

Promoting research

Nov. 20, 2012
tallahassee.com

With its two major universities and a thriving community college, Tallahassee is well positioned in offering local and regional residents with a variety of academic choices.

But the role of higher education institutions goes much deeper than classroom work, providing stimulating cultural activities and offering intellectual exposure.

Behind the walls of the universities, many people associated with the universities are engaged in what they can develop here in Tallahassee that can lead to advancements globally in several areas such as health care, business and product development.

This week, Florida State University honored several of its faculty who are engaged in such research. What they are developing in labs and research environments not only provides a benefit to Florida State, but the work and reputation of those researchers behind the products brings attention to Tallahassee.

The university annually receives just under \$2 million in royalties, minus patent expenses. Of that, about 40 percent goes to the inventor, 30 percent to the academic division and 30 percent back to the university for further research projects. The university also provides about \$250,000 in money not derived from the state for grants that faculty can apply for to further explore commercial interest in their ideas.

Examples of some of those honored includes:

- Michael Blaber, who developed a family of mutant human and mouse antibodies that could be used in wound healing.
- Richard Liang, who leads a team that has developed processes to improve the utility and manufacture of buckypaper.
- Jake VanLandingham, who received grant to test methods that would reduce damage from mild concussions and other brain injuries.

“The work of these dedicated researchers is important as it will enhance the reputation of FSU, demonstrate to people that FSU is engaged in addressing some of society’s most pressing needs and, finally, having an impact on the Florida economy for jobs and create products that can save lives,” John Fraser, assistant vice president for research and economic development, said in a release.

Their work essentially benefits us all in promoting this community as a top research and development community. It also helps bring attention to the importance of encouraging and supporting a creative environment for academic and research pursuits in the state of Florida.