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Central Connecticut State University

## News

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### **CCSU Receives Nearly Half-Million Dollars in Scholarship Money**

By Christopher Boulay  
*News Editor*

The National Science Foundation has granted CCSU nearly \$500,000 in scholarship money to give to students majoring in computer science, physics and mathematics.

The program is brand-new, though the NSF has similar programs. CCSU was not a member of those programs in the past. Around 400 schools applied for the grant, CCSU were among the close to 100 that were chosen.

Dr. Stanislav Kurkovsky, the Associate Professor of computer science composed the proposal for the scholarship to the NSF. The maximum amount of the scholarship is \$5,200. Some people may qualify for less money, and there will be at least 20 scholarships.

CCSU was selected after the NSF's review process, which included collecting approximately 400 applications, inviting outside reviewers that included professors and other college faculty members from all over the United States that graded proposals. The grading system went from excellent to poor. CCSU had two "excellent" and two "very good" which are the top two levels of proposals, leaving it in very good shape to receive the money, which it did.

The program is aimed toward both minorities and females.

According to Dr. Kurkovsky, "The idea is to get underrepresented students involved. The lack of minorities and females in computer science is a national trend and the NSF is aware of that."

He wants this scholarship to help people pay for any aspect of the college cost. So they would not have to work as much as they would have to in order to make the money on their own.

Dr. Kurkovsky is the principal investigator of the program at CCSU and has three people that are working as co-principle investigators, one from each department that is taking part in the program.

"We want to make sure that all key offices on campus are not only aware, but are participating. This includes the financial aid department, career services, admissions and local employers," said Kurkovsky.

Kurkovsky as well as the rest of the group heading the program have received letters of support from all of these departments.

This program also wants to create activities for their students as a sort of "collective learning" experience. This would be a way to facilitate bonding among students who belong to a particular major. Kurkovsky has many ideas in mind including but not limited to seminars, guest lectures and possibly even social events.

He said, "I want to keep a cohort of students together through a range of activities. Older students

could mentor younger students.”

He related it to the common European model of learning that has occurred there for hundreds of years. Kurkovsky also plans to give half of the scholarships to incoming freshman, one quarter of them to transfer students, and the other quarter to upperclassmen or students that are already at CCSU.

Students will be selected based on financial need and must have a GPA of 2.75 and a 3.0 in their major in order to stay in the program. The program will begin for the fall 2007 semester.

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