



# News Release

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## **Six University Researchers Earn Grant Awards**

PIERRE, S.D. – Six South Dakota faculty members are receiving state grants to support their individual research projects. The grants, to be matched by like amounts from their own university, are part of the state’s strategy to build public university capacity for research and technology development.

“Research is alive and well in South Dakota’s public universities,” said Gary E. Johnson, system vice president of research for the South Dakota Board of Regents. “The call for proposals in this year’s Competitive Research Grant Program garnered a record 49 proposals requesting \$3.38 million against the \$500,000 we had available to award.

“Research expenditures from competitively awarded grants and contracts on the public university campuses last year alone reached a record \$78.6 million and, by conservative estimates, had a \$113.2 million economic impact on the economy of South Dakota,” Johnson said.

This is the fifth year the state has financially supported grant awards to build a higher level of competitive research at the six public universities.

Gov. Mike Rounds’ 2010 Initiative in economic development calls for the state to “become a recognized leader in research and technology development by 2010.” Since the launch of the 2010 Initiative, the state has been highly focused on the role university research can play in South Dakota’s economic development. The competitive grants announced today complement other strategies to increase university-based research, including the 2010 research centers and new doctoral programs in the sciences, engineering, and technology.

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### **2009 Competitive Research Grant Program**

These are the six faculty members who received a Competitive Research Grant, their department, research topic, and summary of funds awarded:

**Northern State University**

- Alyssa Kiesow, Biology – “*Characterization & Isolation of Microsatellite Loci for Three Species, Ring-necked Pheasants, Common Yellowthroats, & False Map Turtles, for the Purposes of Conducting Population Genetic Structure Analyses*” (Grant award: \$37,710; University match: \$39,198)

**South Dakota School of Mines & Technology**

- Rajesh Sani, Chemical & Biological Engineering – “*Development of an Overexpressing Thermostable Cellulase Strain Using a Bacterium Isolated from the Homestake Gold Mine, Lead, South Dakota*” (Grant award: \$82,463; University match: \$82,463)

**South Dakota State University**

- Omathanu Perumal, Pharmaceutical Sciences – “*Zein Nanoparticles for Drug Delivery Applications*” (Grant award: \$93,161; University match: \$93,164)
- Youngjae You, Chemistry & Biochemistry – “*Novel Drug Delivery Strategy: Visible/Near IR-controlled Drug Release*” (Grant award: \$67,658; University match: \$67,807)

**The University of South Dakota**

- Gina Forster, Basic Biomedical Sciences – “*Effects of Mild Traumatic Brain Injury on Stress Sensitivity in an Animal Model*” (Grant award: \$100,000; University match: \$100,000)
- Hongmin Wang, Basic Biomedical Sciences – “*Generation of Ubiquilin Mouse Models for Studying Huntington's Disease*” (Grant award: \$100,000; University match: \$100,000)