Cancer Center gets $19.5M grant

By Monica Wirren
ARIZONA DAILY WILDCAT

The Arizona Cancer Center’s fight against skin cancer will continue in southern Arizona until at least 2010, thanks to a $19.5 million grant awarded to the center by the National Cancer Institute. The award is the largest program project grant in the center’s history, according to a press release.

"Skin cancer is of epidemic proportions in southern Arizona," said Dr. David Albright, co-principal investigator of the Cancer Center’s Chemoprevention of Skin Cancer Program Project. "We have two to three times the rate of skin cancer here in the rest of the U.S.," he said. "Our rates of skin cancer are second in the world only to Brisbane, Australia. It’s related to the fact that we have 3,000 hours of sunlight per year and people live outdoors." The grant will fund four projects, which will focus on skin cancer prevention and the development of new drugs that can be added to sunscreens, Albright said.

Three of the projects include pre-clinical research performed in Tucson, Phoenix and at the University of Minnesota. The fourth project, one of the co-principal investigators on the project, is the final project to apply the discoveries made during research to patients in the center’s clinic, Bowen said.

"The ultimate goal of the project is to develop a topical treatment that can identify and destroy molecular targets in the skin," Albright said. Bowen’s project at the cancer center and the research being conducted at the University of Minnesota focus on nonmelanoma skin cancers and the effect ultraviolet rays have on the skin.

See CANCER8

Artificial Intelligence lab works to hunt terrorists, cure cancer

By Joe Ferguson
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In a small lab in McClelland Hall, about 50 students and researchers work to catch terrorists, cure cancer and build a large-scale academic digital library.

The director of the UA’s Artificial Intelligence Lab, Hunchuan Chen, said the goal of the AI Lab is to provide academics and professionals with a better way to get information in their high-tech works. "I think with the ever-increasing wealth of knowledge available in the digital age, it has become difficult for researchers to stay on top of the most recent developments," Chen said.

One of the AI Lab’s main projects is building academic-specific Internet portals where a collection of links and search engines specific to a confined subject matter would be available to researchers.

Chen said he is in addition to creating portals, the AI Lab is helping build vast online digital libraries to help researchers stay