STONY BROOK
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

TO: University Senate

FROM: Robert L. McGrath,
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

DATE: October 9, 2006

REPORT TO THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

INTRODUCTIONS

Graham Glynn, Executive Director, Teaching, Learning and Technology

COMPUTATIONAL SCIENCE INITIATIVE

On September 21, 2006 The Provost announced a new initiative in Computational Sciences.

The announcement to faculty on this initiative follows:

Colleagues,

I am very pleased to announce an initiative that will strengthen computational science at Stony Brook and also enhance our ties with Brookhaven National Laboratory. Earlier this summer we learned the good news that the New York State budget has $26 Million set aside for Stony Brook to acquire a supercomputer in the 100 Teraflop class. At present this would be the largest computer in the world available for non-classified research.

The plan is to locate the machine at BNL which has appropriate space to house the machine and considerable experience in managing large user facilities. BNL Director Sam Aronson and I are serving as interim co-directors of what we call the New York Center for Computational Science. We have appointed three interim co-associate directors for the new center: James Glimm (chair of Applied Mathematics and Statistics), Douglas Swesty (research professor in Physics and Astronomy), and James Davenport (senior scientist at BNL and director of BNL's Center for Scientific Computing).

We have devised a draft plan for building up the Center and also for building computational science at our two institutions. More information will be available (still under construction) at http://www.stonybrook.edu/nyccs Our vision is to use this wonderful support from New York State as a stimulus to create a world class education and research activity in computational science. As many of you know, the long range plans in many areas of

science, engineering, social sciences, and other disciplines argue future advances will come increasingly from computations using massively parallel supercomputers. We already have a core of strong computational scientists who are eager to help build this center of strength, but we have an opportunity to build added strength by recruiting additional faculty. This brings me to a second piece of good news.

SUNY Chancellor Ryan has created what is called the Empire Innovation Program. The program, supported by new funds from New York State, objective is to recruit outstanding new tenure track faculty to SUNY in disciplines with potential to attract federal research funding (and long term contributions to economic development.) The first year funding of the program was announced earlier this summer and we were required to submit proposals for EIP funds on very short notice.

The deans of CAS, SOM, CEAS, and MSRC working with my office proposed and received funding for new faculty in the following areas: Computational Science; Environmental Sciences; Wireless and Information Technology; Neurobiology; Chemical Biology (Drug Discovery); Infectious Diseases (esp. Avian Influenza); and Diabetes and Endocrinology. You will hear more about these other initiatives in other venues, but I am pleased to announce here that the EIP will support hiring in this year of up to three FTE faculty in Computational Science.

I have asked James Glimm to chair a single recruiting committee for these new hires. The terms of this cluster hiring initiative are that each new hire will have an anchor appointment in a department, and will also be part of the broader computational science effort including seminars and workshops and interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving. Host departments or units will provide funds for 0.5 FTE, so that up to six new faculty can be recruited. The goal is to find the best and the brightest in any of a number of fields. Examples of fields include atmospheric sciences, environmental sciences, biology, materials and nano science, hydrodynamics and nuclear astrophysics, and finance, computer architectures. Depending on the person and area of expertise, joint appointments with BNL may be desirable.

There will be a town meeting on October 4 at 1 PM in Wang Center Room 401 where interested department chairs and other faculty can learn more about the present plans for the NYCCS and for the faculty recruiting process. I hope many will attend!

RECENT GRANTS/FACULTY AWARDS

SBU's new College of Journalism has recently be grant $1.7 million from the Knight Foundation to begin a freshman program in News Literacy, the official announcement of the award and program will be launched later this fall.

Dr. Iwao Ojima, Distinguished Professor of Chemistry and Director of the Institute for Chemical Biology and Drug Discovery, has been named to the "Medicinal Chemistry Hall of Fame" which was established this year by the Division of Medicinal Chemistry of the American Chemical Society.

Dr. Gene Sprouse was honored by the College Board for his course, "PHY 141/142 Introductory Honors Physics," which was identified as one of the top examples of best practices in a national study of Physics courses conducted by the Center for Educational Policy Research (CEPR) on behalf of the College Board.

PROVOST LECTURE SERIES

On Thursday, October 12, 2006 at 4:30 p.m. in the Humanities Institute, Room 1006 of the Humanities Building, the Provost's Lecture Series with the Templeton Research Lecture Series will host a talk by Dr. Joseph Godfrey. Dr. Godfrey is a philosopher of religion and author of "A Philosophy of Human Hope," numerous articles on hope, and more recently, on trust. Dr. Godfrey is currently an Associate Professor of Philosophy, and former chair of the Philosophy Department, at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia. He will give a lecture entitled: "Conceiving Trust: Trust in a Technological Age,"

On Thursday, October 17, 2006 at 4:00 p.m. in the Wang Center, Room 201, the Provost's Lecture Series will host a talk by Dr. Garman Harbottle. Dr. Harbottle, a senior chemist at Brookhaven National Laboratory, has an international reputation as an expert in dating and authenticating historically important items and was most recently awarded the Archaeological Institute of America's Pomerance Award for Scientific Contributions to Archaeology.

REMINDER: DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AND TEACHING PROFESSOR NOMINATIONS

The call for nominations for this year's Distinguished Service and Teaching Professor Awards was announced on September 1st. Nomination forms and complete guidelines for the awards can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/provost/index.html.

The Provost's Office site also includes information on the Chancellor's/President's Awards for: Excellence in Teaching, Excellence in Faculty Service, Excellence in Librarianship, Excellence in Professional Service, and Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities.

The nominations for Distinguished Professor are distinct from the recent call described above and are handled through a committee of Distinguished Professors. For additional information in nominating a colleague as a Distinguished Professor, please see the website at http://ws.cc.stonybrook.edu/provost/Policies/revised2.htm