

TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTO EDITOR

Voxtel Senior Engineer and University Associate Researcher Andreas Stonas explains how his research could increase the capabilities of telecommunication and solar power technologies.

Voxtel partnership with University a natural pairing

The collaboration will combine Voxtel's and ONAMI's research to improve telecommunication technologies

NICHOLAS WILBUR
NEWS REPORTER

A small, privately owned company in Portland obtained a two-year \$750,000 research contract with the University's Oregon Nanotechnology and Microtechnologies Institute (ONAMI) earlier this month.

The new partnership, between Voxtel, Inc. and ONAMI, will work to develop high-speed, microwave circuit technology by pairing Voxtel's quantum dot technology with ONAMI scientists' research of polymers — the conducting matrixes that surround the embedded dots. Both ONAMI and Voxtel were started in 2000.

"The things Voxtel is interested in studying overlapped with the University and it was only natural for us to form a collaboration," Andreas Stonas said of the contract.

Although the collaboration has yet to yield any products, advances in this basic science will be commercialized and a part of people's daily lives in a couple years, Stonas said.

The Air Force Small Business Initiative Research program funded this contract, but not solely for military use, Stonas said. He said he wanted funding from the National Science Foundation, but that it has too small a pool of money. The Department of Defense had a \$401.7 billion base budget for 2004 and later requested nearly \$100 billion on top of that. The National Science Foundation budget was \$5.48 billion, according to its Web site.

"We're not doing military research," Stonas said. "This is basic science. It may be militarily funded, but it's non-military in application."

Stonas cites the Internet as an example of the type of militarily

funded research that benefits American citizens more than it does the military. To further diminish skepticism, Stonas said all the research will be published.

"If we were keeping something a secret, then you could worry," Stonas said.

Stonas, a senior engineer at Voxtel, is working with chemists Mark Lonergan and Jim Hutchison of the University's Materials Science Institute.

"Voxtel's area of research is a natural extension of the work conducted in my labs," Lonergan said in a press release.

The University will contribute its expertise in the organic polymer properties that surround the quantum dots (nanocrystals).

Stonas described the process as follows:

Nanocrystals within the router device of a fiber optic cable, for example, absorb light and "knock off" an electron, leaving a positively charged hole. Two contacts on the top and bottom of the device, each containing variations of metal compounds, pull the electrons and holes in opposite directions. After the device separates the charges, the number of absorbed photons can be measured and the currents can be recombined to generate basic electronic charges. The variations of electronic charge recombination will allow advancements in the fundamental science of nanotechnology. Eventually, these advancements will make longer-lasting, more durable devices that are capable of uninterrupted communication of complex information over long distances.

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Contracts: Supporters were encouraged to call governor

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Thursday. The governor offered the University service employees a 2 percent wage increase, but Moore said that after a two-year salary freeze, a 2 percent increase was not sufficient.

"We need to recognize the sacrifice for having steps frozen," Moore said.

Petitions were sent around the crowd asking for support in health care and minimum low-end salary increases, necessary, Moore said, to keep up with the increased cost of living.

The main speaker of the rally explained to the crowd that two Oregon University System representatives were at the bargaining table trying to reach a settlement with the governor.

At one point during the rally, the speaker called the governor's office and had the crowd yell in unison, "We want a contract, now!" Everyone in the crowd was

also given a 4- by 6-inch card with the governor's phone number on it. Supporters were encouraged to call and leave a message that expressed the concern for a new settlement "that meets our needs."

The crowd chanted, "2 percent won't pay the rent!" and, "We need a real raise, not a raw deal raise!"

Although there have only been two strikes in the last 20 years — in 1986 and 1995 — the SEIU workers said they will fight until a fair settlement is reached. The SEIU said a strike is possible in the fall if a fair contract is not negotiated.

About an hour into the rally, the organizers marched down to University President Dave Frohnmayer's office to chant and protest outside of his office.

OUS representatives will continue negotiations tomorrow.

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