industry labs, including a new nano fabrication lab.

David Luzzi, Northeastern’s executive director of strategic security initiatives, and Peter Boynton, director of the Kostas Research Institute, say the partnership promises to be a new model for university-industry collaboration that can accelerate the development of new technologies into the marketplace while expanding university research programs.

Additional partnerships and initiatives have taken shape at the BIC, says Bernstein. A new Northeastern collaboration with Waters Corporation has led to the establishment of the Biopharmaceutical Analytical Training Lab in Elliott Hall, which includes research, training, and education components.

The university’s Center for Research Innovation is locating its Tech2Venture pilot program within the Kostas center, a program that identifies and engages entrepreneurs in commercializing Northeastern technologies. The proximity to the Route 128 high-technology corridor will raise the visibility of some of the university’s newest technologies, and provide entrepreneurs with unprecedented industry access and feedback. Also in the entrepreneurship realm, planning is under way for early-stage venture creation and maker space utilizing existing buildings on the campus.

The BIC also supports the newly established Center for Resilience Studies at the Kostas Research Institute, which is exploring the role of the private sector in making critical systems more resilient to man-made or naturally occurring disasters. Army-funded research to develop replacements for strategic materials is engaging students in Northeastern graduate programs, exemplifying the university’s use inspired research theme.

Shuttle-safe service between the main campus and the BIC began in August to support the increasing level of student and faculty activity at the Kostas Institute and elsewhere on the BIC.
Faculty, students, and staff from Northeastern’s Urban Coastal Sustainability initiative, led by professors Mark Patterson and Brian Helmuth, took part in Mission 31—a month-long underwater research expedition led by Fabien Cousteau, the grandson of legendary marine explorer Jacques Cousteau. Mission 31 took place in the Aquarius lab, the only underwater marine habitat and lab in the world, located nine miles off the coast of Key Largo, Florida.

Matthias Roth, professor of public policy and urban affairs and civil and environmental engineering, was a co-author on the recent Third National Climate Assessment released by the White House. The National Climate Assessment summarizes the impact of climate change on the United States.

Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, professor of English, was awarded an American Council of Learned Societies Digital Innovation Fellowship for the Early Caribbean Digital Archive and Network Visualization Project. This project brings together a wide range of digitized texts, manuscripts, and images from the pre-20th century Caribbean and provides an interactive digital scholarly lab for the collaborative study of these materials.

Emery Trahan, senior associate dean of faculty and research and professor of finance in the D’Amore-Mckim School of Business, will be the keynote speaker at the New York Accounting and Finance Forum in September.

Congratulations to our FY14 National Science Foundation CAREER Award Recipients


Swastik Kar, assistant professor of physics, “Graphene-based Ultra-responsive Photo-sensing Devices.”


Paul Whifford, assistant professor of physics, “Disorder, tRNA Composition, and Resolution, and Ultra-fast Terahertz Spectroscopy and Imaging.”

Support for Research is on the Rise

The close of fiscal year 2014 saw Northeastern University continuing its upward trajectory in research growth, attracting external support of more than $111.2 million, with research expenditures of about $93 million. The greatest percentage growth came in the area of security research, a direct consequence of a multiyear strategy to build this area by expenditures of about $93 million. The greatest percentage growth came in the area of security research, a direct consequence of a multiyear strategy to build this area by expenditures of about $93 million.

Understanding the uncertain federal funding climate, the university has continued to make strides in increasing non-federal support for research. Industry and foundation support for research in fiscal year 2014 was 18 percent of the total, up from 6 percent in fiscal year 2011. Research partnerships at the Burlington Innovation Campus and plans for venture development and maker space at that campus (see related story) are expected to have a positive impact on the university’s research profile and funding levels, and will greatly accelerate the success of innovation and commercialization efforts.

Northeastern University

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