

Research unpredictable, yet essential to education

By Deb McAdams
Editor

Building the George W. Beadle Center for Genetics and Biomaterials Research was one of the wisest decisions ever made at UNL, President Dennis Smith said in a recent interview.

That decision, made nearly five years ago, represents the state's investment in the Nebraska Research Initiative.

Proposed during the Orr administration, the NRI was intended to provide state funds for focused research, in increasing increments over a five-year period, said Kim Phelps, assistant vice chancellor of business and finance. The NRI appropriation would have reached \$20 million in the fifth year, but Orr was defeated, and the appropriations were scaled back, he said. The NRI appropriation in 1993-94 was only about \$8 million, according to the UNL Fact Book.

State support for the university is not likely to increase in the near future, leaving students to pay for new programs and development through tuition increases. The state's investment in research will not detract from its investment in undergraduate programs, even though funds are limited, said Marion O'Leary, head of the department of biochemistry.

"Most research is supported by federal funding," O'Leary said. "Grants end up in the community. The state's \$6 million investment (in the Beadle Center) was multiplied into \$30 million, and it all ended up in the Nebraska economy."

The Beadle Center will have a strong program of basic research, particularly to enhance plant productivity, O'Leary said. Although increased plant productivity aggravates surpluses and price support programs, Nebraska's economy depends on it, which

justifies further research, he said. "Look at the history of agriculture in the United States over the past 50 to 75 years. Continued profitability has come about because of increased productivity and efficiency," he said.

It's difficult to make a value judgment about research, O'Leary said. "You never know where research is going to go," he said. "What is the lead time from basic research to economic benefits?"

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"Forty years ago, a man at Purdue was working on boron complexes. The National Institute of Health cut off his funding because they saw no application for his research. It turned out that the compounds were very valuable for chemical transformations of biological compounds," O'Leary said.

The man eventually won a Nobel Prize for the unanticipated results of his research.

"Research is an essential part of the education process. It provides a training ground for higher education. Research isn't just carried out for the hell of it."

Scott Barney displays remorse after sentenced to life in prison

By Sam Kepfield
Staff Reporter

Judge Donald Endacott sentenced Scott Barney to life in prison Tuesday for his role in the murder of UNL Candace Harms. The sentence was in accord with a plea agreement between Barney and Lancaster County Attorney Gary Lacey. Endacott added that it was his hope that Barney never receive an early release, and that he spend the rest of his life in prison.

Barney gave a statement at the hearing Handcuffed and shackled, wearing blue prison overalls, he faced a half-filled courtroom accompanied only by his attorney, John Stevens Berry of Lincoln. "The first thing I wish to say is I take responsibility for my part in the death of Candace Harms," Scott Barney told the court Wednesday morning. "I do not blame my parents, my educators, my siblings, drugs, or Roger Bjorklund."

In his prepared statement, read in a low and halting voice, Barney still proclaimed his innocence, saying that he knew nothing of Bjorklund's intent to murder Harms until a few minutes

before she was shot. Barney insisted that he made several feeble attempts to stop Bjorklund, but was unsuccessful.

"The night of September 22, 1992 was a nightmare for Candy Harms, and it was also a nightmare for myself," Barney said.

Barney also spoke of his conversion to Christianity while in jail, saying that his sins had been washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ.

"If the truth shall set you free, then I stand before you a free man," he said. "Even the death of Candy Harms can be used by God to bring about some good in the world."

He offered his apologies several times to the Harms family, telling them that he was truly sorry for his acts.

"No one raises a child to have them taken away and killed for no reason," he said.

Stan Harms, the father of Candace Harms, sat impassively looking directly at Barney throughout the hearing.

See BARNEY on 5

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