Biomedical research infrastructure is crucial to Vermont’s economic prosperity. This prosperity depends upon making the latest technology available to our scientists, supporting their basic research projects, assisting them with transfer of knowledge to application and providing a highly skilled biomedical workforce.

- Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy

Vermont investigators have been awarded more than $136 million through the IDeA program.

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Institutional Development Awards

Vermont Center on Behavior and Health (COBRE)

An $11.5 million COBRE research grant from the National Institutes of Health supports the development of the Vermont Center on Behavior and Health (VCBH) at the University of Vermont. This center studies the relationships between personal behaviors and risk for chronic disease and premature death.

This center supports research projects led by five outstanding UVM junior faculty that include studies of weight control in breast cancer patients and overweight pregnant women; an intervention to increase cardiac rehabilitation participation in Medicaid patients; a study of heart disease risk in women with breast cancer and a study of the origins of obesity and heart disease risk in childhood psychiatric syndromes.

The VCBH integrates an interdisciplinary group of accomplished senior scientists, promising junior investigators, and distinguished advisors and collaborators to establish a center of excellence in an area of clinical research that is vitally important to U.S. public health. The Center, led by UVM faculty members Stephen Higgins, Ph.D., and Philip Ades, M.D., is one of only three in the nation addressing the important challenge of behavioral health from a behavioral economics perspective. COBRE PI and Director is Stephen Higgins (stephen.higgins@uvm.edu). To learn more, visit: http://www.uvm.edu/medicine/behaviorandhealth/

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The Institutional Development Award (IDea) program broadens the geographic distribution of NIH funding for biomedical and behavioral research, and fosters health-related research. Supported by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) of the National Institutes of Health, the IDea program increases the competitiveness of investigators by supporting faculty development and research infrastructure enhancement at institutions in 23 states and Puerto Rico.

Vermont IDea Program Goals

- Strengthen the research capacity and critical mass of biomedical research at the lead institution, University of Vermont, as a resource for the entire state.
- Continue a stimulating, supportive, and "cutting edge" research milieu.
- Compete for federal funding. To address workforce development and its diversity, we build researchers across Vermont the resources they need to carry out world class research and compete for federal funding.
- To address workforce development and its diversity, we build cultures of research by supporting faculty and student research at our Baccalaureate Partner Institutions (BPIs): Castleton, Johnson and Lyndon State Colleges, Middlebury College, Norwich University, Saint Michael's College and Green Mountain College.
- Continue a stimulating, supportive, and "cutting edge" research milieu.
- Strengthen the research capacity and critical mass of biomedical research at the lead institution, University of Vermont (UVM), we have developed state-of-the-art facilities for Microarray and Proteomics to provide to researchers across Vermont the resources they need to carry out world class research and compete for federal funding.
- To address workforce development and its diversity, we build cultures of research by supporting faculty and student research at our Baccalaureate Partner Institutions (BPIs): Castleton, Johnson and Lyndon State Colleges, Middlebury College, Norwich University, Saint Michael’s College and Green Mountain College.
- Also work with students in college lab classes throughout Vermont in order to bring state-of-the-art research resources into their education.

VGN impacts STEM employment in Vermont by supporting faculty and staff members at UVM and BPIs. 5 full time faculty at UVM and Norwich University, 3 part time faculty at UVM and 2 at BPIs, and 9 full time staff at UVM and Norwich University. Since 2005, VGN has funded 20 graduate students, 42 project awards to BPI faculty members, 53 pilot project awards to BPI faculty members, 79 student summer research awards to BPI undergraduate students and use of faculty awards to 12 UVM faculty members. Our students' careers in medicine, biomedical research and STEM teaching have been influenced by opportunities made possible by VGN, 87% of our students go on to STEM careers. The principal investigator is Judith Van Houten, PhD (Judith.VanHouten@uvm.edu). To learn more, visit: http://vgn.uvm.edu/

Vermont Center for Immunology and Infectious Diseases (COBRE)

The Vermont Center for Immunology and Infectious Diseases (COBRE) is to enhance Neuroscience research and training infrastructure (COBRE) in Neuroscience, created in 2001 by a grant from the NIH National Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE). The goals of the VLC (COBRE) are to: train residents, and graduate, medical and undergraduate students. Multiple multi-year research projects and one-year pilot projects for junior investigators were funded in the first 10 years of the award. The current transitional COBRE grant, which was awarded for 5 years in 2011, continues to support the shared research cores and funds one-year pilot projects in the...