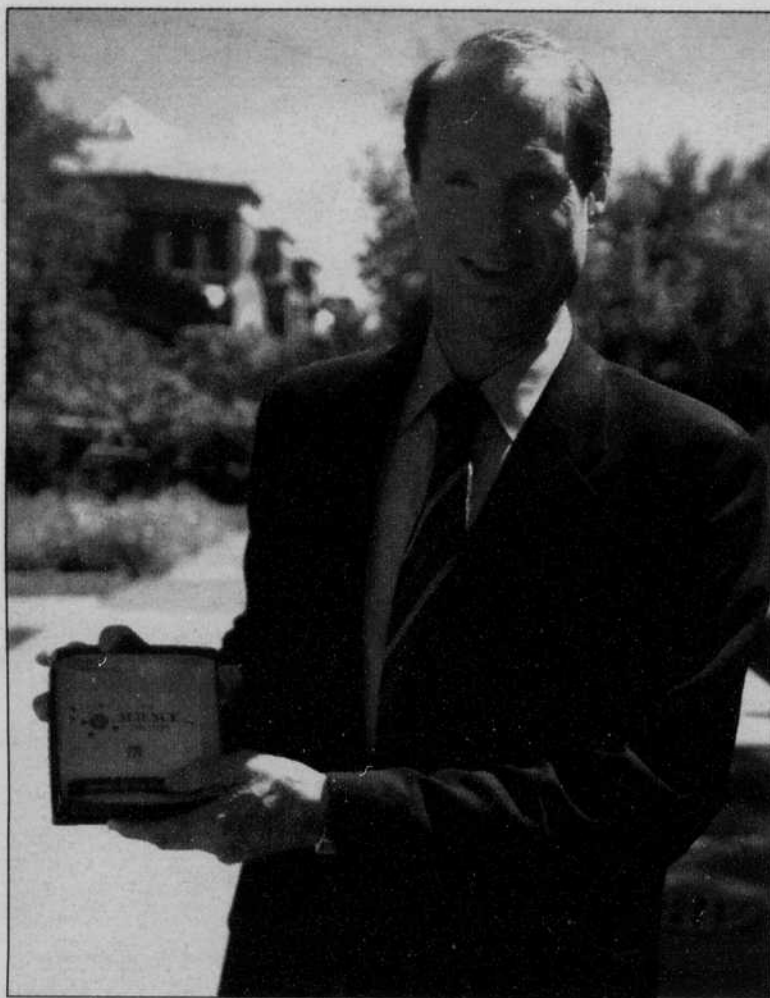


# Wyden recognized at UO for supporting research



Jessica Waters Emerald

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., received the Champion of Science Award from the Science Coalition on Monday for his help in securing funding for a nanotechnology research program.

Ron Wyden, who helped secure funding for a nanotechnology research program, toured the University's Semiconductor Lab

By Jan Tobias Montry  
Managing Editor

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., may not be a University researcher, but he is a familiar name around campus labs. His efforts in the U.S. Senate have garnered federal support for scientific study at Oregon universities, which many hope will help contribute to a more robust economy.

For his support, Wyden received the Champion of Science Award from the Science Coalition — which comprises more than 400 organizations, including the University — at the University's Semiconductor Lab on Monday. Wyden also toured the research facility while graduate students demonstrated the doping process to make microchips and allowed Wyden to view transistors — only 10 microns long — using optical microscopy.

Following the tour, University President Dave Frohnmayer talked to a room full of graduate students, University officials and industry leaders about the University's role in building a strong Oregon economy through research. Frohnmayer explained how Wyden had contributed to that effort and presented him with the award.

"It's very important that we con-

tinue to nurture and continue to elevate, in the public consciousness, the essential nature of this research enterprise, especially in the sciences where we have such strengths already," Frohnmayer said. "Senator Wyden has been a tireless advocate for Oregon, for sciences, for the University of Oregon. ... We deeply appreciate all of that."

Wyden was recognized, among other things, for authoring legislation that would create a federally funded National Nanotechnology Research Program for long-term research and would establish the University as a major hub for the program. He was also recognized for his efforts in 2002 to double the National Science Foundation's budget, as well as his commitment to ensuring women have greater opportunities in science fields.

In return, Wyden praised Frohnmayer and the University's research programs, and highlighted the importance of investing in research for economic growth.

"I think when you look out here, when you look out at the laboratories and look out at the young people who are doing this great work with semiconductors, this, my friends, is the face of Oregon's future," he said. "This is what it's going to be all about in the effort to create more high-skilled, high-wage jobs."

University officials estimate the University as a whole had a total impact on Oregon's economy of \$703 million

during the 2000-2001 fiscal year.

Following the awards ceremony, a short round-table discussion took place with Wyden, University research staff and business leaders, who expressed confidence in the relationship between University research, federal support and the business world to stimulate Oregon's economy.

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Ron Wyden  
U.S. Senator, D-Ore.

Skip Rung, a retired Hewlett-Packard executive and consultant for University research programs, expressed the importance of "new, radical innovation" through research to spur economic growth, and especially endorsed research partnerships among Oregon universities.

"Hewlett-Packard is delighted to see the University of Oregon, Oregon State and Portland State collaborating together," he said. "There is a lot of excitement ... everybody is going to work together to make a success out of it."

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## Labor

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and it seeks the ability to force furloughs (unpaid leave) of up to 15 days by citing a lack of funds, she said.

OUS offered a very different perspective, however.

OUS Spokeswoman Di Saunders said, in the current language, OUS would provide full-time employees with full health insurance, but that part-time employee health insurance was still being discussed. She said OUS should have the option of providing "voluntarily provided perks," such as bookstore and ticket discounts or free bus fare, if the budget demands it. She said OUS was not trying to take away tuition discounts, however.

In an e-mail to University classified employees, Vice President for Administration Dan Williams also defended the OUS position, saying "There is no intent to discontinue the (Lane Transit District) free bus ridership program ..."

"The concern now is that the current contract language prohibits campuses from being able to alter, in any way, these kinds of voluntary bene-

fits, regardless of economic or other changes that occur that are out of OUS' control," Williams continued.

As far as cost-of-living adjustments and the wage step freezes, Saunders said OUS has proposed a lump payment of \$350 for eligible employees as an alternative.

That lump payment would be disbursed in November 2004, a time when employees would likely face extra holiday expenses, Williams said in the e-mail.

For scheduling, OUS needs the flexibility to work employees during later hours when non-traditional students, such as parents and returning students, are attending school, Saunders said. OUS wants to narrow the area in which laid-off employees can "bump" into another's position from geographical area to administrative areas, such as each department, to reduce the costs of retraining an employee and the stress caused to the bumped employee. Lastly, as far as the furloughs, OUS would rather temporarily lay off an employee during slow times, like holidays, than have to lay them off permanently, Saunders said.



Jessica Waters Emerald

SEIU members and supporters gather on the lawn in front of Oregon Hall Thursday to protest current contract negotiations with OUS.

As a result of the stalled negotiations, OUS declared an impasse on Friday, August 8, a day SEIU mem-

bers have dubbed "Black Friday." As far as Kirtner could remember, it was the first time OUS has ever declared an impasse.

But Saunders said OUS has declared an impasse before, and the union itself declared an impasse in 1999, she said.

On Friday, Aug. 15, each side submitted their final proposals. No agreement was reached.

According to an e-mail from Kirtner to classified employees on campus, OUS made large concessions on Friday, including halting the proposal for temporary layoffs, retaining the current rules on bumping after a lay-off and retaining current work schedules. OUS also called the union and said it was "willing to make even more movement" on Saturday, according to the e-mail.

Saunders confirmed OUS did propose an offer that "moved in the direction" of the union with respect to insurance and economic settlements.

"We're trying to come to a final settlement over the next couple of days," she said. "It's sort of in a wait-and-see mode. The endpoint is an unknown right now, but we're hoping to reach a settlement."

Susan Carver, an office specialist at the University for 12 years who marched in Thursday's rally, said she was protesting because she couldn't afford more cutbacks, adding that she is "basically the breadwinner" of the household. Her husband worked for Weyerhaeuser for 26 years before his plant shut down. Now, he works part time and doesn't receive any benefits.

"It's really hard when you can't afford prescription medicines," she said. "It's really discouraging when all of the higher-ups" get all that they need in contracts.

George Kokis, a member of the emeritus faculty who is working part-time as a fine arts teacher, said he felt a certain responsibility to support the classified employees even though he is not one.

"I have to support my friends in the office," he said. "It's terrible to see them squeezed like this. Whenever it's necessary to come forward, I think the faculty should be there. As faculty, we know what it's like to be squeezed financially, but to these people it's even worse. One retires from teaching, but you don't retire from caring."

Jared Paben is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

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